

# FASD Circle of Friends

*A Snapshot of the Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network  
Community-Based Social Marketing Initiative*



## Issue and Background

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) are a group of physical and mental birth defects caused by the use of alcohol during pregnancy. FASD is a new term which includes Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and all other neurological defects caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy. It is estimated that in Canada at least one child is born with FASD each day. FASD is the leading cause of preventable birth defects and developmental delay in Canada.

In the fall of 2002, The Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network (CFAN) developed an FASD "Circle of Friends" Social Marketing Campaign with the goal of changing and encouraging the attitude in 16-24 year olds (peer groups) that *no alcohol is best while pregnant*. This campaign was aimed at empowering these peer groups in their role of support and influence with their pregnant friends.

The "Circle of Friends" campaign message does not use "scare" or "guilt" tactics focused on pregnant women. Our message attempts to alleviate the pressure and guilt that a young pregnant woman may feel if she is drinking or thinking about drinking while pregnant. This campaign will engage the peer groups and validate the support role of friends and community.

## Campaign Goals

- ◆ Empower the "Circle of Friends" peer support groups and give them a voice in this campaign in order to increase sustainability and capacity in the Calgary community.
- ◆ Change perceptions and behaviors associated with alcohol and pregnancy via an advertising, public relations, and community development campaign using positive, supportive and healthy messages.
- ◆ Raise awareness of FASD issues in the community as a whole.
- ◆ Develop a common understanding of FASD in the community.

**Bottom Line:  
Reduce the Incidence of FASD**

## Initiatives

### FASD "Circle of Friends Campaign Implementation

- ◆ September 2003 implementation of the "Circle Friends" Campaign via Poster, Media & Advertising Strategies

### FASD "Circle of Friends" Community Development

- ◆ Facilitate community development around FASD issues within groups and organizations serving 16 to 24 year-olds. Through the "Circle of Friends" Peer networks we will implement the Future Parents Uniting Now (F.U.N.) decree

### FASD Public Relations/Community Events

- ◆ Take a lead in the planning of FASD awareness initiatives for the Calgary Region: "Circle of Friends" Calendar of Events 2003, FASD Day 2003, etc

### FASD Community Partnerships

- ◆ Link with youth organizations who will champion the "Circle of Friends" campaign and other FASD initiatives We'll encourage support by groups like the Calgary Stampeders and the Calgary Youth Singers

### CFAN & "Circle of Friends" Promotional and Marketing Tools

- ◆ Pamphlets
- ◆ Handouts
- ◆ Information Packets/Media Kits
- ◆ Posters
- ◆ Tip Sheets
- ◆ Power Point Presentations

### **A Problem Exists**

Children are being born with FASD due to drinking in pregnancy.

### **Barriers are Identified and Removed**

- × Women are not feeling supported by peers:  
*Peer Support Campaign Created*
- × Women are not feeling supported by Community:  
*Alternative to Guilt and Fear Campaigns developed*

### **Behavior Change Tools are Employed**

**Prompts:**

- × "Circle of Friends" Slogan
- × "Share and Care" message

**Peer Commitment:**

- × Taking part in the development of Campaign
- × Forming networks to promote campaign to the public
- × Signing F.U.N Decree

**Communication:**

- × Media/Ad Campaign

### **Pilot Program is Launched**

The "Circle of Friends" campaign was introduced to 3 target groups:

- × University
- × Corporate
- × Inner City

These groups were given an assessment and post-evaluation to measure FASD knowledge. The groups were then asked to participate in the final campaign design and messaging process. The goal of the pilot campaign was to attain the buy-in of the target audience before being launched into the community.

## **"Circle of Friends" Community-Based Social Marketing Model\***

*\*Created in collaboration with the Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network and the Minnesota Department of Health*

### **Community-Wide Campaign to be Launched**

The "Circle of Friends" campaign will be incorporated using the following Tools of Change:

- × Commitment
- × Prompts
- × Communication

120 organizations will be introduced to the campaign along with a Region wide marketing blitz. Peer networks will take ownership in introducing the campaign to the community.

### **Campaign Evaluation and Impact Studied**

An Evaluation process is being developed to determine the impact of the "Circle of Friends" campaign on the prevention of FASD

**Problem is Positively Affected and Behavior is Changed**

**Reduction of FASD**

For more information, visit our website at:

[www.calgaryfasd.com](http://www.calgaryfasd.com)

**calgary fetal alcohol network**  
*Support for Today  
Prevention for Tomorrow*

## **Funders**

Funding projects to date have been provided by:  
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calgary health region

