

# FASD in North Carolina



## About FASD:

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). FASD refers to a range of birth defects including brain injury and physical, behavioral and intellectual disabilities.<sup>1,2</sup> There is no cure for FASD.

**FASD is 100% preventable with the right information and support.<sup>3</sup>**

FASD can be prevented by not drinking any alcohol during pregnancy.<sup>4</sup> There is no known safe amount or type of alcohol during pregnancy.

**This message is shared by all major health groups:**

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC)<sup>5</sup>
- American Academy of Pediatrics<sup>6</sup>
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)<sup>7</sup>
- U.S. Surgeon General<sup>8</sup>
- World Health Organization<sup>9</sup>

## FASD by the numbers:

- As many as 1 in 20 children in the United States has an FASD.<sup>10</sup>
- FASD costs more than \$23,000 per person per year.<sup>11</sup>
- In North Carolina, 55% of women drank alcohol before becoming pregnant.<sup>12</sup>
  - 16.5% continued drinking during pregnancy.<sup>13</sup>
  - This means an estimated 19,600 babies are born in NC with alcohol exposure each year.<sup>14</sup>
- In North Carolina, 41% of pregnancies are unplanned.<sup>15</sup>
  - Most people do not find out they are pregnant until at least four weeks into the pregnancy. They may drink alcohol during that time without knowing they are pregnant. This exposure to alcohol can affect how the fetus develops.
- 70% of women in North Carolina did not receive preconception health information from their health care provider.<sup>16</sup>
- About half (47%) of doctors in North Carolina did not talk with their patients about abstaining from alcohol during pregnancy.<sup>17</sup>

## Everyone plays a role in preventing FASD:

- If you can become pregnant, talk with your care provider about preventing an alcohol exposed pregnancy.
- If you are a health care provider, take every opportunity to have conversations with patients about alcohol use before and during pregnancy.
- Become an advocate for change as it relates to alcohol policies in your community and state.
- Learn more about FASD and how you can support those impacted by this disorder at [proofalliancenc.org](https://proofalliancenc.org).

## Sources:

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16. North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics. 2019 North Carolina Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System Survey Results.
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