



First Nations Telehealth Network Alberta



1

Audrey McFarlane
Director of Strategic Partnerships
& Initiatives

July 14, 2026



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Outline

- Short overview of CanFASD
- Important facts
- Relevant current research
- Resources available

Poll

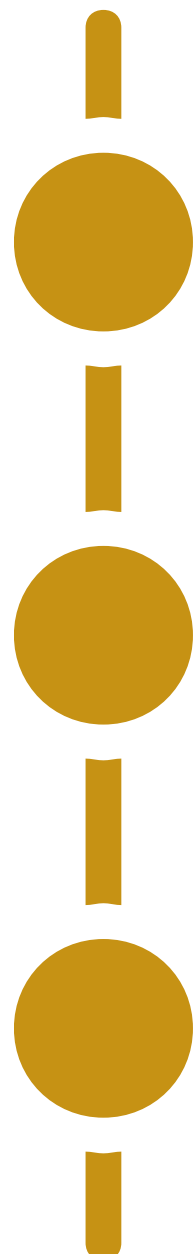
- What sector do you work in?
 - Acute nursing
 - Public Health
 - Prenatal care
 - Early childhood
 - Social work
 - Other





- Canada's only research network focused on FASD
- Not for profit and charity of Canada

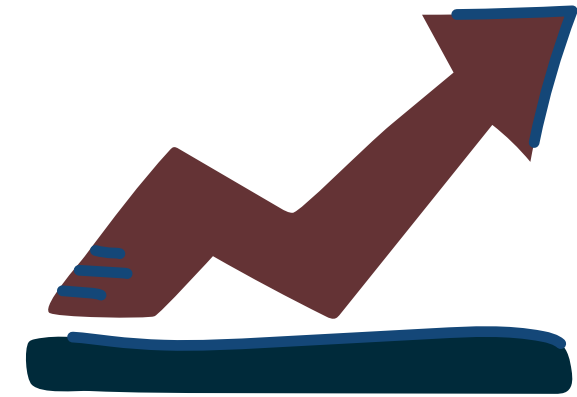
Purpose of CanFASD



Stimulate

Develop

Disseminate evidence in FASD to inform
policy



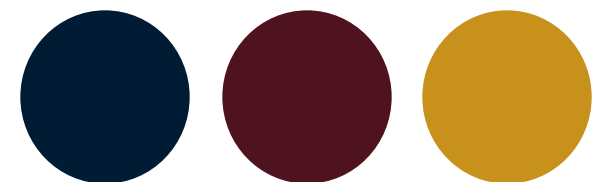


FAC

Family Advisory
Committee

AFFECT

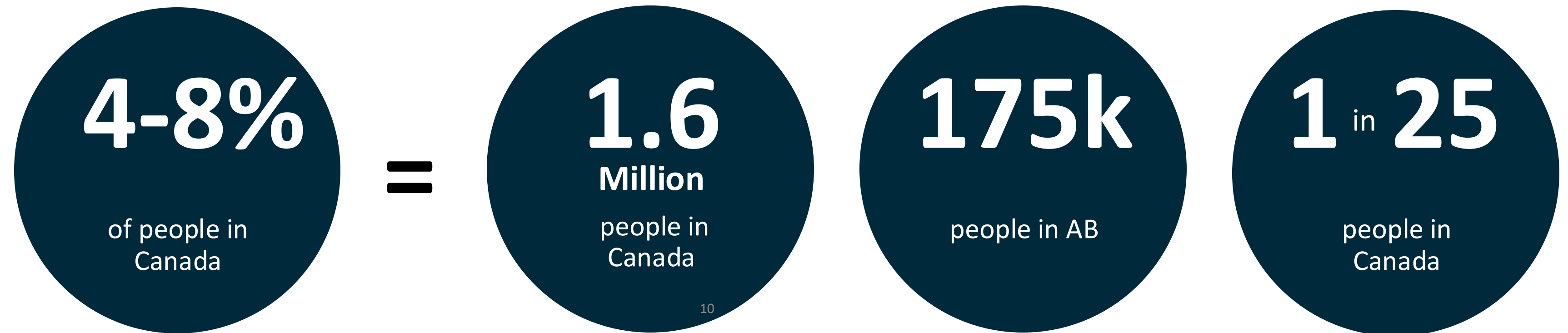
Adult FASD
Expert
Collaboration
Team



Outline

- Short overview of CanFASD
- **Important facts**
- Relevant current research
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Prevalence



