

\$6.1 million boost to Preventing FASD Project to change lives for the better

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2022-23 State Budget delivers boost to successful Preventing FASD Project

Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is the leading preventable cause of non-genetic developmental disability

Up to two per cent of Australian babies are believed born with FASD

Preventing FASD Project facilitates meaningful conversations about alcohol use during pregnancy

McGowan Government committed to protecting the health of Western Australians

The McGowan Labor Government is expanding Western Australia's successful Preventing FASD Project with a \$6.1 million funding boost to be included in the upcoming State Budget.

Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) describes a range of permanent and lifelong conditions caused by prenatal alcohol exposure, including physical, mental and behavioural disabilities.

Developed as part of the McGowan Government's Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing in 2020, the Project aims to reduce the incidence of FASD by raising awareness that drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause permanent damage to the brain of the developing baby.

It has been estimated as many as two per cent of all Australian babies may be born with some form of FASD.

The National Health and Medical Research Council recommends women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy should not drink alcohol.

The project includes the 'One Drink' campaign which has been very successful, with 95 per cent understanding its key message and 91 per cent of women saying they would not drink any alcohol.

In the first six months, more than 1.8 million Western Australians were exposed to the campaign, which challenges the mistaken belief that the placenta protects an unborn baby from alcohol.

The pilot also featured training for 100 health workers across the State, to engage in more meaningful conversations with families of child-bearing age about the importance of alcohol-free pregnancies.

The \$6.1 million investment will fund the continuation of the State-wide public education campaign, as well as expanded and ongoing training for health workers across WA including those in regional and remote communities.

Comments attributed to Mental Health Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson:

"The McGowan Government is committed to improving health and wellbeing outcomes for families, and reducing the harms associated with alcohol use.

"The Preventing FASD Project, which has been hugely successful, does both these things.

"We know people find it easier to say no to drinking alcohol during a pregnancy when they understand the potential harm to their baby, and they feel supported by their community not to drink.

"There is no safe amount of alcohol to drink during pregnancy. Everyone in the community has a role to play to encourage and support healthy and alcohol-free pregnancies."

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