About sex and drinking

THE FASD ADOLESCENT PREVENTION CONVERSATION

A Shared Responsibility

Training Manual

EDITED September 2025

Agenda

WHAT CAN WE DO?

1. **PREVENTION CONVERSATION**
   A History
2. **FASD PREVENTION**
3. **EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL & PREVALENCE**
4. **SEX AND ALCOHOL**
5. **TEACHING ADOLESCENTS ABOUT FASD**
6. **CANNABIS**

PREVENTION CONVERSATION

LET'S GET REAL

About sex and drinking

Alberta Government Core Beliefs

Alberta Government

FASD IS PREVENTABLE

NO ALCOHOL DURING PREGNANCY IS SAFEST

FASD AFFECTS EVERYONE

CREATING SAFETY IS CRUCIAL

RELATIONSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT

FASD PREVENTION IS COMPLEX

Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission: Annual Report. (2015-2016). 40-41.

Strength Based Approach

Focus on Strengths and Abilities
not on areas of need or challenges.

Participants
are their own experts on self.

Encourage
participants with the process and content.

Individuals
are influenced by social determinants.

Facilitate
positive involvement.
Assign roles or tasks.

Ask Questions
that focus on the future versus the past problems.

Acknowledge
the whole person.
Challenges are contextual.

Graeme Stuart, (2016). Seven principles for a strengths-based approach to working with groups. *Sustaining Community.*

Respect Statement

Respect, dignity and inherent human worth should be promoted among individuals with FASD, people who use alcohol during pregnancy, and their families.

Respect and acknowledgement is implied to all cultural and gender diverse groups throughout the presentation regardless of how it may be referred to in the content.

Acknowledging Diversity

including Trans, Two-Spirit, and Gender Diverse Youth

Individuals who are trans, Two-Spirit, and gender diverse are more likely to experience substance use problems because of stigma, discrimination, violence, and trauma.

However, there are many ways in which we can tailor our discussions about alcohol use:

- Ask your youth their **pronouns and preferred name**
- **Encourage their involvement** in the design of new interventions
- **Help address co-occurring issues**, such as substance use and gender dysphoria, mental health, violence, or HIV prevention.

Let’s Get Real

Alcohol

Alcohol and Sex

What is FASD

and how we can prevent alcohol use during pregnancy for future generations.

THIS IS A

BRAVE SPACE

What is FASD

There are three main components to understand about FASD

DIAGNOSTIC TERM

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a diagnostic term used to describe impacts on the brain and body of individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol.

LIFELONG DISABILITY

FASD is a lifelong disability. Individuals with FASD will experience some degree of challenges in their daily living and need support in many areas.

UNIQUE

FASD is a spectrum disorder; meaning that everyone with FASD is unique and has areas of both strengths and challenges.

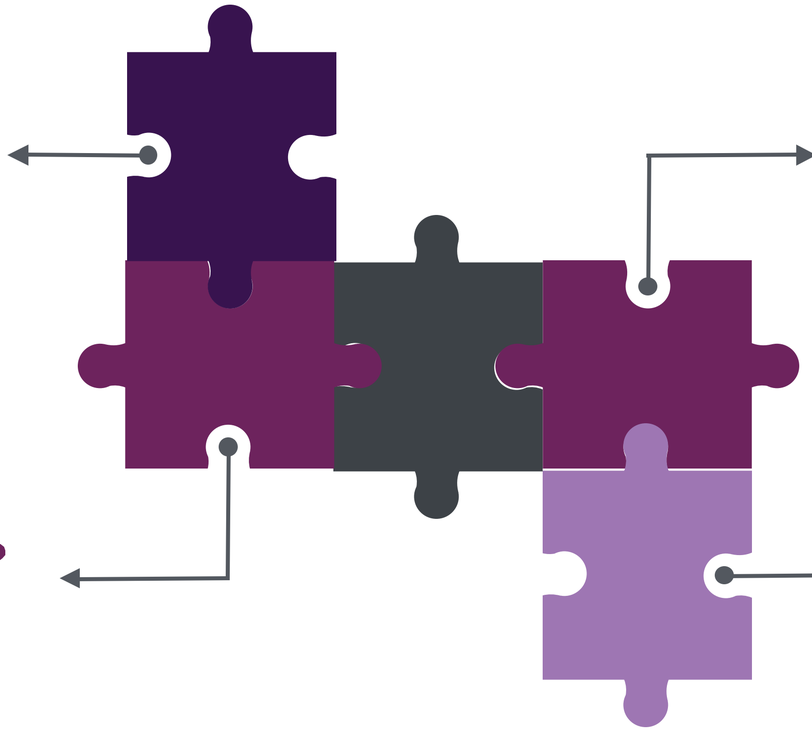
Through a **strengths-based approach**, there are many **SUCCESSES!**

Capable

People who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder are capable.

Conversation

How we talk about FASD matters.



Families Need Support

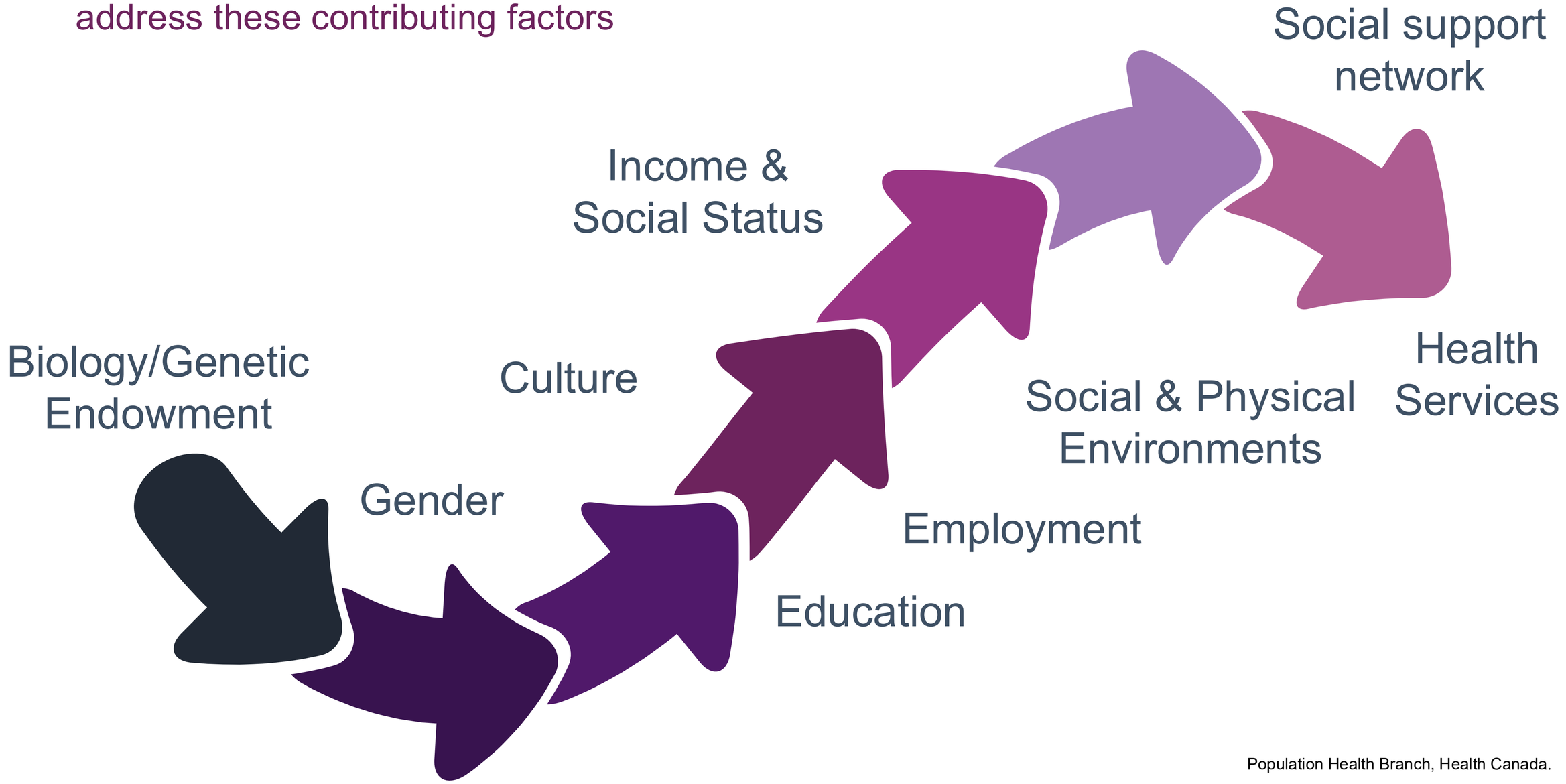
Mothers Need Support

Mothers at risk of having a child with FASD also need our support.

Graeme Stuart, (2016). Seven principles for a strengths-based approach to working with groups. *Sustaining Community*.

What Determines How We Stay Healthy?

We need to provide a network of supports that directly address these contributing factors



The Issue

WE NEED TO TALK!

Society

Alcohol is deeply embedded in our society.

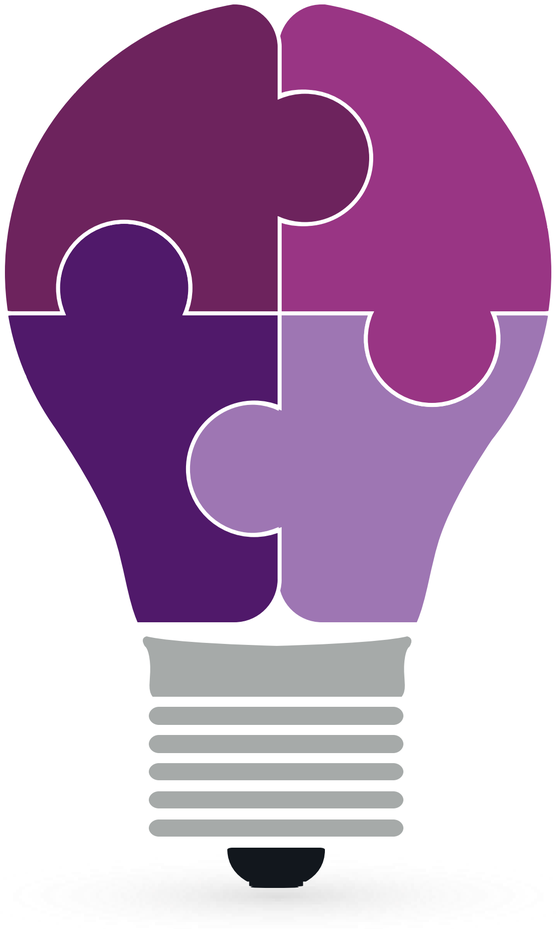
Culture

Alcohol plays an important & cultural role for many Albertans.

