

Prenatal Exposure to Alcohol – A Worldwide Epidemic

Is This Happening in Your Community?

Who is at the highest risk for drinking while pregnant?

- White professional single women
- Low income blue collar women
- Teenagers in foster placement
- Indigenous women
- Women aged 22-29 reporting 70% unwanted/unplanned pregnancies

Alcohol is far more damaging to the unborn child than meth, crack, and cocaine or any other recreational drug.

What can happen if you drink when pregnant?

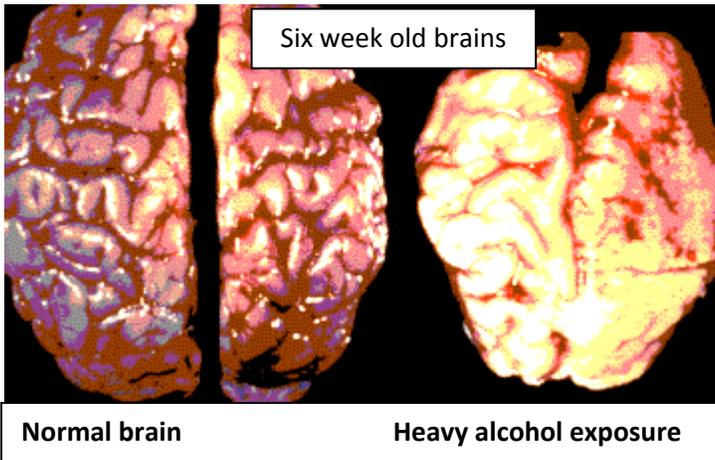


Photo courtesy of Sterling Clarren, MD

As little as ½ drink a day can lower reading and math achievement levels.

One binge of five drinks during the first trimester can lead to a full fetal alcohol syndrome child.

Heavy prenatal exposure to alcohol will damage the child's brain and body up to and including death of the fetus or infant.

Prenatal exposure to alcohol can result in premature birth, severe lifelong medical problems and severely lowered intellectual ability.

What will you see in the behaviors of a heavily prenatally exposed adolescent?

(A child may display several or all of the following academic and social behaviors)

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| Poor reading and writing skills | Poor math skills |
| Impulsive | Behavioral problems |
| Struggles with generalizing- takes things literally | Poor abstract thinking - concrete thinking |
| Extra sensitive to stimuli – (sound/touch) | High pain and temp threshold |
| Poor problem solving | Acts without regard to consequences |
| Poor control of sexual urges | Trouble controlling temper |
| Poor interpersonal skills | Does not understand personal space and boundaries |
| Emotionally immature | Early involvement in alcohol and drugs |
| Poor judgment | Depression – self abusive |
| Grandiose belief of own self | Unrealistic involvement in cults/gangs/fantasy |

A common expression when working with FASD adolescents: "Boys get locked up –girls get knocked up"

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder behaviors are often diagnosed as: Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder, Sensory Integration Dysfunction, Bi-Polar, Asberger, Reactive Attachment Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and Depression.