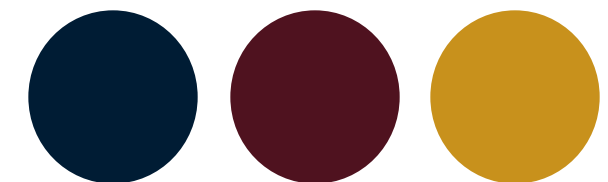
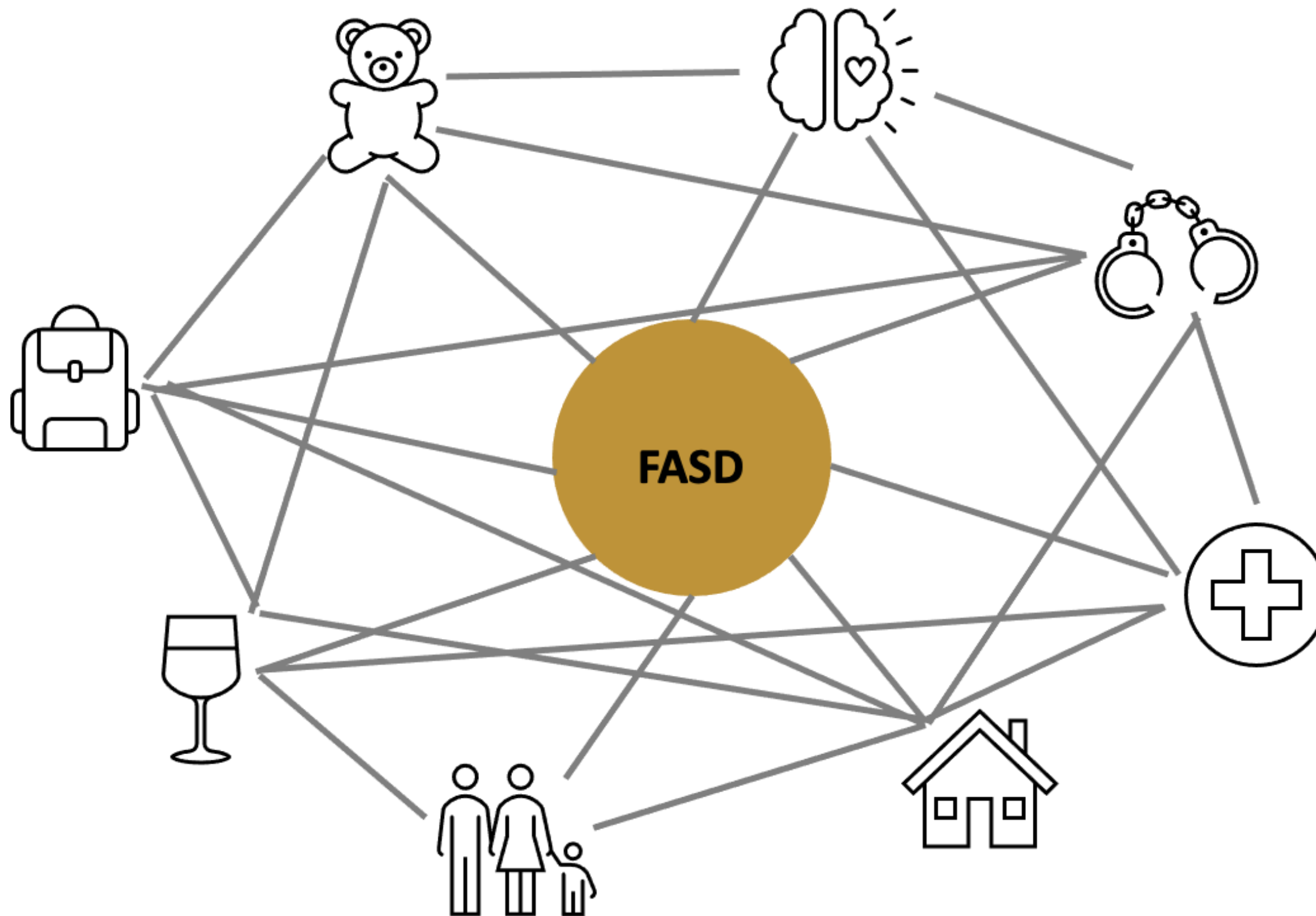
FASD is a Whole Body Disorder



100X

more likely to have
11
health problems than
the general population

FASD is Uniquely Complex



Challenges



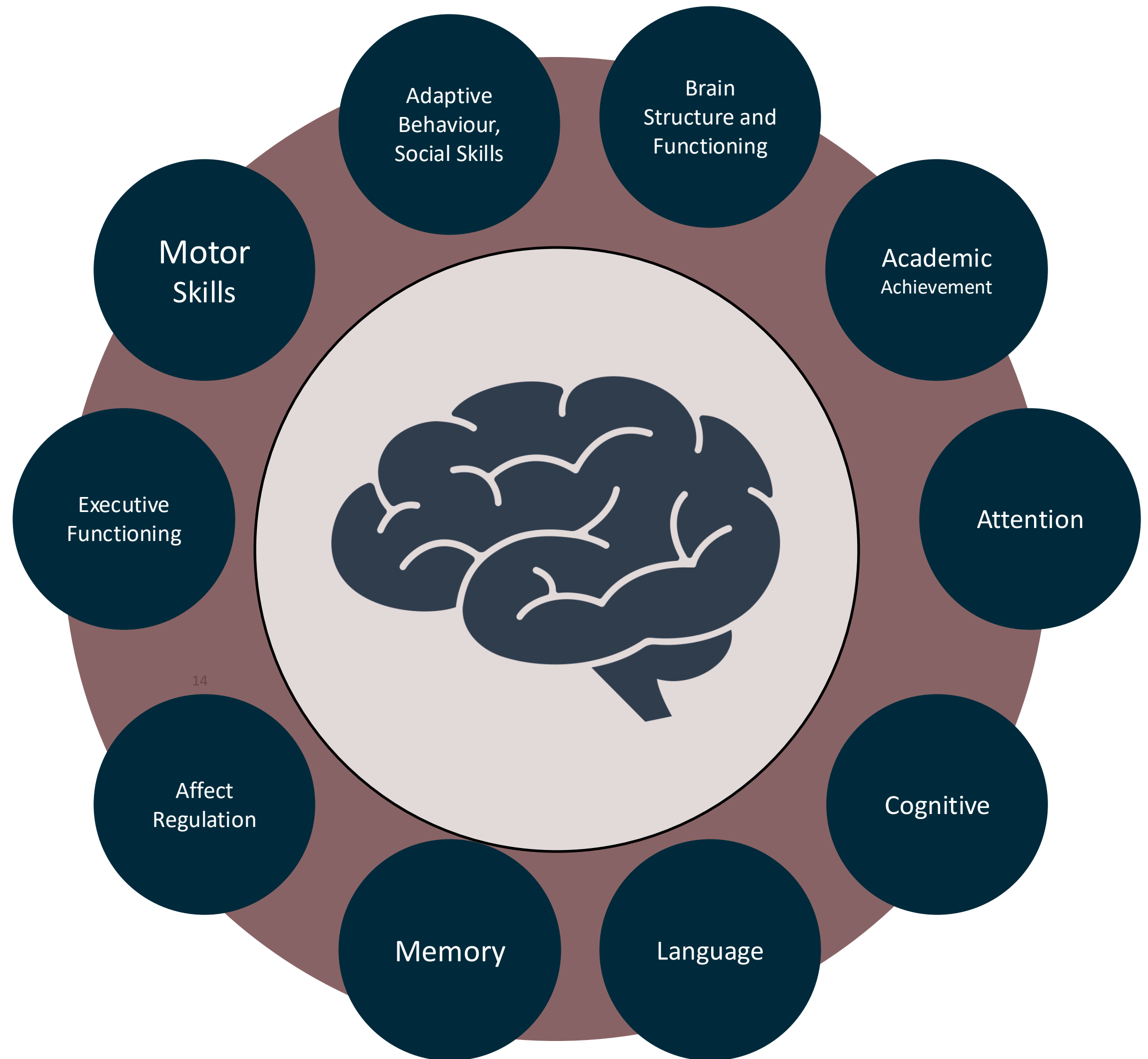
The challenges associated with FASD are often grouped into