Misuse

When alcohol is misused, it has the potential to cause considerable harm for individuals, families and communities.

How Does Alcohol Show Up In All Of Our Lives?



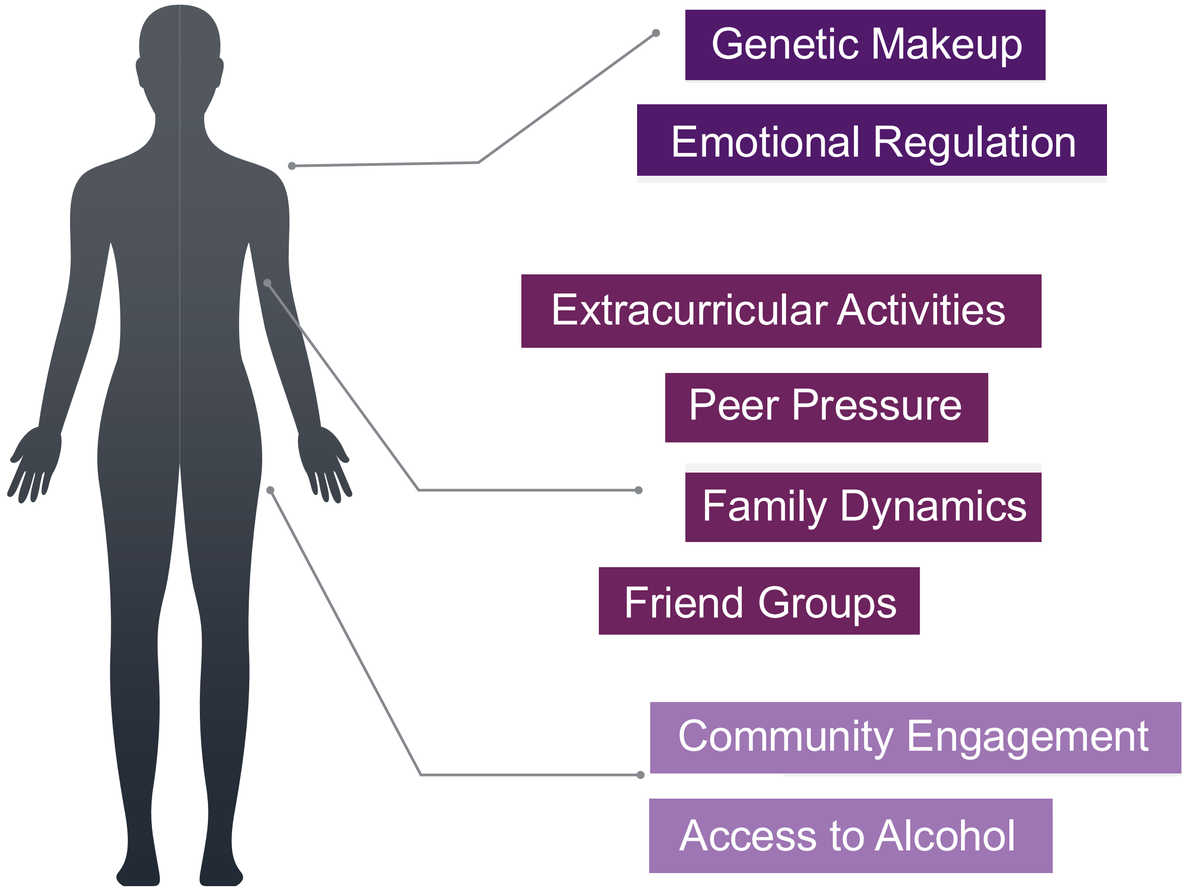
- Where do you see alcohol in our day-to-day lives?
- What are the positive associations with alcohol?
- Does perception affect a factual observation?
- What are the implications when alcohol is accepted as a norm?
- Do we know everything we need to know about alcohol?
- What is the potential of peer and cultural influence on major decisions?

Youth & Alcohol

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ISSUE

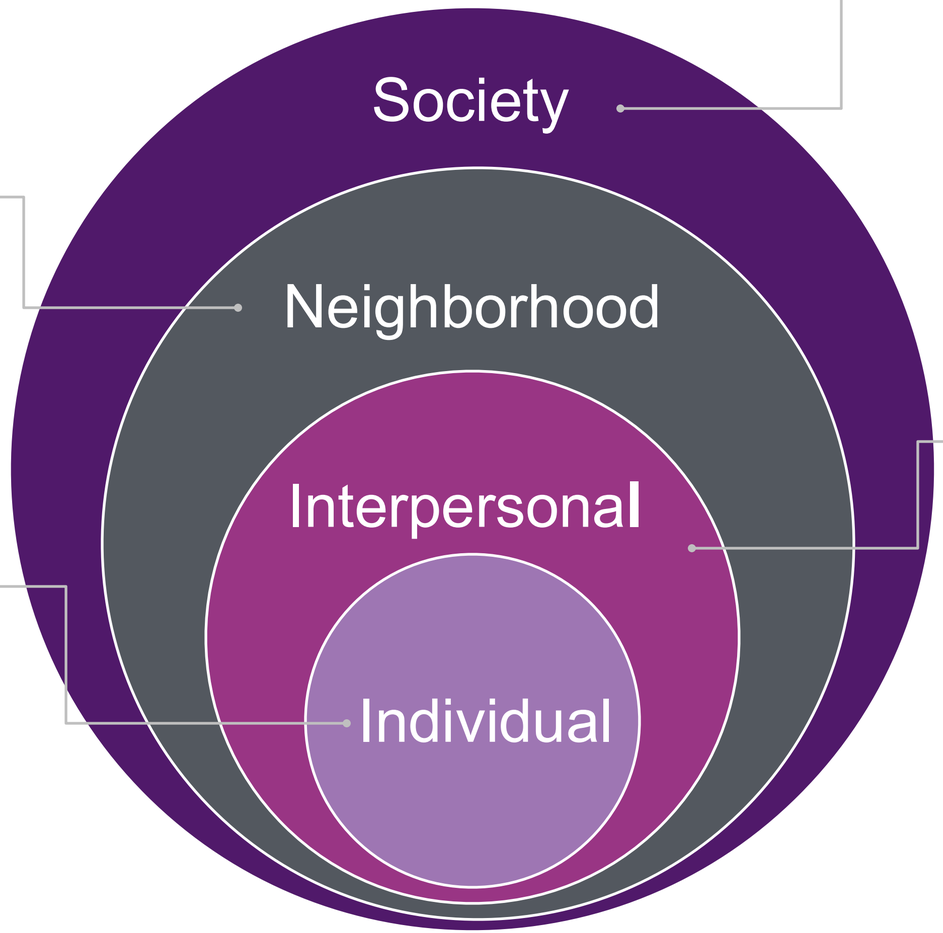
Statistics show a high correlation between alcohol use and social, environmental and behavioural problems, including substance abuse.

- Personal Influences
- Social Influences
- Environmental Influences



Hassar, B., Heudes, A., Pei, J., Poth, C. & Radil, A. (2014). The Youth Prevention Survey

Influences



- Racism
- Stigma
- Segregation
- Formal and informal policies

- Alcohol environment
- Neighbourhood disadvantage
- “Broken Windows”

- Social and sexual networks
- Social norms
- Setting/situational factors

- Individual characteristics
- Alcohol consumption
- Substance use
- Sexual behaviour

Adolescent Prevention Programs

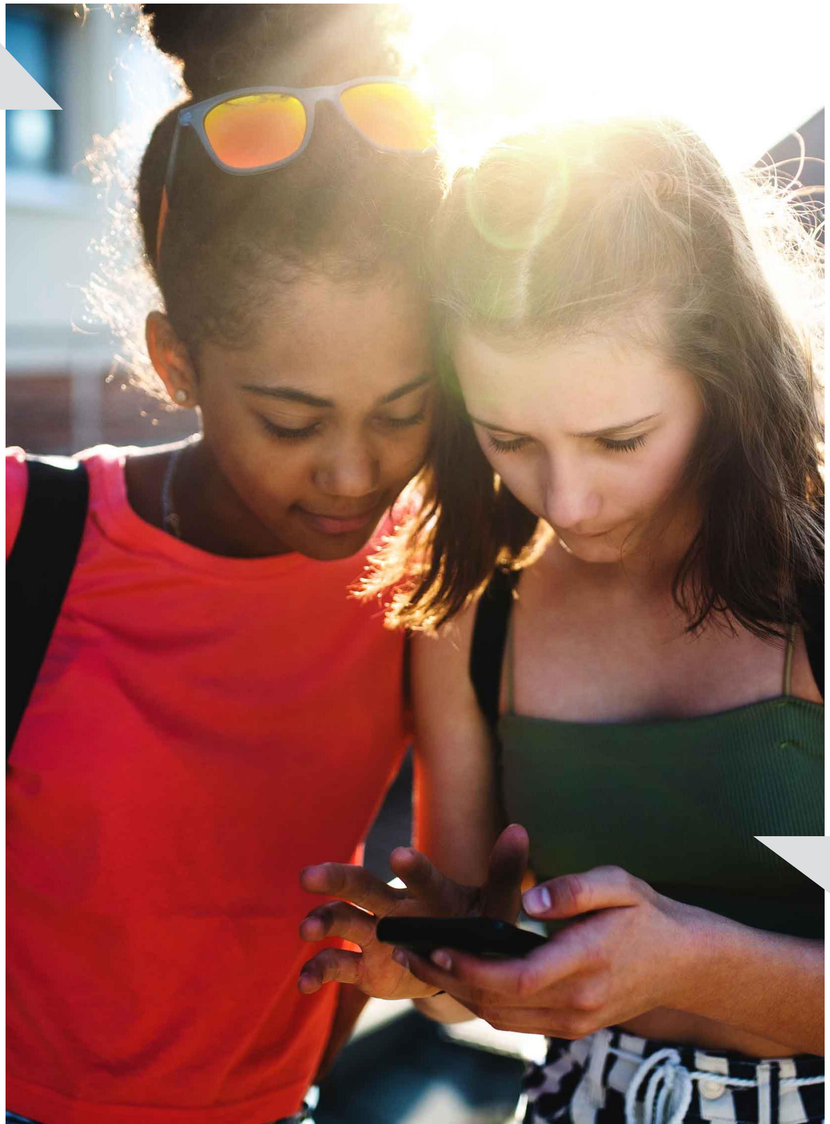
Which programs are most effective?

