

# Alcohol is... COMPLICATED

- ✓ It is legal and socially accepted for adult use
- ✓ It is everywhere and in many forms
- ✓ Alcohol use has effects on the entire body\*
- ✓ There is **no safe time to consume any amount of alcohol during pregnancy\*\***

# Pregnancy is COMPLICATED too...

- Less than half of women in Hawaii didn't drink alcohol prior to becoming pregnant\*\*\*
- About half of pregnancies in Hawaii are unintended\*\*\*\*

\*<https://www.collegedinkingprevention.gov/specialfeature/interactive-body>

\*\*<https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol-pregnancy/about/index.html>

\*\*\*<https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/view?indicator=104&to=calendar>

\*\*\*\*[https://health.hawaii.gov/fhsd/files/2020/10/Unintended-Pregnancy-Fact-Sheet\\_2020.pdf](https://health.hawaii.gov/fhsd/files/2020/10/Unintended-Pregnancy-Fact-Sheet_2020.pdf)



For more information go to:  
[fasdhawaii.org](https://fasdhawaii.org)

## Getting REAL about FASD:

FASD is a condition that is not going to **just go away**. There are unique considerations for each individual and their families. Pregnant, birthing, and parenting people are not the only ones this issue should matter to. Alcohol use and its effects are highly complicated, and in Hawaii we care about everyone in our communities...

***we don't leave anyone behind.***

## FASD is a kākou thing.

While prevention and early intervention is BEST, let's be compassionate, curious, and **acknowledge complexity** in our path forward together, and advocate to make FASD **"invisible no more."**



**Hawai'i FASD  
Action Group**

P.O. Box 6611  
Kaneohe, HI 96744

[fasdhawaii.org](https://fasdhawaii.org)  
**email:** [info@fasdhawaii.org](mailto:info@fasdhawaii.org)

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Action Group**



# Matters

*Getting real about*  
**Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders  
in Hawai'i**

**FASD** is a complex social and public health issue and **EVERYONE** should know about it



**"Invisible No More"**



## What are FASD's?

FASD's are a spectrum of diagnosable conditions, ranging from the most serious Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), with a range of health conditions such as heart defects and visual and hearing impairments, to the often "hidden" lifelong neurological and neurodevelopmental disorders due to prenatal alcohol exposure. These can cause more subtle issues such as sensory sensitivities and other functional, social, memory, and communication impairments.

### The effects of an FASD, especially when unidentified, significantly increase:

- School, behavioral, and learning challenges
- **The likelihood of mental and health and substance use disorders**
- Involvement in public safety and our court systems
- **Vulnerability in unsafe situations and with unsafe people**

National Data indicates that

**"1 in 20 school-aged children" have an FASD.**

For more information see FASD United's FACT SHEETS. <https://fasdunited.org/fact-sheet/>

**Prevention, early screening, identification, and informed-support are always most COST effective.**



## A person with an FASD may:



### Not know about FASD

Some effects of alcohol exposure in utero are not immediately diagnosed, or even observable. **Long-term neurological effects may only be noticed later on in life.**



### Struggle with memory

Memory is a common issue for people on the spectrum of fetal alcohol disorders. Other issues can include impulsivity, difficulty understanding directions, or reading social cues. **These issues, if not properly supported, can compound and create more complex problems.**



### Need extra social supports

People with brain-based neurodevelopmental disabilities might not have existing supports or services in place. **There may be a need for special advocacy for supports that are RIGHT for each person, and can last throughout the lifespan.**



### Benefit from strengths-based approaches

People with an FASD can have unique brains, and that can come in a lot of wonderful forms. Exploring all kinds of strengths, such as creative expression, can be an important focus in informed-approaches and the development of the right supports. **Remember, neurodiversity IS diversity!**

**For our community, our economy, and our 'ohana,**

**let's TALK about FASD.**

**We can't AFFORD not to, and we ALREADY KNOW IT.**



ACT 192 (2023)  
[https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/archives/measure\\_indiv\\_Archives.aspx?billytype=SB&billnumber=516&year=2023](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/archives/measure_indiv_Archives.aspx?billytype=SB&billnumber=516&year=2023)

## How to support EACH OTHER

### Compassion



No one drinks to harm their child. Let's be kind to ourselves and each other and focus on both prevention efforts and supporting special needs. **Blame and shame don't help us move forward.**

### Curiosity



FASD informed-approaches and interventions can be tried even before a formal diagnosis is made. **It's okay to wonder about how to help.** Asking curious and kind questions is a good way to learn.

### Complexity



Many of our social, education, and public health systems in Hawai'i are just learning about prevalence and how complex FASD is. **It will take time and a community effort to involve all the right people and systems.**

### Advocacy



If you are a provider, a parent, a loved one, a person living with an FASD, or a kind and curious advocate, keep seeking information and support. **All voices are needed to improve outcomes for everyone!**

Tell a friend, talk to your doctor, ask a teacher or a social worker, **call your legislator...**



**EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW**  
*(and we can learn together)*

**SCAN ME**  
FOR MORE INFO