**Primary
Disabilities**

13

**Adverse
Outcomes**

Primary Disabilities



Unrecognized & Unsupported

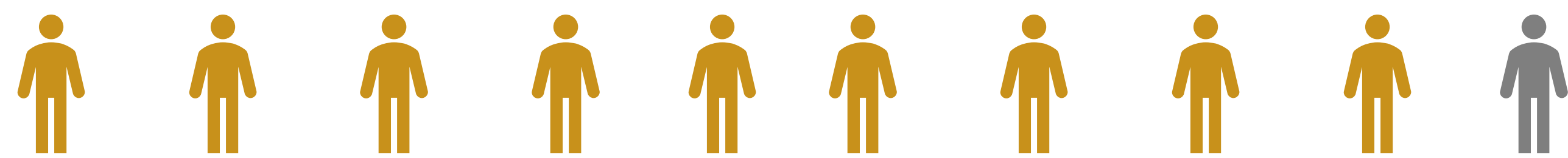
Inconsistency across the country

- 73 FASD Dx clinics in Canada
- 98% of people have not been diagnosed in Canada

Unsupported

- Lack of recognition
- Lack of service supports
- Lack of research to determine effective supports
- Leads to increases in unhealthy situations

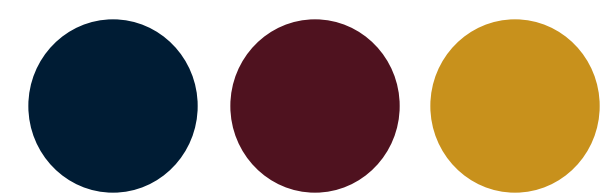
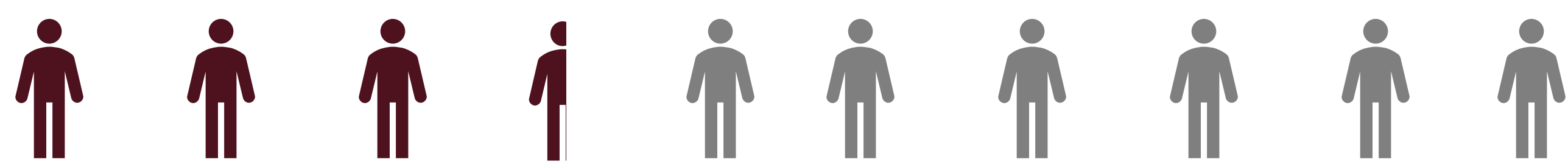
90% experience **mental health challenges**



Rates of **suicide** are 5.5 times greater



35% experience **substance use challenges**



As well as

30% experience homelessness

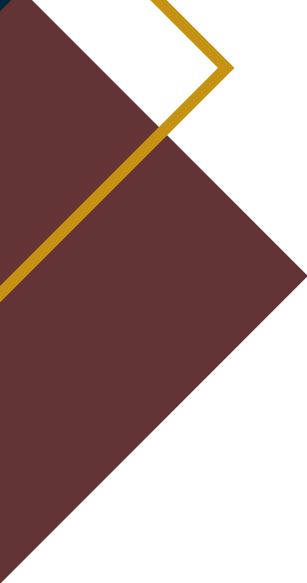
Approx 30% involved in the criminal justice system

Many have children they struggle to raise

Significant involvement in the Child welfare systems

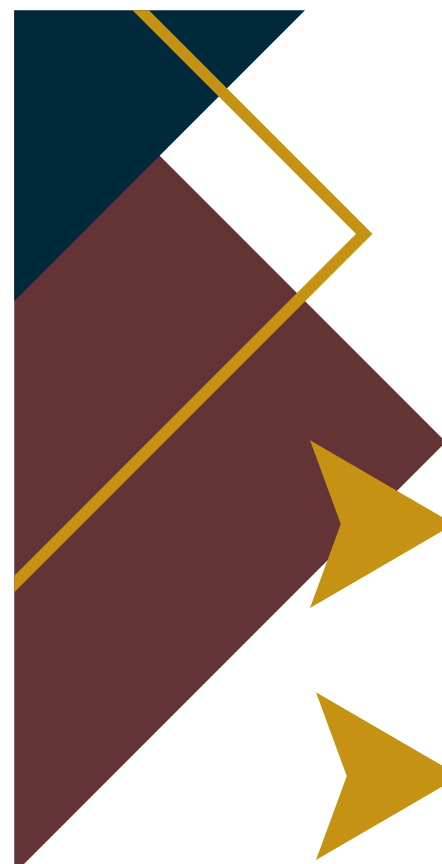
Outline

- Short overview of CanFASD
- Important facts
- Relevant current research
- Resources available



Significant Canadian FASD Research

- 4 Levels of FASD Prevention
- **National FASD Database**
- **Medication Algorithm**
- **Unique Disability Paper**
- Sex and FASD Paper
- Neurodiversity and FASD Paper
- Canadian Diagnostic Guidelines
- **Towards Health Outcomes Intervention Model**
- UNCRPD Paper
- **Adverse Outcomes paper with Canadian Data**
- Developing Indigenous Approaches