MORE EFFECTIVE

Programs that address underlying issues around substance abuse.

Programs that integrate all levels including individual, family and school levels.

Interventions that are personalized to the specific demographic, taking into consideration, developmental stage, community, cultural background etc.



Telling youth not to drink.

Prevention programs focusing solely on abstinence.

LESS EFFECTIVE

Alcohol Consumption & Youth

- Alcohol is a depressant that slows the functioning of the central nervous system, including the brain.

- Youth are at risk for negative impacts since the executive functions in the teenage brain such as:
  - decision-making
  - motivation
  - emotion
  - reward
  - and risk-taking behaviours

  are not yet fully developed until their mid-twenties.

- Youth are vulnerable to alcohol-induced brain-based concerns which could contribute to poor performance at school or work.

SHORT TERM RISKS
if Over-Consume Alcohol:

- accidental injury
- alcohol poisoning
- motor vehicle crashes
- vulnerable to assaults
- vulnerable to sexual coercion
- mental health issues such as depression and self-harm

LONG TERM RISKS
if Over-Consume Alcohol:

- impacts physical health and mental well being
- substance use disorders
- learning and memory issues
- problems with school performance
- increased risk of school dropout
- increased risk for certain chronic diseases, such as liver disease, stroke and cancer

Drug Free Kids Canada
https://www.drugfreekidscanada.org › 2019/10

Prevention Strategies for **Educating Youth**

Integrating all strategies results in the best outcome.

- School Strategies
- Extra-Curricular Strategies
- Family Strategies
- Policy/Community Strategies

What Conversations Should We Be Having With Youth?

OPEN DISCUSSIONS

around alcohol and its misuse.

IN-DEPTH CONVERSATIONS

regarding different types of contraceptive methods and the effectiveness and accessibility of these methods.

RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIORS ARE KEY DETERMINANTS IN FASD

The Alberta Alcohol Scene

1,330
LIQUOR RETAILERS

>44%
STUDENTS IN GRADES 7-12 HAVE CONSUMED ALCOHOL IN PAST 12 MONTHS

64.5%
STUDENTS IN GRADES 10-12

25%
STUDENTS IN GRADES 7-12 EXHIBITED HIGH RISK DRINKING (5+ DRINKS AT A TIME)

40%
STUDENTS IN GRADES 10-12

13 YEARS OLD
AVERAGE AGE OF INITIATION FOR ALCOHOL

80%
OF CANADIANS AGED 15+ ARE CURRENT DRINKERS

https://www.statista.com/statistics/459885/beer-wine-and-liquor-stores-by-region-canada/
Drug Free Kids Canada
https://www.drugfreekidscanada.org › 2019/10

Alcohol in Canada

Alcohol is by far the **most common drug** used by Canadians.

20%

At least **20%** of drinkers consume above *Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health*

The prevalence of alcohol use remains higher among boys and men but are increasing among women and girls.

86%

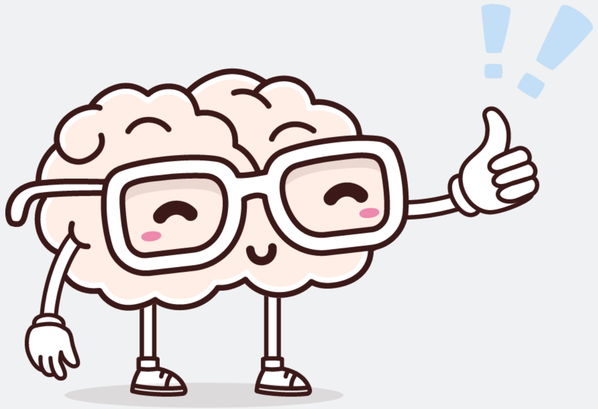
Among girls and women, the highest increase in the past-year heavy drinking was seen among women 25 years and older.

Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, 2017.

PREVENTION CONVERSATION

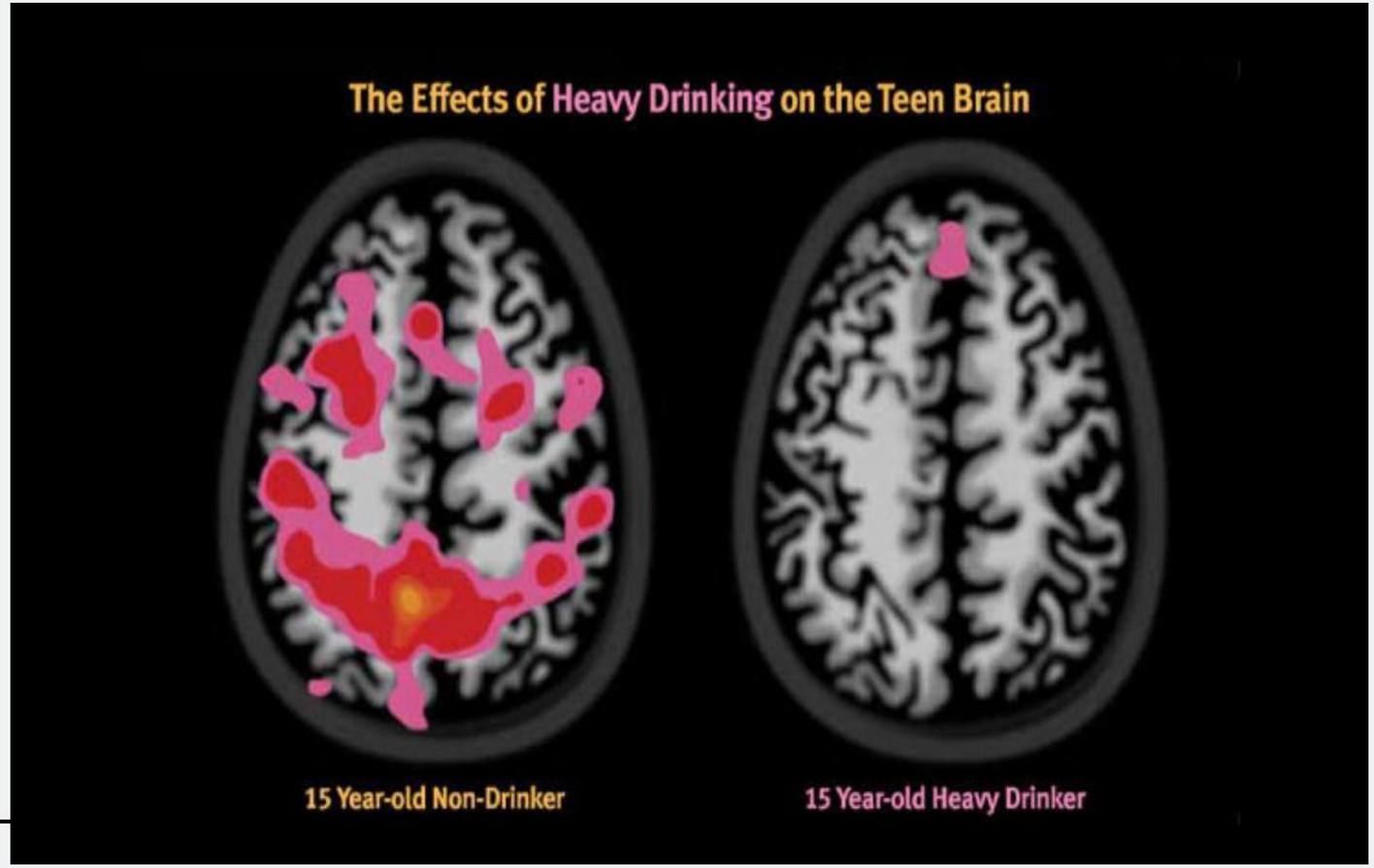
LET'S GET REAL ABOUT

ALCOHOL AND WHAT IT DOES TO YOUR BODY WHEN YOU DRINK IT



THE EFFECTS OF DRINKING ON THE BRAIN

Although a ‘buzz’ may be only temporary, the effects of alcohol on the brain can cause permanent damage over time.



The Governors Interagency Council on Substance Abuse and Prevention.

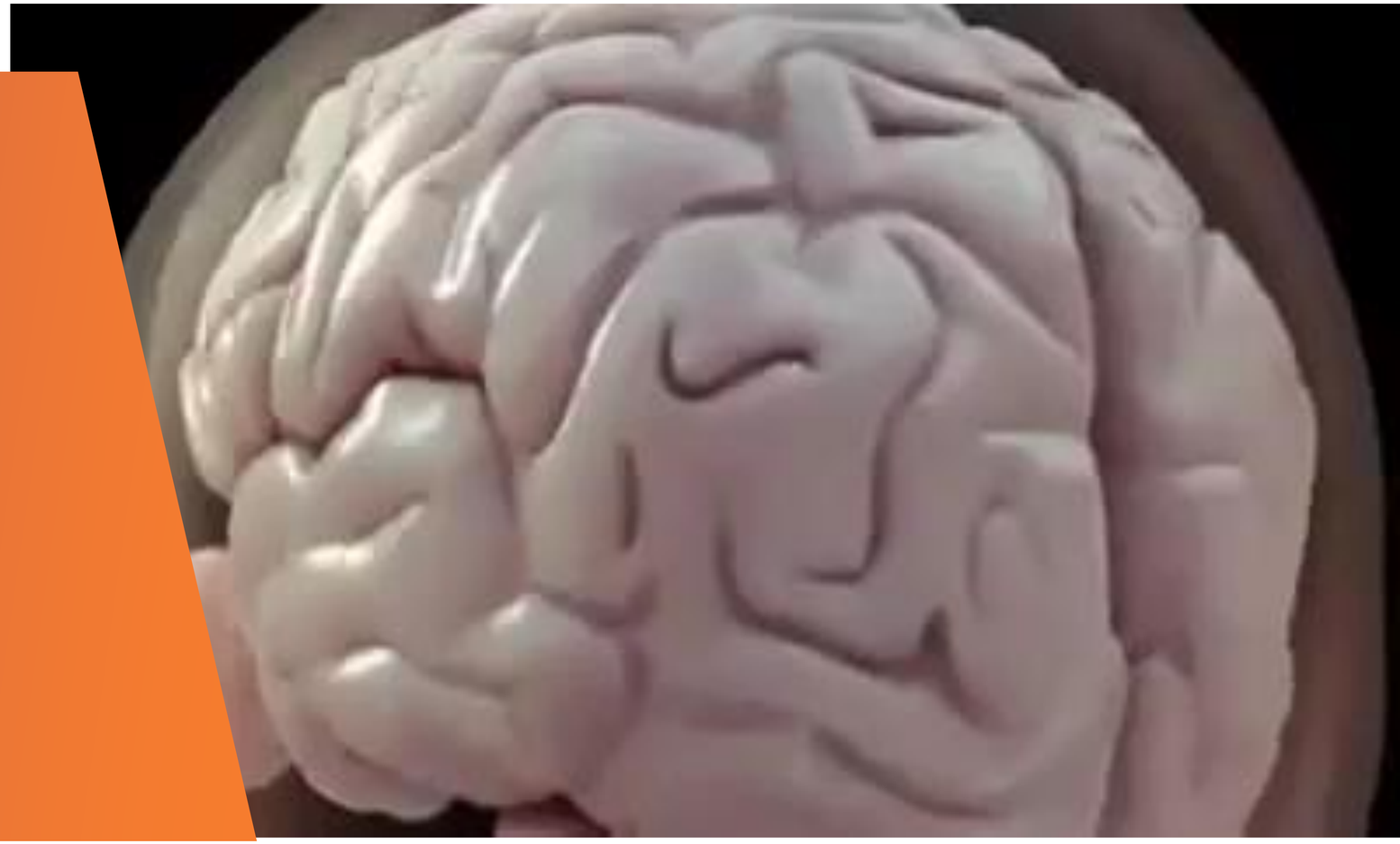
How Does Alcohol Affect the Brain?

