

Prenatal alcohol exposure (or drinking alcohol during pregnancy) can cause fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). FASD refers to a range of conditions including birth defects, brain injury, and physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities. These conditions are typically lifelong and irreversible. FASD can be prevented by not drinking any alcohol during pregnancy.

Because there is no known amount of alcohol that can be considered safe during pregnancy, it is advised by all major medical associations, including the Centers for Disease Control¹, the American Academy of Pediatrics², and the U.S. Surgeon General³, that if a person is pregnant or could become pregnant, they should abstain from drinking alcohol.

FASD is common, costly, and preventable

- Prenatal alcohol exposure is the leading preventable cause of birth defects in the United States.⁴
- 1 in 9 pregnancies are exposed to alcohol.⁵
- As many as 1 in 20 children in the US has an FASD.⁶
- In addition to the typical costs of raising a child, costs for a child with an FASD are an additional \$23,000 per year. This includes expenses such as healthcare, special education, and residential care.⁷
- FASD costs Minnesota an estimated \$131 million each year.⁸
- With the right information and supports, FASD is 100% preventable.⁹

FASD by the numbers:

- As many as 1 in 20 children in the U.S. has an FASD.¹¹
- In addition to the typical costs of raising a child, costs for a child with an FASD are an additional \$23,000 per year. This includes expenses such as healthcare, special education, and residential care.¹³
- With the right information and supports, FASD is 100% preventable.¹²



**children in the U.S.
has an FASD.¹¹**

Sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs). <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/alcohol-use.html>
- American Academy of Pediatrics. AAP Says No Amount of Alcohol Should Be Considered Safe During Pregnancy. <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/AAP-Says-No-Amount-of-Alcohol-Should-be-Considered-Safe-During-Pregnancy.aspx>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Notice to Readers: Surgeon General's Advisory on Alcohol Use in Pregnancy. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5409a6.htm>
- Williams JF, Smith VC. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. *Pediatrics*. 2015;136(5):e1395-406.
- Denny CH, et al. Consumption of alcohol beverages and binge drinking among pregnant women aged 18-44 years -- United States, 2015-2017. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*. 2019;68(16):365-368.
- May et al. Prevalence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders in 4 US Communities. *JAMA*. 2018;319(5):474-482.
- Greenmyer JR et al. A multicountry updated assessment of the economic impact of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder: Costs for children and adults. *Journal of Addiction Medicine*. 2018;12(6):466-473.
- Lupton C, Burd L, and Harwood R. Cost of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. *American Journal of Medical Genetics*. 2004;127C(671):42-50.
- Hubberstey C, Rutman D, Hume S, Van Bibber M, Poole N. Toward an Evaluation Framework for Community-Based FASD Prevention Programs. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*. 2015;30(1):79-89.
- Wilder Research. Alcohol Use and Pregnancy: The Beliefs and Behaviors of Minnesota women. <https://www.proofalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Wilder-2013-Alcohol-Use-in-Pregnancy.pdf>
- Guttmacher Institute. State Facts About Unintended Pregnancy: Minnesota. https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/factsheet/mn_17.pdf
- Minnesota Department of Human Services, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division. Substance Abuse in Minnesota. A State Epidemiological Profile. http://sumn.org/~media/510/2017_Minnesota_Epi_Profile.pdf
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), 2000-2010, based on data received through October 10, 2011. <http://media.samhsa.gov/data/2k12/TEDS2010N/TEDS2010NTbl2.10.htm>
- Millar JA, et al. Educating students with FASD: linking policy, research and practice. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*. 2017;17(1):3-17.
- Streissguth AP, Bookstein FL, Barr HM, et al. Risk factors for adverse life outcomes in fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*. 2004;25(4):228-238. <https://www.proofalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Streissguth-Risk-Factors-for-Adverse-Life-Outcomes.pdf>