Current FASD Research Highlights



Caregiver survey



Suicidality & FASD



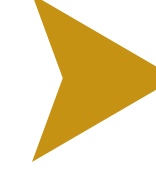
Substance Use Treatment



Housing & FASD



COMPASS project



Cannabis Use



Alcohol Policy



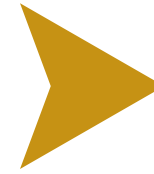
Justice approaches



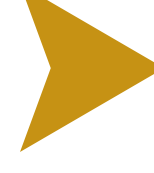
Strengths of Individuals with FASD



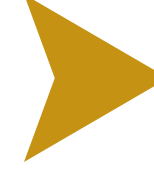
Identification (screening) tool



Mental Health & Resiliency



Diagnostic practices in Canada



Indigenous Led FASD Framework

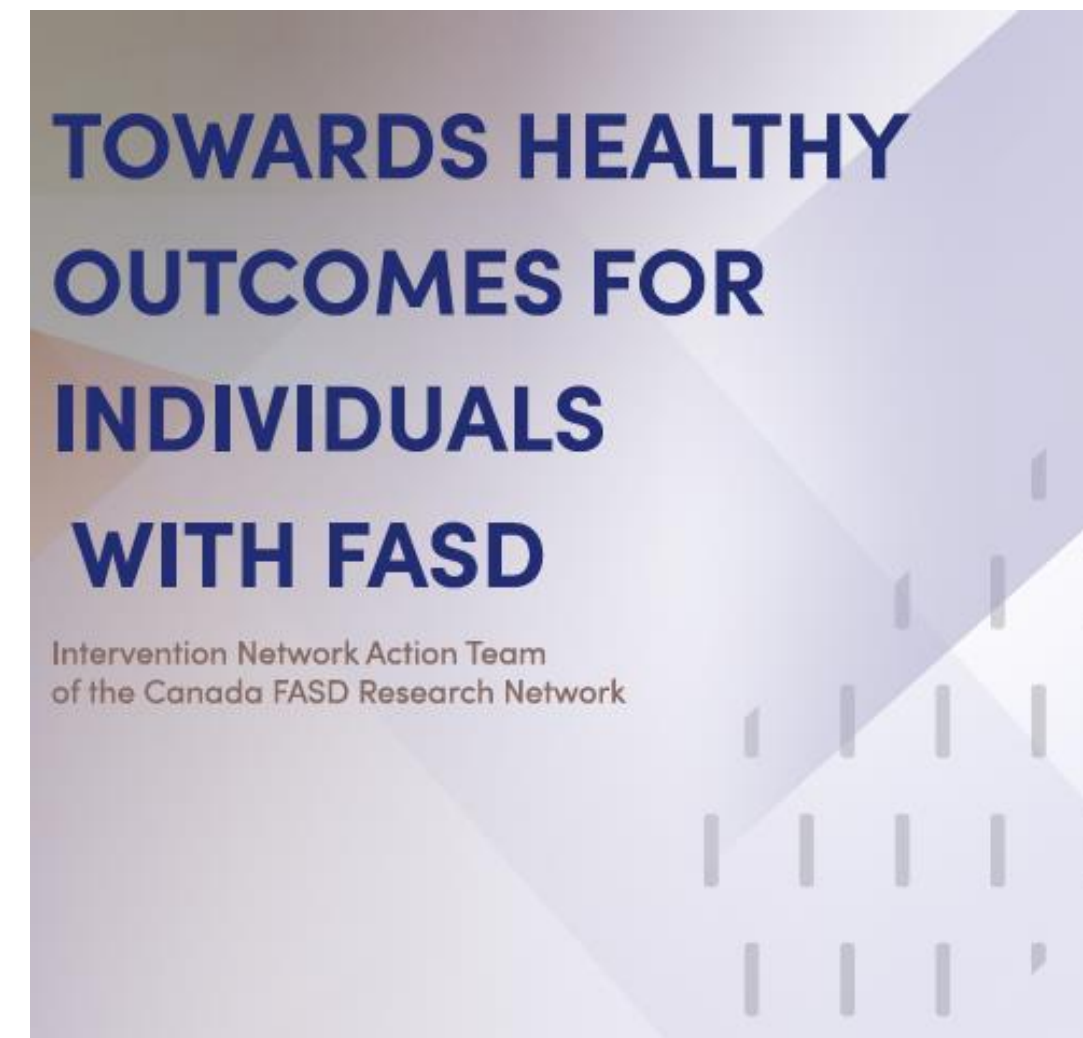
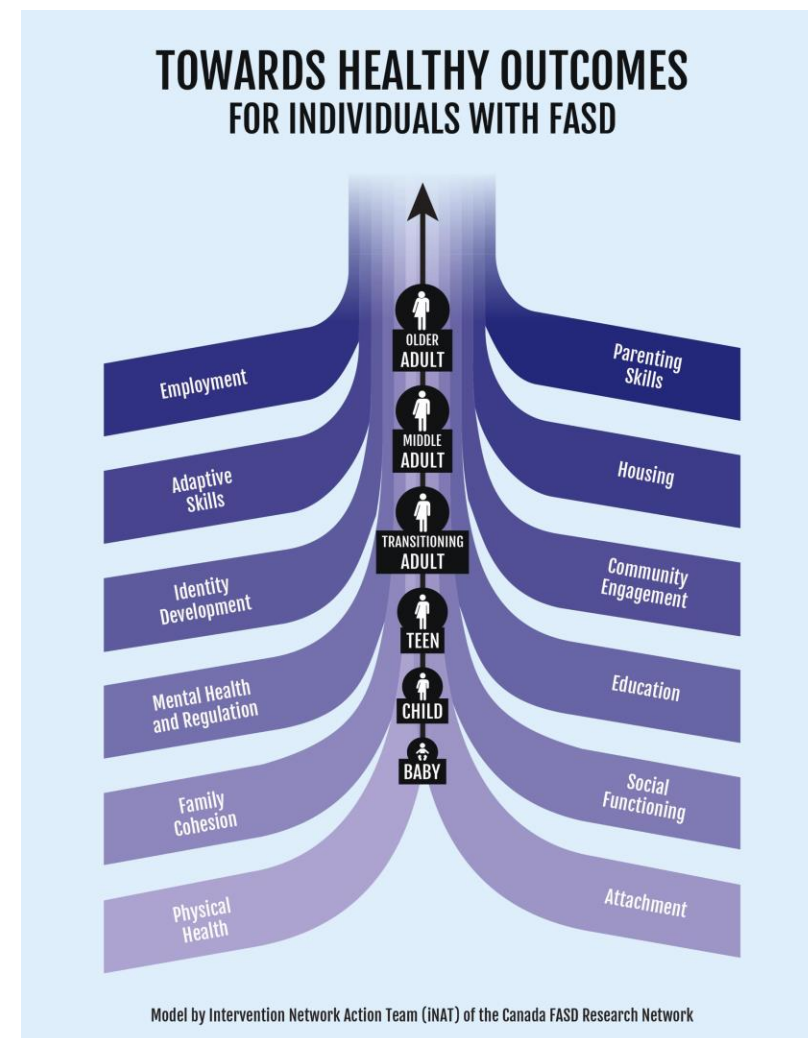
A photograph of a courtroom interior. The room features dark wood paneling on the walls and ceiling. In the center, there is a judge's bench with a large American flag to its left and a circular seal on the wall behind it. Several rows of wooden benches are arranged for the public. A large, ornate chandelier hangs from the ceiling. The lighting is warm and focused on the central area.