What part of the brain is affected when you drink alcohol?

When you are cold should you drink alcohol to warm up?

How long before one drink has gone through your body?

Does alcohol affect your emotions and inhibitions?



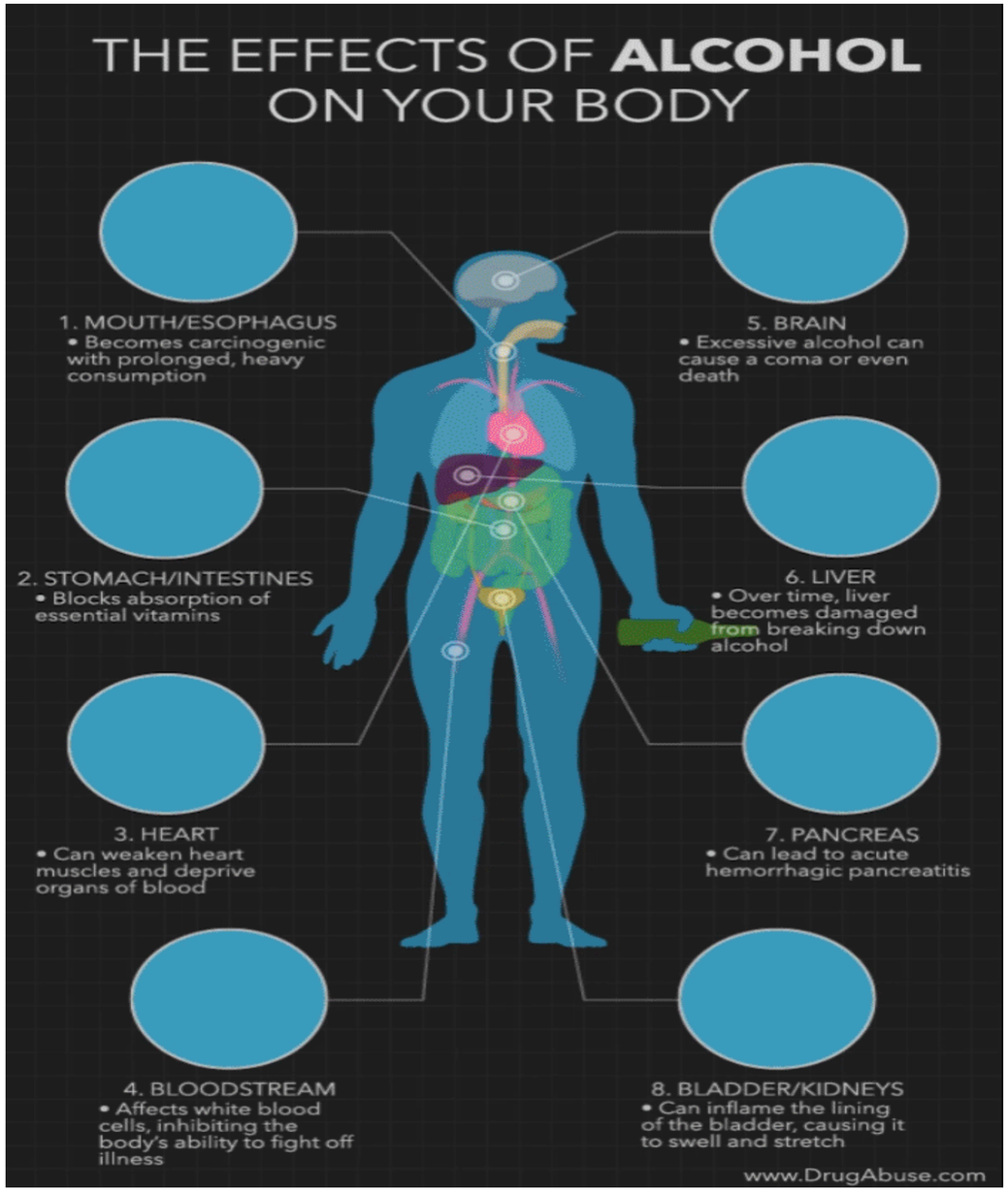
Alcohol and Your Brain – Get the Facts. YouTube, uploaded by Bob Sto Domingo 28 May 2013

What is Alcohol?

Alcohol is a **depressant**, meaning it slows down how you react to your environment.

Teens experience stress and anxiety and may use mood altering substances such as alcohol to feel better or to help them **fit in with friends.**

Alcohol **blocks some of the messages trying to get to your brain.**



Alcohol and Adolescents. (2014). *Alberta Health Services*

Alcohol. (2017). *Kids Health Website*

WHY DO YOU THINK TEENS MIGHT WANT TO DRINK?

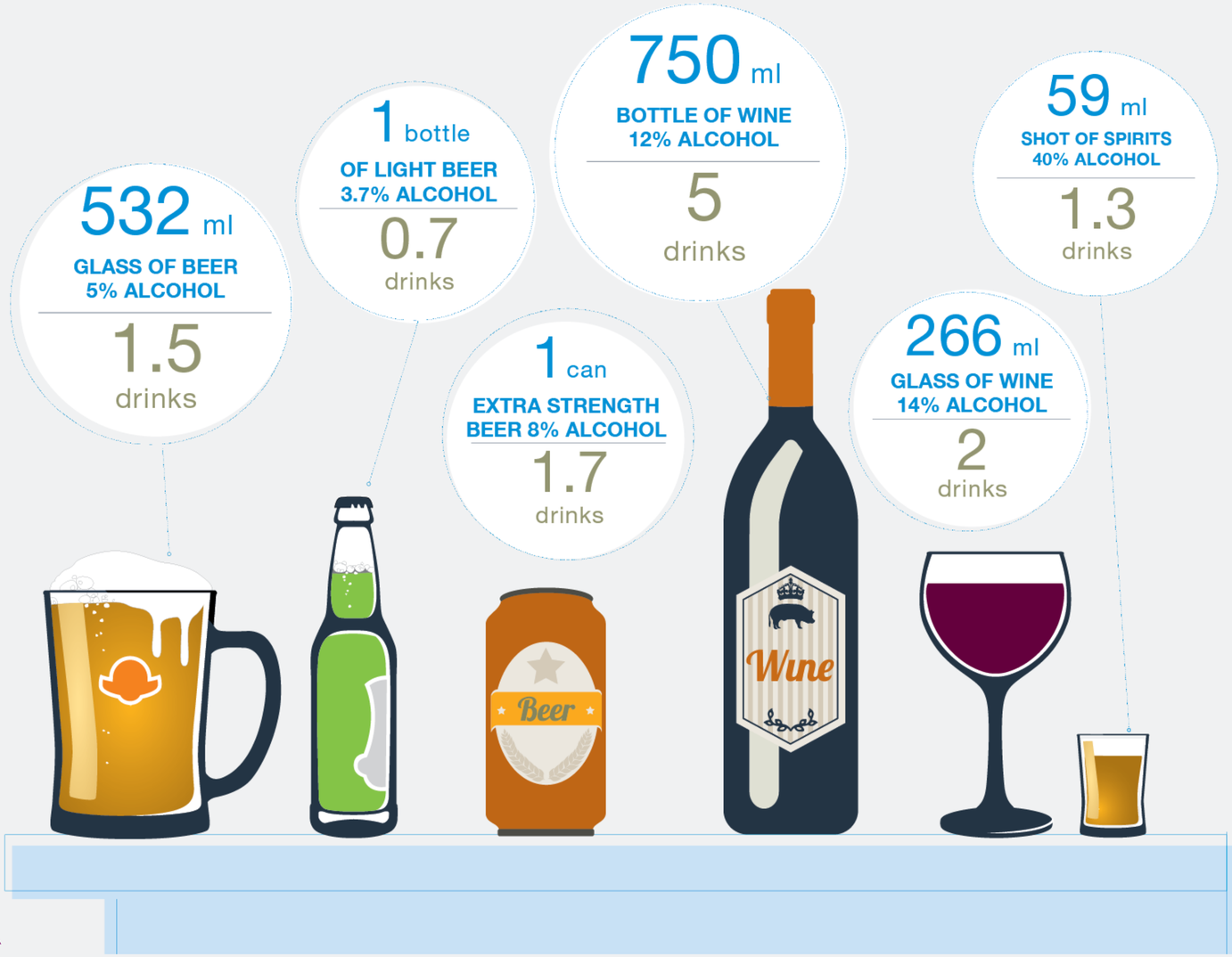
teen talk

"Why youth use & don't use alcohol" Brainstorm

"Why Youth Use? / Don't Use Substances?" Brainstorm. (2017).

