

Understanding FASD: A guide for justice professionals

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Previous Research

Survey 427 judicial officers, lawyers, corrective services staff and police officers in Western Australia

- ▶ 90% had heard of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- ▶ 64% had heard of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
- ▶ 50% basic understanding
- ▶ 21% good understanding
- ▶ Mainstream media most reported source of information (60%)
- ▶ 82% wanted more information about FASD
 - ▶ 70% via website
 - ▶ 50% via Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Research Translation

Develop an educational intervention to prepare for the challenges facing judicial officers and lawyers so that they can:

- ▶ recognise cognitive impairments and possible FASD in young people engaging with the justice system whether as a victim, witness or offender
- ▶ identify legal implications
- ▶ consider referral for assessment if the disability is suspected
- ▶ consider decision making with respect to orders, sentencing and management

Educational Resources

- ▶ [FASD & Justice website](#)
- ▶ [Equality before the Law Bench Book](#)
- ▶ [FASD & Justice videos](#)
- ▶ On-line CPD module for lawyers
- ▶ Presentations at conferences, seminars and workshops

Educational Videos

Overview: ISSUES IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Video 1: FASD AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

- ▶ The key principle of our justice system is 'equality before the law'
- ▶ FASD is a lifelong disability that can impact on the capacity of a person to be fairly treated under the justice system
- ▶ How the justice system identifies and responds to FASD will have a significant impact on the outcomes for people affected by FASD, their families and the broader community

Video 2: AWARENESS OF FASD

- ▶ People with FASD may interact with the justice system at all levels and in a range of roles
- ▶ FASD may not always be diagnosed or may be misdiagnosed
- ▶ What does FASD 'look like'?

Educational Videos

Video3: REPRESENTING CLIENTS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- ▶ Requesting assessments of persons affected by FASD
- ▶ Understanding how FASD may affect a person's behaviour in relation to criminal activity

Video 4: FASD AND THE JUDICIARY

- ▶ The court needs to be guided by lawyers
- ▶ An assessment can change the court's response

Video 5: PROTECTION AND CARE PROCEEDINGS

- ▶ Children and young people in care are a high risk group for FASD
- ▶ Practitioners in Protection and Care need to be particularly alert to the indicators of FASD

Overview: FASD and issues in the justice system



Links

FASD: Knowledge, attitudes and practice in the Western Australian justice system

<http://alcoholpregnancy.telethonkids.org.au/our-research/research-projects/previous-projects/fasd-and-justice/let-al-alcohol-spectrum-disorders-knowledge-attitudes-and-practice-within-the-wa-criminal-justice-system/>

Equality before the Law Bench Book

http://www.supremecourt.wa.gov.au/files/equality_before_the_law_benchbook.pdf

FASD and Justice website

<http://alcoholpregnancy.telethonkids.org.au/fasd-justice/>

FASD and Justice videos

<http://alcoholpregnancy.telethonkids.org.au/fasd-justice/professional-development/>

Telethon Kids Institute projects FASD and Justice

<http://alcoholpregnancy.telethonkids.org.au/our-research/research-projects/current-research-projects/fasd-and-justice/>

Links

- ▶ On-line CPD module for lawyers

WA Lawyers can get free access by contacting Rhys McVicker at WA Legal Aid

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Contact

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THANK YOU