Approach to Justice

Therapeutic jurisprudence: a relational approach to law that emphasizes the role of empowerment, human rights, and personal well-being in legal matters

Manitoba FASD Pilot Project
(youth and adults 18 – 25 y/o)

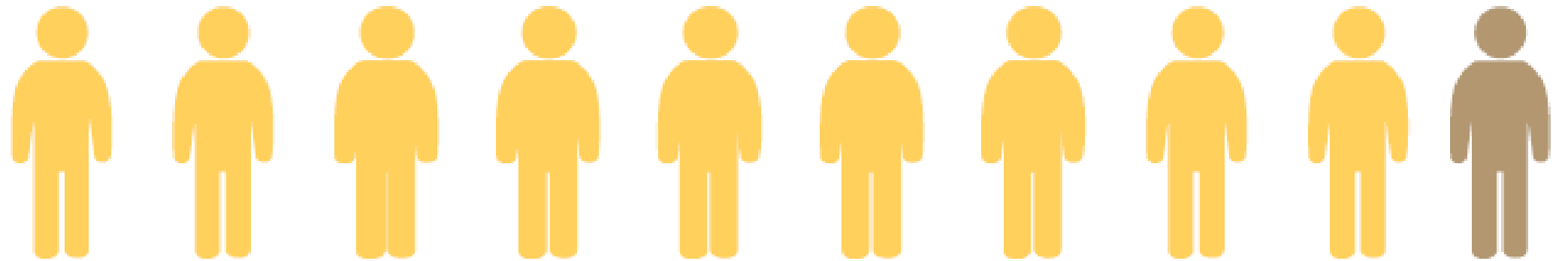
Intervention Framework Identified *for* *integrated service delivery*



Mental Health and Addictions (MH/A) in FASD

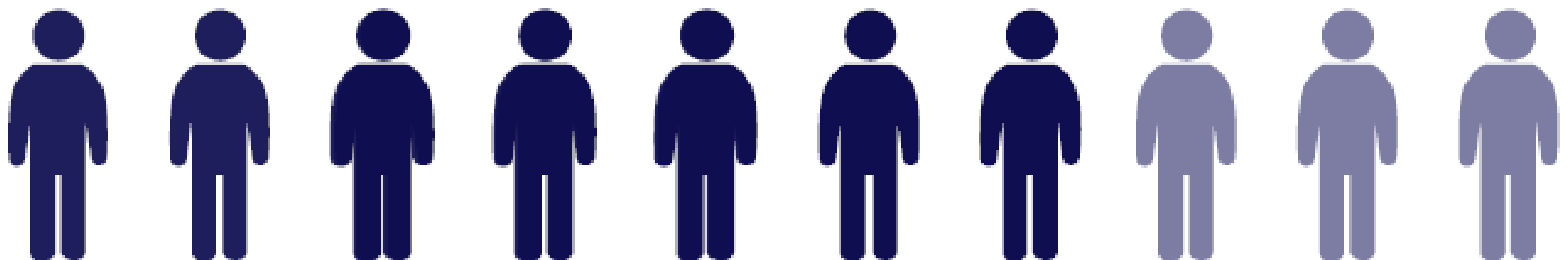
Mental Health
Issues

**up to
90%**

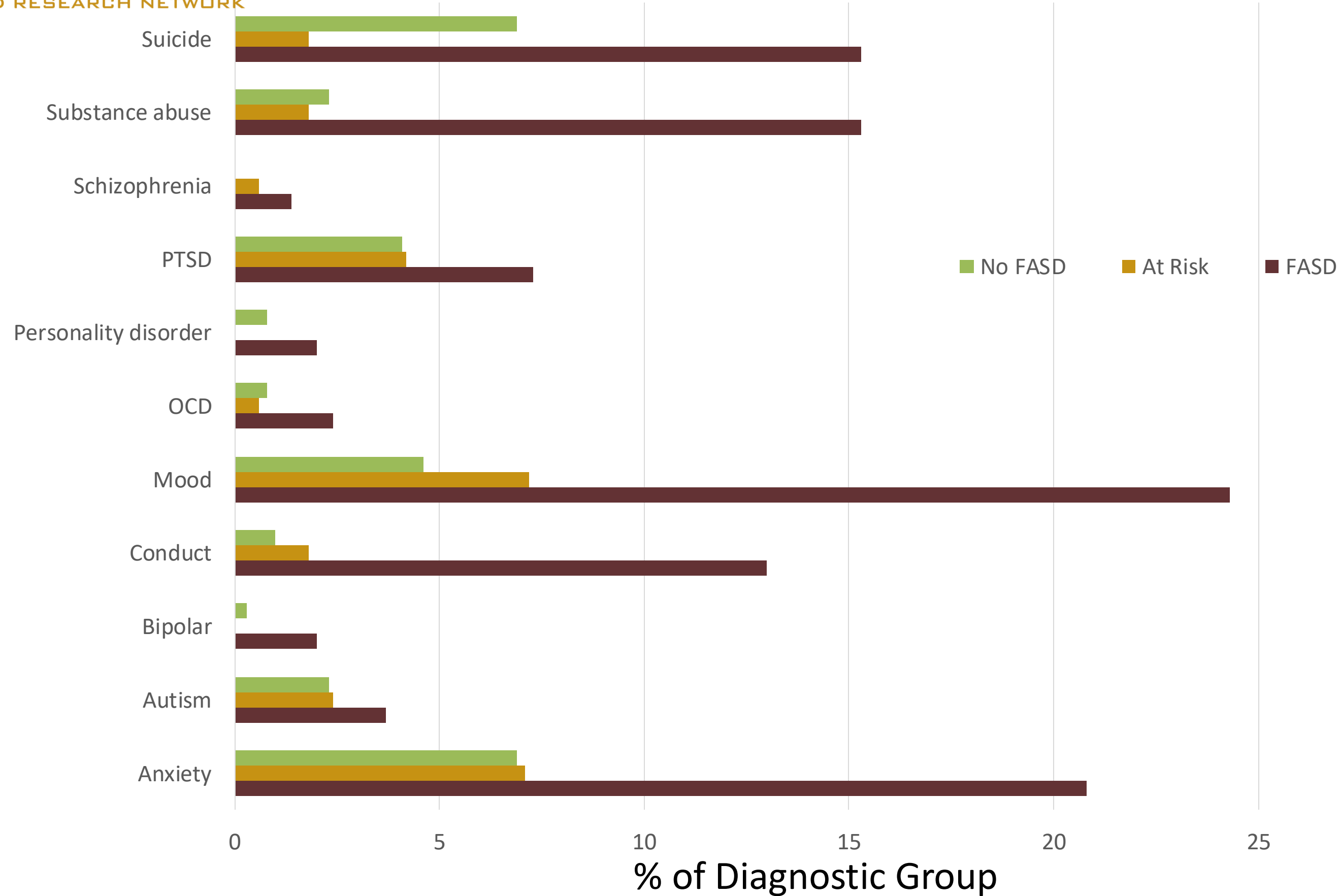


Substance Use
Challenges

50-70%



Mental Health (*N* = 1806)