One standard drink = any one of the following:

341 ml (12 oz)	bottle of 5% beer	about 130 calories
43 ml (1.5 oz)	shot of 40% hard liquor	about 105 calories + mixer
142 ml (5 oz)	glass of 12% wine	about 125 calories



WHICH DRINK IS THE STRONGEST?

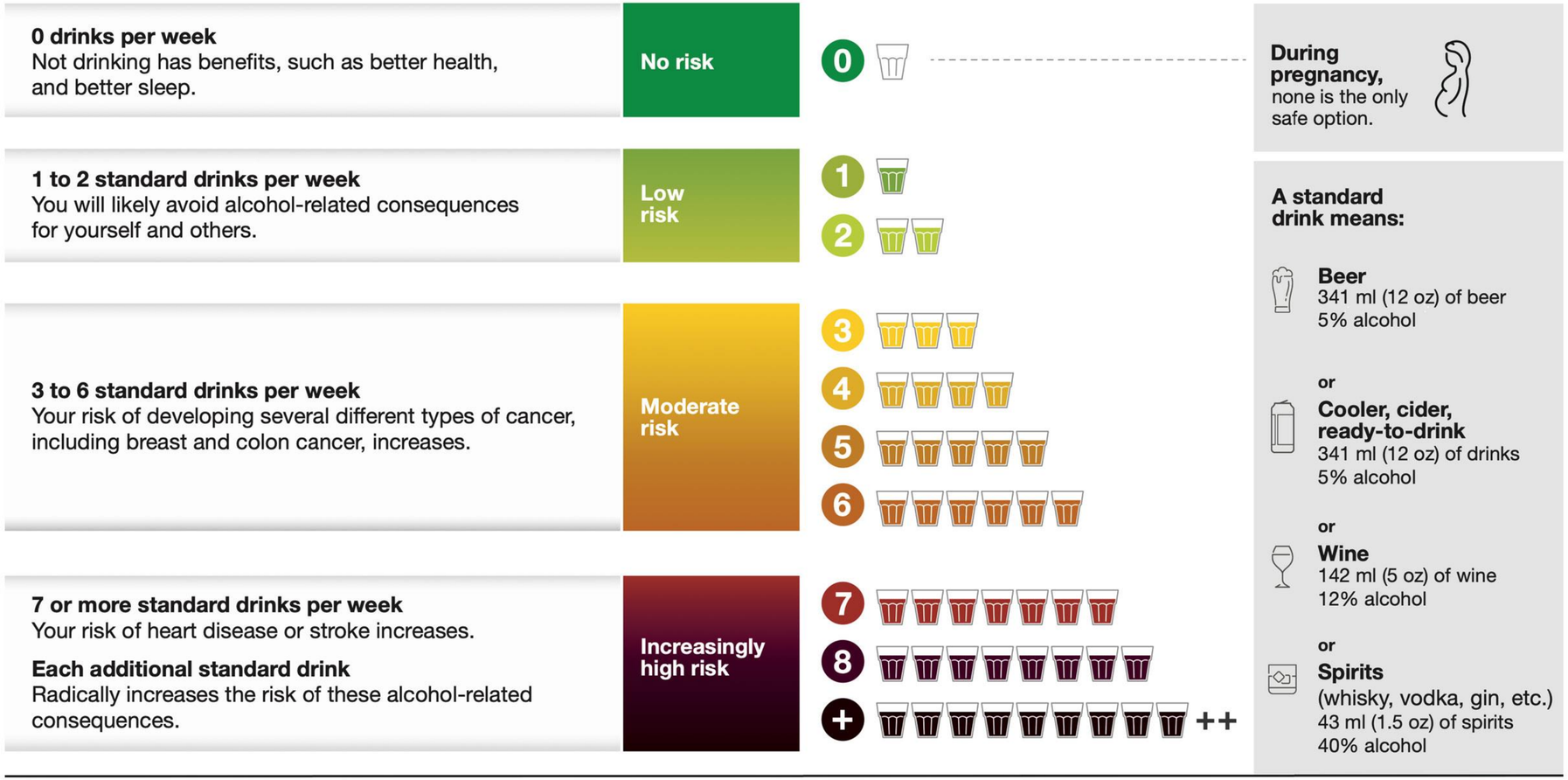
DRINKING:

WHEN, WHERE, WHY AND HOW?

Drinking less is better

We now know that even a small amount of alcohol can be damaging to health.

Drinking alcohol, even a small amount, is damaging to everyone, regardless of age, sex, gender, ethnicity, tolerance for alcohol or lifestyle.



The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction was commissioned by Health Canada to produce Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health.

Alcohol and youth

Drinking is a leading cause of death and social issues in young people. Intoxication is associated with:

- High risks of injuries
- Aggression and violence
- Dating violence
- Worsening academic performance

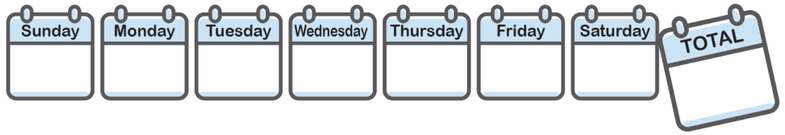
Youth under the legal drinking age should delay drinking for as long as possible.

Aim to drink less

Drinking less benefits you and others. It reduces your risk of injury and violence, and many health problems that can shorten life.

Here is a good way to do it

Count how many drinks you have in a week.



Set a weekly drinking target. If you're going to drink, **make sure you don't exceed 2 drinks on any day.**

It's time to pick a new target

What will your weekly drinking target be?

Tips to help you stay on target

- Stick to the limits you've set for yourself.
- Drink slowly.
- Drink lots of water.
- For every drink of alcohol, have one non-alcoholic drink.
- Choose alcohol-free or low-alcohol beverages.
- Eat before and while you're drinking.
- Have alcohol-free weeks or do alcohol-free activities.

Good to know

You can reduce your drinking in steps! Every drink counts: any reduction in alcohol use has benefits.

Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction was commissioned by Health Canada to produce *Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health*.

This document is a summary for the public of the new guidance. For more information, please visit www.ccsa.ca.

What is Binge Drinking?

The consumption of an excessive amount of alcohol in a short period of time.

The guideline is to have **no more than 2 drinks a day** (per occasion)

Binge drinking can

lead to difficulty concentrating, problems with memory, mood changes, and **alcohol poisoning.**

Alcohol poisoning

affects the body's involuntary reflexes – including breathing and the gag reflex, as well as the bloodstream. If the gag reflex isn't working right, a person can choke to death on his or her own vomit.

Dowshen, S. (Ed.). (2016). Binge Drinking.
Underage Drinking, (2017). *National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.*

Safer Drinking Tips

Delay drinking
as long as possible; at least until the legal drinking age.

Choose alcohol-free activities
You don’t need to drink to have fun.

Be open & honest
Speak to your caregivers about drinking.
It is better to be open and honest.

Pace yourself – drink slowly
Try not to have more than one or two drinks at a time.

Have a full stomach
Eat before and while you are drinking alcohol.

Mix it up

For every alcoholic drink, have a non-alcoholic drink – water!

PREVENTION CONVERSATION

LET'S GET REAL ABOUT

SEX & ALCOHOL

Why might Risky Sexual Behaviours Happen in Adolescent Populations?

- **Lack of knowledge**
  About contraception
- **Embarrassment**
  About contraceptive use
- **Drug and alcohol use**
- **Peer pressure**
  The desire to fit in or look cool
- **Boredom**
- **Lack of planning**
  For sexual activity

Some risk factors: a history of child abuse, poverty, poor academic performances, psychological factors, family factors, early onset of puberty, relationships, poor access to health services, rapid repeat pregnancies.

Adolescents & Pregnancy

Adolescent individuals that can get pregnant are likely **to receive less or no prenatal care** and have an increased risk of pregnancy complications compared to pregnant adults.

Choosing to Have Sex is a **Big Decision**

What about alcohol and sex?

A Alcohol can affect judgement and decision making.

C Alcohol may make you forget to have safer sex.

E Alcohol may lead to unintended pregnancies or STIs.

B Alcohol may make people have sex or do other sexual things that they wouldn't do if they were sober.

D Alcohol may make you use condoms incorrectly.

F Alcohol may lead to negative emotions such as guilt, fear or regret.

All about Sex. (2017). Planned Parenthood. Website

WHAT IS CONSENT?

EVERYONE Plays An EQUAL ROLE In Consent

SAYING YES

and really meaning it.

GIVEN FREELY

There's no pressure or manipulation.

CONSENT IS INFORMED

This means telling a future sex partner about STIs, past sex partners and talking about condoms or other birth control.

PEOPLE CANNOT GIVE CONSENT IF THEY ARE:

- High or drunk
- Forced, threatened, bribed or offered rewards for something sexual

All about Consent. (2017). Planned Parenthood.

But Everyone Does It
OR DO THEY?

In our culture, mixing alcohol and sex is made to look normal.

But it does not mean everyone actually does it.

About **50%–70%** of sexual assaults can be linked to alcohol use.

Most alcohol-related sexual assaults occur between people who know each other.

Alcohol is the number one **‘date rape’ drug.**

STRAIGHT TALK

The truth about alcohol and sex

"Straight Talk: The Truth about Alcohol and Sex." Human Relations Media, (2011).

PARTYING SAFER

The most effective way to be safe from the harms of alcohol is not to use it at all.

However, this is not always a choice that people can or want to make which is why it's important to know **how to reduce the harms when using alcohol.**

"Partying Safer" Brainstorm

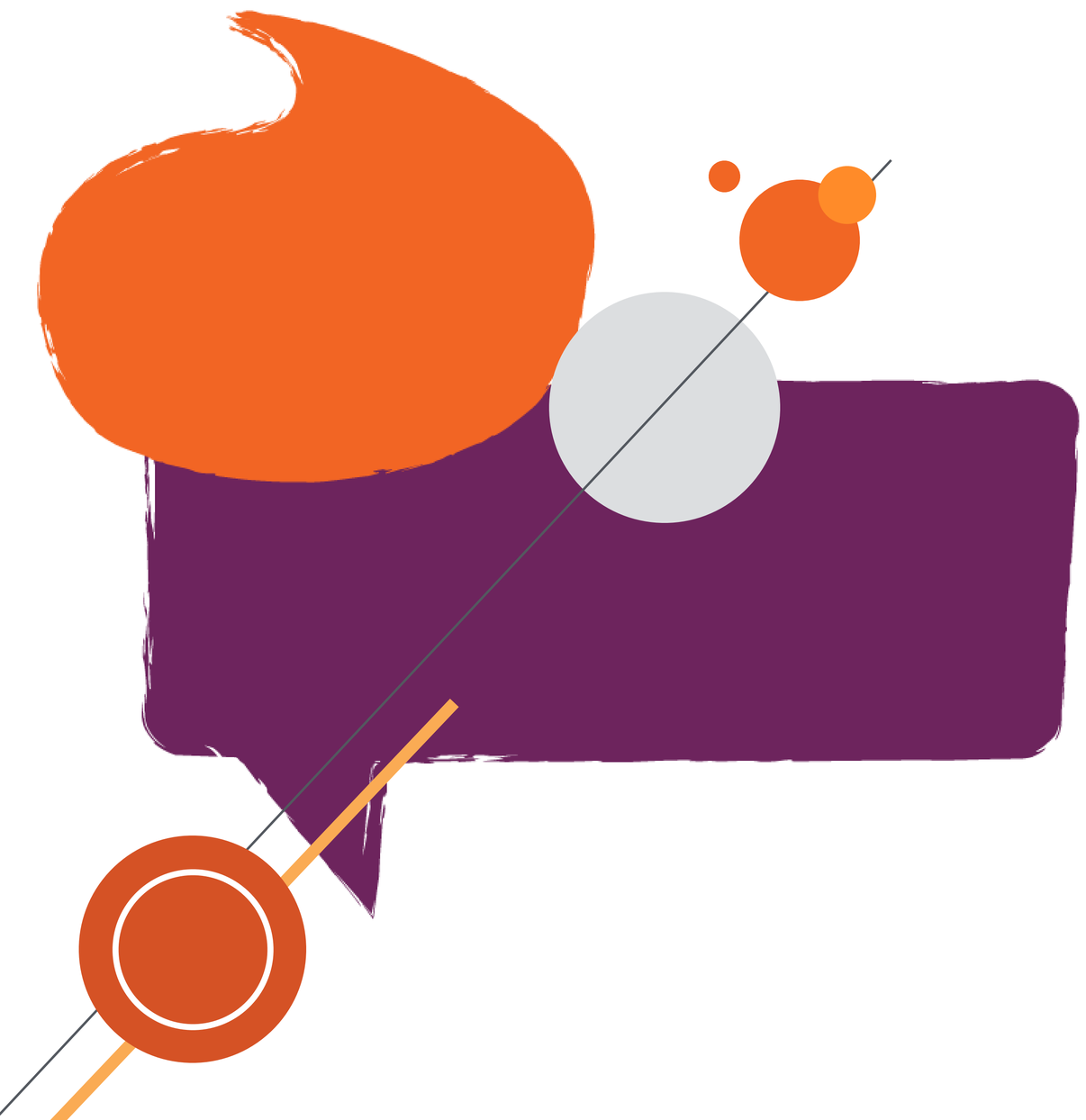
teen talk

"Partying Safer" Brainstorm and Flipchart. (2017). *Teen Talk*

PREVENTION CONVERSATION

LET'S GET REAL ABOUT

BIRTH CONTROL



When You Think About Birth Control, What Comes to Mind?

1. What types of birth control are you familiar with?
2. What do you think are some side effects of each?
3. Which method is the most effective?
4. Why might you not want to use birth control?
5. Where and how can you get birth control?

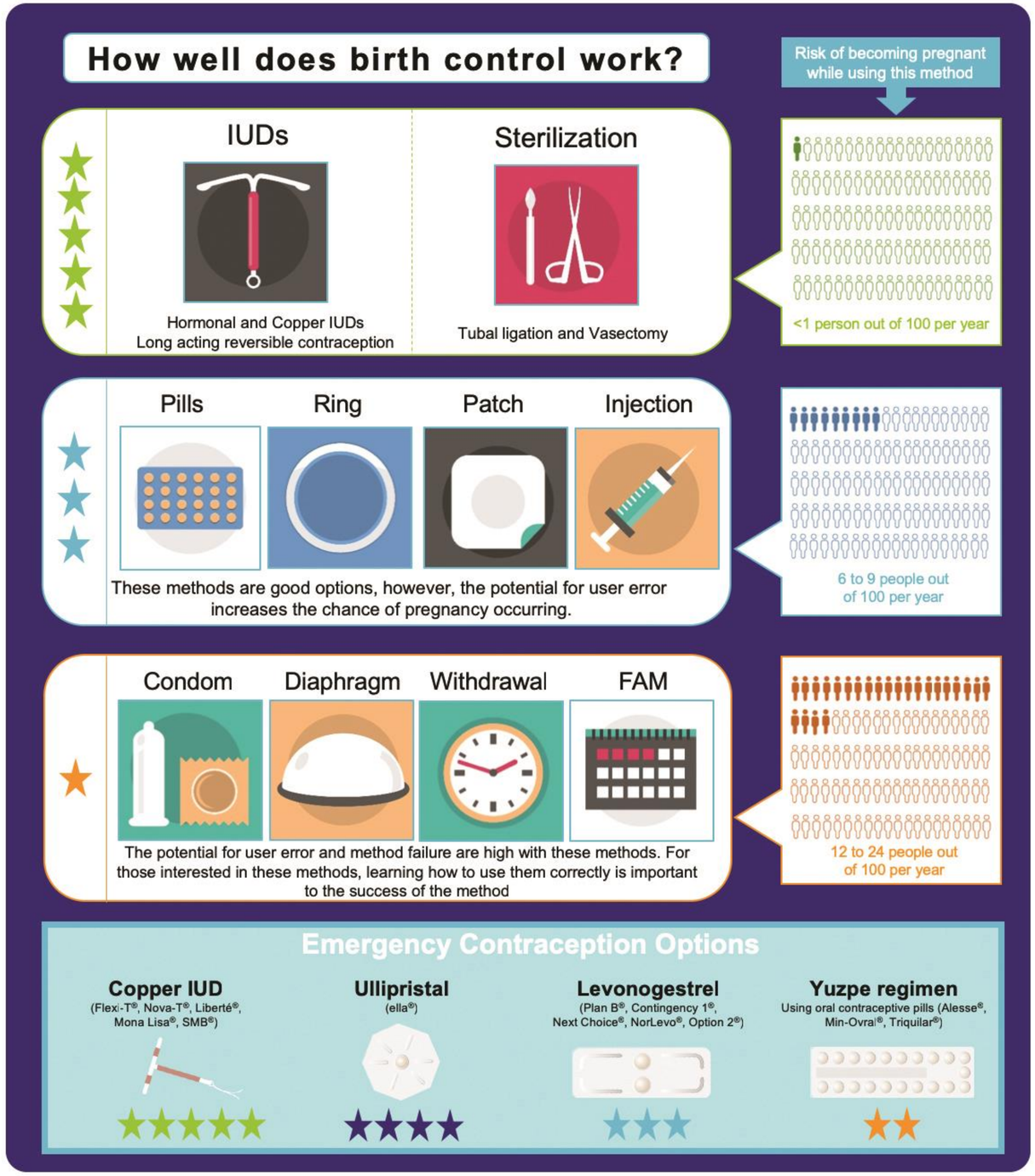
Birth Control

What is the right method for my partner and me?

Key questions to ask yourself:

- How effective is it?
- How often am I having sex?
- Am I on any other medication?
- How comfortable am I with it?
- What are the side effects?

Contraception. (2017). *Sex & U Web Site.*



Contraception Methods

Risk of becoming pregnant while using each method

- **IUDs • Sterilization**
  - <1 person out of 100/year
- **Pills • Rings • Patch • Injection**
  - 6 – 9 people out of 100/year
- **Condom • Diaphragm • Withdrawal • FAM**
  - 12 to 24 people out of 100/year

LET'S GET REAL…

DISCUSSION

If I am on birth control or my partner is, do I still need to use a condom?

Why might people not use a condom while on birth control?

LINK: Why Don't & Do Teens Use Birth Control" Brainstorm

Contraception **HOW CAN I GET IT?**

Other than condoms and emergency contraception (Plan B), **you do not need a prescription from a doctor but it should not be used as a regular form of birth control.**

Find a doctor you are comfortable seeing.

If you are not comfortable taking a parent, it's okay to go on your own.

Resources

There are many resources where you can get birth control and **little to no cost.**

Helpful Resources in Alberta:

Call 811 HealthLink

- **www.albertahealthservices.ca**
- **www.getrealab.ca**

HELPFUL RESOURCES IN ALBERTA

Calgary

ConnecTeen Calgary 24/7 **403.264.TEEN**

www.CalgaryConnecTeen.com

ConnecTeen@distresscentre.com

Centre for Sexuality **403-283-5580**

www.centreforsexuality.ca

Edmonton

Birth Control Centre, Edmonton **780-691-0946**

Compass Centre for Sexual Wellness **780-423-3737**

www.compasscentre.ca

Red Deer

49th Street Community Health Centre **403-314-5225**

www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth/facility

Lethbridge

Sexual and Reproductive Health: Community Health Services **403-320-0110**

www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth

Medicine Hat

Sexual and Reproductive Health:Community Health Services **403-502-8200**

www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth

I had sex without protection/or the condom broke

NOW WHAT?

One option may be the **Emergency Contraception Pill**, also known as *Plan B*

- most effective within the **first 24 hours of having sex** → the pill can delay or prevent a woman from ovulating, or the egg being fertilized
- recommended use within the **first 3 days after,** but can be effective up to 5 days after having sex
- you can get it at a pharmacy or grocery store and it's **available to anyone**
- there is usually a generic brand that costs less than Plan B


LET’S
TAKE A
BREAK!

LET'S GET REAL…

WHAT IS ABSTINENCE?

Abstinence is choosing not to have sex.

Complete abstinence is the only way to guarantee protection against STIs. This means avoiding all types of intimate genital contact. Someone practicing complete abstinence does not have any type of intimate sexual contact, including oral sex. So, there is no risk of getting an STI.

WHAT IS VIRGINITY?

While there is no medical definition for a virgin, it often refers to a person who has never had sexual intercourse.