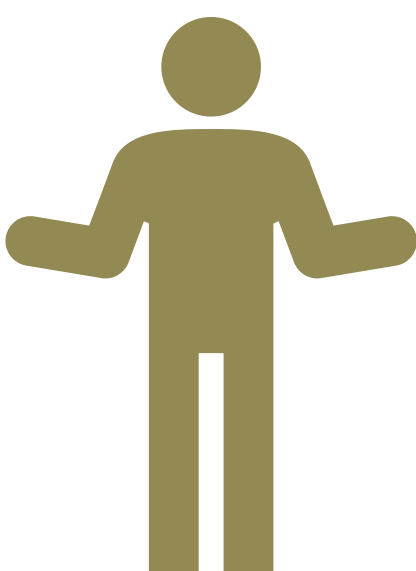
Suicidality Across the Lifespan



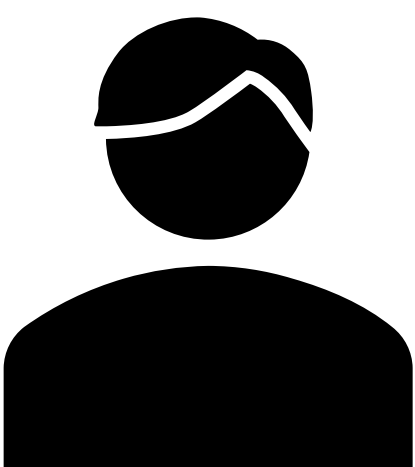
6-12 years
11.9%
n = 34



13-17 years
34.7%
n = 85



18-24 years
35.2%
n = 44



≥ 25 years
30.5%
n = 43

“A lot of people don’t want to die
– they just don’t want to live.”

Indigenous FASD Framework



- Led by Dr. Melissa Tremblay, U of A & CanFASD
- Focused on Diagnosis and Supports
- Indigenous Voices from community, professionals, folks with FASD and their families, FASD Indigenous service providers
- Including Indigenous ways of knowing
- Developing a framework that gives us an Indigenous path forward
- Visiting many communities and groups



Outline

- Short overview of CanFASD
- Relevant current research
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Poll #2

- Have you taken training in FASD before? (check all that apply)
 - In my local community
 - CanFASD online training
 - Other online training
 - Webinars
 - Conferences



Workforce Development

- AB initiated a proposal to develop a model for a trained workforce to better serve people with FASD and their families; and to build training in the prevention sector.
- CanFASD developed a model on 3 levels of training.
 - Basic information that everyone needed
 - Training provided relevant to specific work sectors
 - Higher level skill requirement.
- Easily accessible, evidence based, interactive, and regularly updated



Workforce Development Online Courses



Level 1

*Foundations in FASD**

Empowering Advocacy
skills for families,
caregivers, and individuals
with FASD

*Also in French



Level 2:

*FASD for Community &
Social Service Professionals*

Judicial and Legal Professionals*
Solicitor General Professionals*
Practical strategies for School Staff*
Identifying Best Practices*
The Prevention Conversation
Substance Use and Treatment in FASD*
Understanding & Supporting ECD*



Level 3:

*Multidisciplinary Team
Training for Diagnosis of
FASD**

Issue Papers 2021- 2026

Gap Analysis: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Neurodiversity and FASD

FASD and Suicidality: Rates and Associated Factors

Employment and FASD: An Update

Broad Approaches to Psychotherapy for Individuals with FASD

Why FASD Diagnostic Assessment is Important

Framing FASD Policy, Practice and Research Using a United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Gap Analysis: Human Trafficking and FASD

A Place to Call Home: Addressing Housing Needs for Individuals with FASD

Sensory Processing and FASD

Siblings and FASD

Gap Analysis: Black Identity and FASD

The Prevalence of Alcohol Use During Pregnancy in Canada

Level 2: FASD for Community & Social Services Professionals



- Builds on level 1
- Designed for community workers in disability, finances, housing, shelter and crisis supports, and employment
- Provides knowledge and practical skills
- Better understanding of FASD informed supports
- Increased knowledge of assessment, diagnosis, intervention and support methods
- Understanding the intersection of trauma and grief
- Lots of lived experience voices and stories

* Free to Albertans



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Mental Health Resource and Practice Guide

Introduction



In collaboration with the [Canada Northwest FASD Partnership](#), CanFASD has developed the following resource and practice guide for frontline mental health counsellors/therapists, prevention mentors, crisis workers, community mental health providers and those who work directly with individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Mental health is an important consideration for people with FASD, despite the challenges they face in accessing mental health services and support. This resource guide was developed through a comprehensive examination of the literature on FASD and mental health, other available resources, professionals in the field of FASD, and incorporating individual's lived experience through the inclusion of audio/video recordings and sources written by individuals with FASD.

This project was made possible due to the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership and was developed by CanFASD with consultation from an excellent advisory committee of academics, clinicians, researchers, frontline mental health service providers, and individuals with lived experience. Their valuable perspectives guided the content and development of this resource, and we hope that it will allow for professional development, growth, and knowledge regarding the support of people with FASD.