Note: How sexual intercourse and virginity is defined is up to everyone.

https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/abstinence.html 2022

Sexual Health

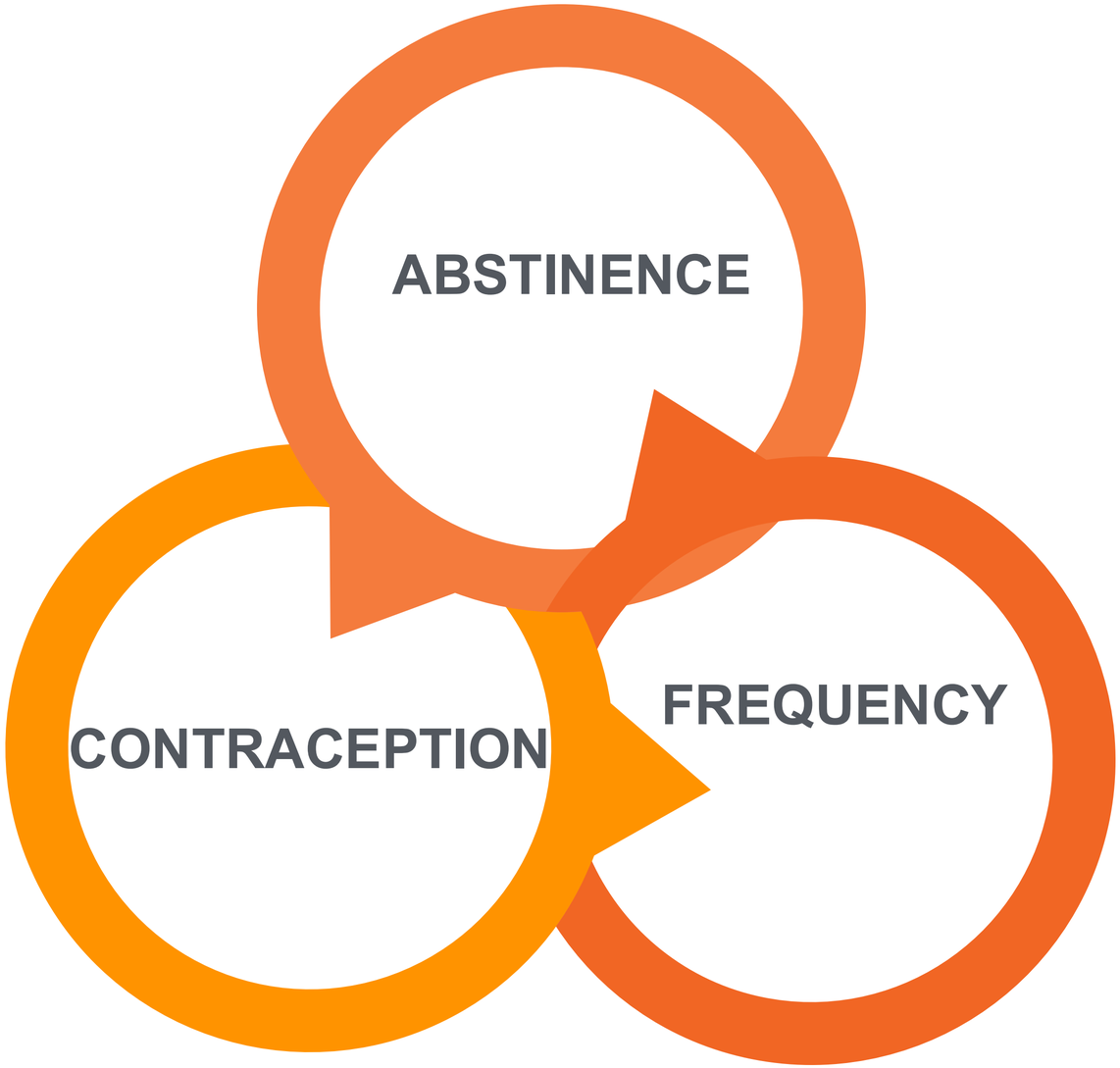
HARM REDUCTION MODEL

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE SEXUAL HEALTH

Encouraging adolescents to abstain from sex may not be the most effective.

Encouraging effective contraception use may decrease risks of unplanned pregnancies.

The educational component includes the logistics and instruction on how to use contraception.



True or False?

Can you be a carrier of STIs and not know it? → ✓ TRUE

Do hormonal birth control and IUDs protect you from STIs? → ✗ FALSE

Do most people agree, having sex with a condom is equally as pleasurable? → ✓ TRUE

Can you get pregnant while on your period? → ✓ TRUE

Birth control doesn't work if you drink, smoke or do drugs? → ✗ FALSE

Can you get birth control on your own? → ✓ TRUE

Are condoms the most effective form of birth control? → ✗ FALSE

PREVENTION CONVERSATION

TEACHING ADOLESCENTS ABOUT FASD

Due to the sensitive content in this chapter, it is important to be aware of the contextual impact this topic may have on different communities and its members.

WHEN YOU THINK OF FASD, WHAT OTHER THINGS COME TO MIND?

55

TRUE OR FALSE?

Is drinking alcohol only harmful to the baby during the first trimester?

If a mother drinks during pregnancy and the first baby is normal and healthy, it should be okay to drink during the second pregnancy?

56

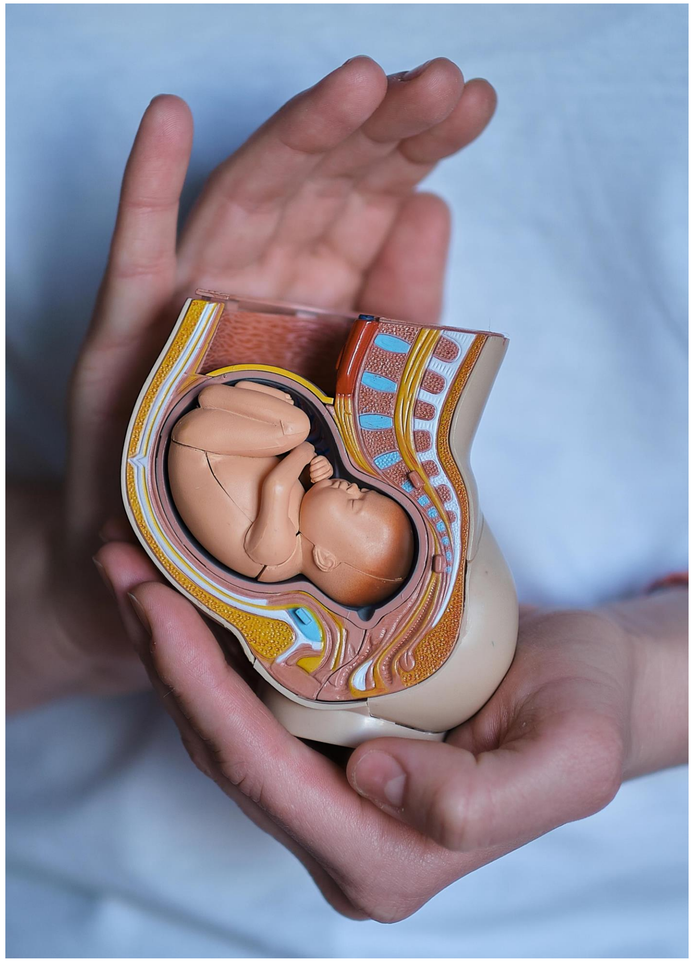
TRUE OR FALSE?

Will the effects that alcohol has on a newborn gradually go away as the child gets older?

Is drinking wine or beer during pregnancy alright; is it only the hard alcohol that should be avoided?

How FASD Happens

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF FASD?



Alcohol freely gets into the fetus' bloodstream.

Alcohol in the fetus' system takes longer to be removed.

Harm can be caused before the pregnancy is known or confirmed.

Pregnancies are exposed to alcohol at any time over the duration of pregnancy.

Alcohol acts as a poison (teratogen) in the fetus' bloodstream.

- Teratogen can impact how cells are formed in a developing fetus.
- Damage can be done to developing organs, including the brain and the whole body.
- Permanent brain-based concerns can cause disability in the individual.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Prevention: Canadian Perspectives. (2008).

The Developing Brain

AND HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS IT

Alcohol affects the size of the brain, formation of brain structures, neurochemistry and the function of the brain after birth.

Exposure to alcohol can impact how and where cells in the brain develop. In some cases, there may not be any cell development at all.

WHEN DOES THE BRAIN STOP DEVELOPING?

Statistics on FASD in Alberta

Prevalence

4% of all Albertans currently have FASD
- 249,032 in Alberta (*2025)*
- 1.65 million in Canada (*2025)*

11% of children in care in Canada have FASD

10-23% of youth in Canada in the justice system have FASD

Mental Health

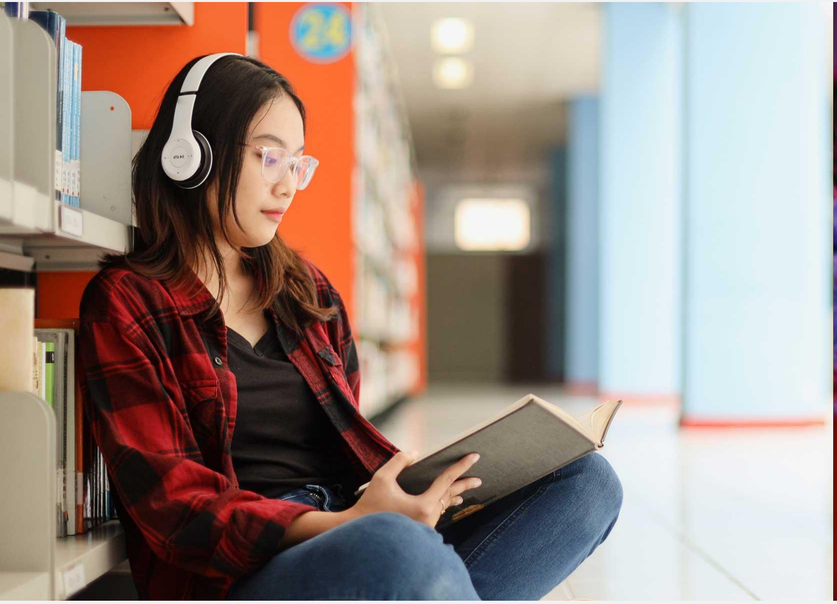
90% of people with FASD experience mental health issues

22-80% youth experience substance use

Economic Investment for supporting those with FASD:

$400m Alberta:
- $130 – 400 million/year

$9.7b Canada:
- $9.7 billion/year



Who drinks

DURING PREGNANCY?