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA

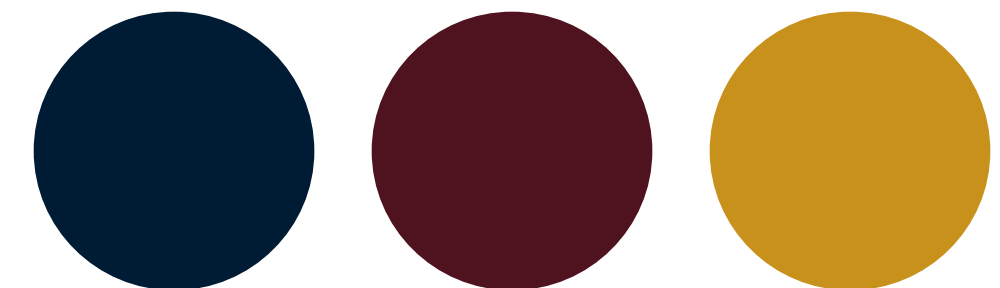


Overlap
Associates_



CHOoSE

Co-Creating Housing Solutions:
Enacting Opportunities for Individuals with
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder



FASD Identification, Assessment & Diagnosis HUB



NEW!

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Identification, Assessment and Diagnosis Hub:

Canada's Evidence-Based Portal for Identification, Diagnosis and Referral

En Français

Welcome to the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Identification, Assessment and Diagnosis Hub.

This is a collaborative online resource brought to you by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada and the Canada FASD Research Network.

This hub is designed to be **Canada's one-stop, evidence-based platform focused on identification, diagnosis, and referral for FASD**, with emphasis on culturally safe and trauma-informed care.

Below, you will find information and resources tailored to clinicians and families; please select the path most relevant to you.



Resources for Clinicians



Resources for Individuals with FASD, Families and Advocates



Common Messages

Guidelines for talking & writing about FASD

canfasd.ca



September is
FASD
awareness
month



visit fasdmonth.ca




Hidden disabilities, such as FASD can be quite challenging to identify, which in return makes it harder for those with the disability.

#FASDMonth



Individuals with FASD are known to possess many strengths and abilities!



friendly
Hard Working
Artistic
Outgoing
Determined
Musical

#1



September 9 is
FASD
awareness
DAY



CFAN
Calgary
Fetal Alcohol
Network
Caring. Connecting.



Month

Strengths & Abilities

to celebrate the
of those with
Disorder (FASD)
of this disability.



#RedShoesRock
#FASDMonth2020

visit fasdmonth.ca for more information

Webinars

CanFASD Webinar Series

Thinking About FASD Month

with presentations from:

Dr. Nancy Poole

Lindsay Wolfson

Victoria Bailey

and **Lauren Richardson**

Webinar from 25 June, 2021



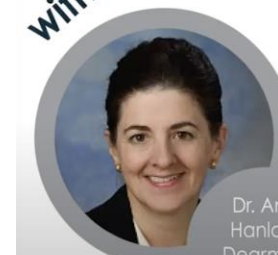
Assessing Preschoolers with Prenatal Alcohol Exposure

Free Webinar

Friday February 5, 2021

10am PST • 11am MST • 12pm CST • 1pm EST • 2pm AST

with



Dr. Ana Hanlon-Dearman
Panelist



Shana Mohr
Panelist



Dr. Ghita Wiebe
Panelist



Marlene Dray
Host



Student Spotlight

Emerging FASD Research in Canada

Free CanFASD Webinar

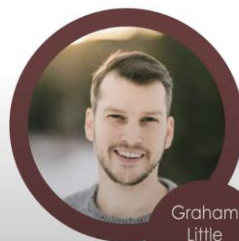
Friday April 30, 2021

10am PT • 11am MT • 12pm CT • 1pm ET • 2pm AT

with



Aamena Kapasi
Presenter



Graham Little
Presenter



Maude Champagne
Presenter



Audrey McFarlane
Host



CanFASD Webinar Series

Supporting Caregivers through Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

with Sterling Clarren FASD Research Award recipient

Dr. Brianne Redquest

Webinar from 19 March, 2021



Blogs

CanFASD Connect



Bringing together research, community, and policy to address the complexities of FASD

September is **#FASDMonth**

4 Unique Ways Canadians are Celebrating FASD Day During a Pandemic

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, FASD awareness events and activities are a little bit different this year. Here are four unique campaigns that are doing a great job of raising awareness of FASD during the pandemic.

Share this:

Like this:

Supporting Self-Regulation for Back to School

Self-regulation is the ability to control and regulate our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours in response to our environment. Self-regulation includes how we manage stress, how we control our emotional arousal, and how we manage our impulses.

Share this:

Like this:

"Why Red Shoes?"

Why did I choose to wear red shoes, and what do they signify to me? That is not exactly an easy question to answer in a short time, but please let me attempt to do that here.

Share this:

Like this:

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FASD Prevention



Girls, Women, Alcohol, and Pregnancy *Perspectives on FASD Prevention*

Subscribe to feed

Home About FASD Prevention 101

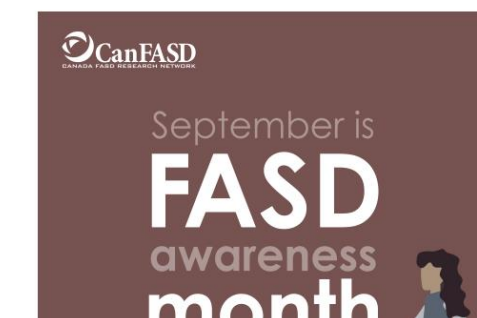
OVERVIEW: FOUR LEVELS OF FASD PREVENTION



#FASD is a woman's health issue

August 27, 2020 in FASD Awareness Day, Prenatal Support, Social determinants of health, Substance Use | [Leave a comment](#)

FASD Awareness Day started on September 9, 1999 to bring global awareness to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).



This year, Canada FASD Research Network (CanFASD) is launching **FASD Awareness Month** for all of September. The goal is to bring awareness to what FASD is and challenge the stigma and misinformation surrounding the disability. In preparation, they have released a toolkit with information about FASD, speech-writing tips, and images that are strengths-based, non-judgemental, and person-centered as to reduce the stigma around FASD.

Website

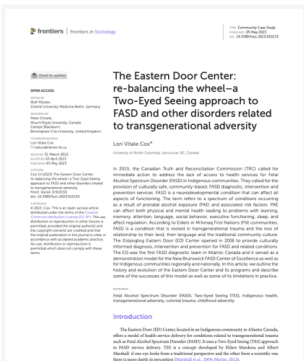
- The CanFASD website is the most trusted source of accurate FASD information.
- Lists research projects
- Published papers by topic
- Published reports
- Annual reports
- Family friendly information
- Easy to use campaigns.



Indigenous Resources

The Eastern Door Center: re-balancing the wheel—a Two-Eyed Seeing approach to FASD and other disorders related to transgenerational adversity

The Eastern Door (ED) Center, located in an Indigenous community in Atlantic Canada, offers a model of health service delivery for conditions related to transgenerational trauma such as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). It uses a Two-Eyed Seeing (TES) approach to FASD service delivery. TES is a concept developed by Elders Murdena and Albert Marshall: if one eye looks from a traditional perspective and the other from a scientific one there is more depth in perception.



Aboriginal Kinship Carers and Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in Western Australia: Advancing Knowledge from an Indigenous and Disability Lens

Children and youth with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) have limited access to assessment, diagnostic, and treatment resources – a distinct disadvantage in meeting their care needs in Australia. Limited knowledge exists on the intersection of FASD, Indigeneity, racism, trauma, and child welfare involvement. Notably, the lack of support for children with FASD increases the risk of adverse outcomes, including incarceration, homelessness, mental health problems, and early mortality. Children with FASD are often cared

Aboriginal Kinship Carers and Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in Western Australia: Advancing Knowledge from an Indigenous and Disability Lens



Development of an Australian FASD Indigenous Framework: Aboriginal Healing-Informed and Strengths-Based Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing

Aboriginal culture intuitively embodies and interconnects the threads of human wellbeing: connection. Therefore, Aboriginal wisdom and practices are inherently strengths-based and healing-informed. Underpinned by an Indigenist research methodology, this article presents findings from a collaboration of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to develop an Australian Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Indigenous Framework during 2021 to 2023. The FASD Indigenous Framework unfolds the changes that non-Aboriginal clinicians and Aboriginal peoples each need to make in their respective ways of knowing, being and doing in order to facilitate access to healing-informed, strengths-based and culturally responsive FASD knowledge, assessment, diagnosis and support services among Aboriginal peoples. Drawing on the Aboriginal

Development of an Australian FASD Indigenous Framework: Aboriginal Healing-Informed and Strengths-Based Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing



Risk, rights and deservedness: Navigating the tensions of Gladue, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and settler colonialism in Canadian courts

In 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada engaged in a public project of national reconciliation to address the ongoing impacts of settler colonialism including the disproportionate number of Indigenous adults and youth who are held in remand facilities awaiting trial or sentence as well as those who are convicted and sentenced to periods of incarceration. Efforts to further reconciliation by reducing Indigenous incarceration rates have relied largely on the courts and their application of a sentencing principle rooted in the Supreme Court's ruling in R. v. Gladue [1999] 1 SCR 688. In this article, we argue that the Gladue sentencing principle is





2027

November 16 - 18, 2027 • Edmonton, AB

How much longer
do we have to wait?

it's time for a

NATIONAL FASD STRATEGY

Get Involved

Calls to Research

Below is a list of ongoing FASD research studies and projects currently looking for participants.

- CanFASD Research
- Research in Collaboration

CAREGIVERS

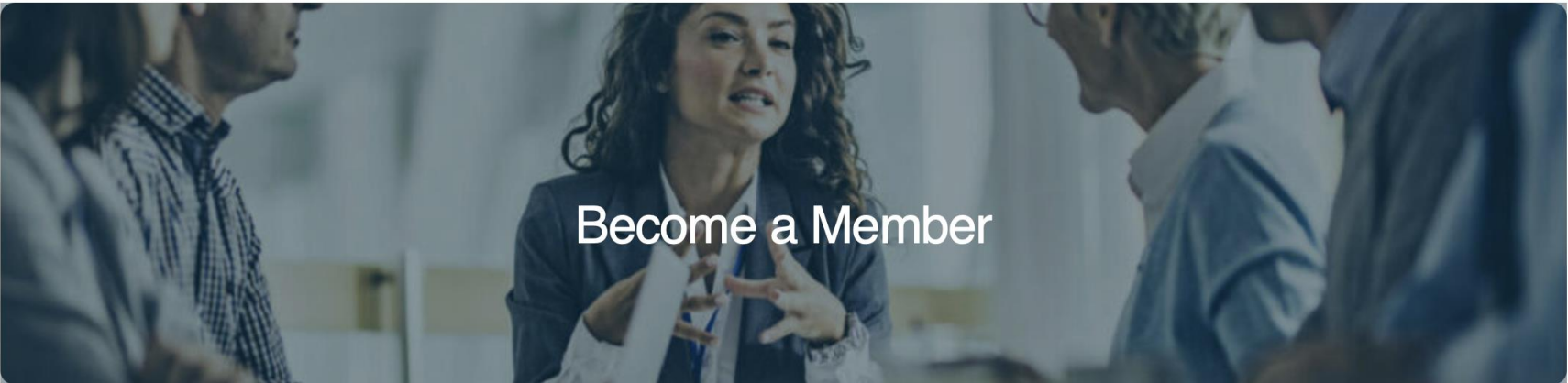
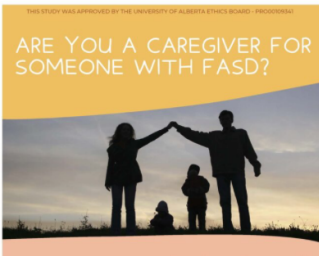
Daily Parenting in Families of Adolescents with FASD

Researchers at the Enhance Lab are looking for caregivers of adolescents with FASD to be part of a Family Advisory Board for a new project on daily dynamics in parenting. Caregivers must be available to attend virtual meetings to give feedback on the study plan and the results of the study. To be eligible you must care for an adolescent with FASD (between 12 and 18 years old), live Canada, the US, the UK, Australia, or New Zealand, and have access to technology to attend virtual meetings. If you are interested in participating in our committee or have any questions, please contact: enhancelab@ucalgary.ca



C.A.R.E. Caregiver Approaches, Resiliencies, and Experiences

FASD is a complex disability. Caring for someone who has FASD comes with unique challenges and successes. Unfortunately, there has not been much research to understand the whole



- Individual Membership
- Affiliate Membership
- Jurisdictional Membership



@CanFASD



CanFASD



Canada FASD Research
Network



www.canfasd.ca



info@canfasd.ca