ANYONE including:

- Light/moderate/heavy drinkers
- Those that may not know they are pregnant
- Higher income, higher education, over 30 yrs old, successful
- People exposed to poverty and isolation
- Those that use multiple drugs and those that drink alcohol eccessively
- Victims of violence (childhood, domestic)

What role do PARTNERS play in FASD prevention?

- Knowing that drinking while pregnant can lead to FASD.
- Making smart decisions before engaging in sex or drinking.
- Ensuring contraception is in place before having sex to prevent pregnancy, FASD or an STI. Use condoms!
- Making sure drinking does not lead to poor choices or violent behaviour.
- Helping to provide help and support to the mother for the outcome of the pregnancy.

Note: *Partner's drinking does not result in FASD. It can, however, affect the baby's birth weight, gestational age, ventricle malformations and abnormal situs.*

Individuals with FASD

POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Like everyone, people with FASD have **unique strengths and challenges.** Try to recognize these strengths and positive characteristics.

WHY ASSESS FOR FASD?

01

Understanding

Creates a shared understanding among colleagues and an understanding between the clinician, patients and caregivers.

02

Validation

The concerns of the individual, family and caregiver are validated.

03

Access

Helps to access programs for support and intervention.

04

Support

Helps people with FASD and their caregivers to get the help they need.

Culture and Bias

FASD and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

ADHD diagnosis has been influenced by the stigma that goes with the perception of a mother drinking during pregnancy.

Bias of FASD

Diagnosis has been connected to the Indigenous culture and replaced with another diagnosis, such as ADHD, for cultures of privilege.

Bias of Culture

Doctors showed to be comfortable talking about alcohol and pregnancy to women of a lower socioeconomic class and of African American culture. However, they were reluctant to have the same conversation with middle class Caucasian women.

Khazan, O., (2015). When ADHD Isn't What It Seems. The Atlantic.

RESEARCH TELLS US…

- **FASD affects people of all cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.**

- **Prenatal alcohol exposure is a risk in all populations where alcohol is used.**

FASD With No Physical Signs

DISCUSSION: What are possible advantages and challenges of having a disability not easily recognizable?

Less than 10%

of individuals affected with FASD

display sentinel facial features.

History of FASD and facial features - The first published literature that linked alcohol use with birth defects was in France, in 1968, by Dr. Paul Lemoine.

In 1973, researchers at the University of Washington published their findings regarding a group of children who shared uncommon physical features and developmental delay. These children all had birthing parents who had consumed alcohol during pregnancy. The term “Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) was created to describe the patterns observed in these children.

Decades ago, the facial features of FASD received a lot of attention in the press. The presence or absence of facial features depends on whether alcohol was consumed in a very narrow window of time during pregnancy. It does NOT reflect the degree of brain disorder.

https://canfasd.ca/topics/basic-information

A Glimpse

Look at the chart and SAY THE COLOR NOT THE WORD

YELLOW	BLUE	ORANGE
BLACK	RED	GREEN
PURPLE	YELLOW	RED
ORANGE	GREEN	BLACK
BLUE	RED	PURPLE
GREEN	BLUE	ORANGE

Cognition and Memory

COGNITION

The cognition (processing) domain refers to the general level of thinking ability. An important facet of assessment in this domain is comparison of verbal with nonverbal thinking abilities.

Individuals may demonstrate varied perceptions and conceptual abilities.

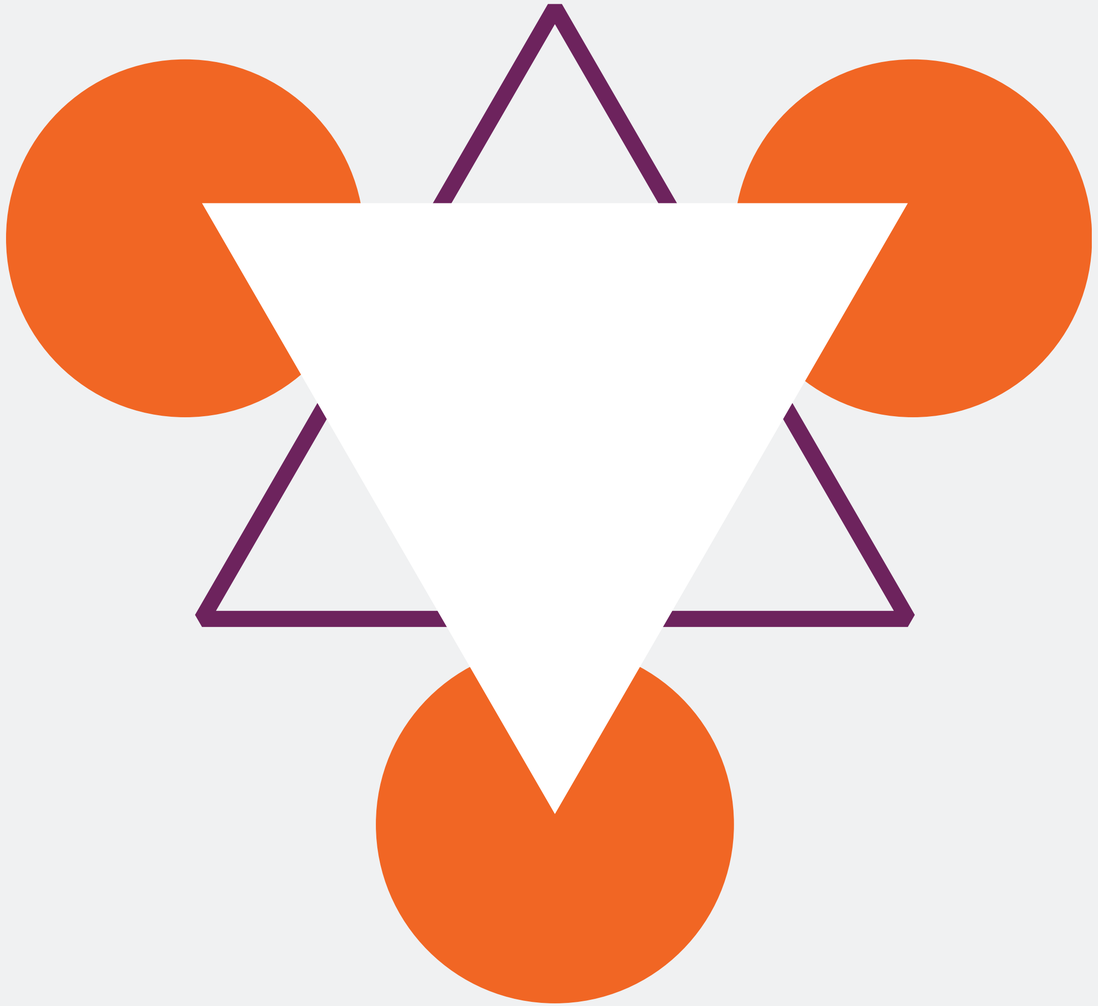
MEMORY

The memory domain encompasses the capacity to consolidate, store and retrieve information for short- and long-term application.

Individuals may struggle remembering appointments, describing incidents, adhering to tenancy and eviction agreements and may be unaware of trauma affects.

Anderson, S., Baldwin, M., Chudley, Conry, J., Cook, J. & Green, C., (2016). *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: a Guideline for Diagnosis Across the Lifespan.*

How Many Triangles?



Using perceptual recognition phenomenon, our brains make the connections for us.

Someone with FASD brain-based differences, may not make those connections.

Anderson, S., Baldwin, M., Chudley, Conry, J., Cook, J. & Green, C., (2016). *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: a Guideline for Diagnosis Across the Lifespan*.

MOTOR SKILLS

Motor domain encompasses general abilities to use and coordinate large and small muscles.

Gross motor skills include:

- walking
- running
- hopping
- climbing

Fine motor skills include:

- handwriting
- eating

Hand-eye coordination refers to the ability to coordinate vision with movement.

Anderson, S., Baldwin, M., Chudley, Conry, J., Cook, J. & Green, C., (2016). *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: a Guideline for Diagnosis Across the Lifespan.*

Some challenges of FASD

- Attention
- Language
- Adaptive Behaviors (life skills)
- Reasoning

- Memory
- Executive Functioning
- Regulation of Body Functions
- Sensory Issues

Knezovich, J., & Ramsay, M. (2012, February).
McLanahan, S., Schneider D. & Tach L. (2013)

Misinterpretation

Understanding and working with individuals who have a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Medical Personnel
can easily misdiagnose.

Human Services Staff, Parents, Caregivers
can misinterpret behaviours and give up.

Justice Professionals
can punish behaviours as criminal.

Teachers/Employers
can expel, fire or refuse to hire individuals with FASD.

Those with FASD look like everyone else

FASD With No Physical Signs

There can be a great deal of misinterpretation that goes along with understanding and working with individuals who have a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

Most with FASD show **no physical signs**. Physical characteristics can be subtle or non-existent and may go unrecognized. Because of this, their behaviour is misunderstood.

The School Experience

Common concerns that may affect students with FASD

Gr. 7 or 8

is dropped by friends who can see the disabilities.

Peers

Hangs with peers who have similar problems.

School

Skips school
Doesn't do homework
School failure

Education

Early school dropout or expulsion. First sign of marginalized adulthood.

Crime

Petty crime
Drug and alcohol use
Early sexual activity

BUT WHAT CAN AN EDUCATOR/FACILITATOR DO?

Promote FASD awareness with your peers and in your school

- Help when and where you can.
- Drink responsibly and avoid alcohol during pregnancy.
- Keep learning about FASD and how it can affect people.
- Practice safe sex.
- Treat everyone equally.

Who can make
a difference in
FASD prevention?

YOU CAN!

Remember,
FASD affects

all of us!

Guiding Principles

HOPE

Supportive intervention makes a difference.

RESPECT

The abilities of all those with FASD.

UNDERSTANDING

Stay open to new information and ideas.

COMPASSION

Be sensitive to the needs of individuals and their families.

COOPERATION

Recognize the importance of partnerships.

Saskatchewan Prevention Institute (2005)

Spread the Word

TAKE A STAND!

http://youtube.com/v/9iVcKAfqyJp

The Brain Can Adapt

The human brain has a remarkable ability to compensate when an area of it is injured or impacted.

The ability of the brain to adapt and compensate for injury is called **plasticity.**

Guidelines for Working with Individuals with FASD

1. Keep it simple and clear.
2. Slow down and allow time to adjust to new activities and environments.
3. Allow for frequent breaks.
4. Focus on strengths and remember the individual's developmental age.
5. Connect individual to a support person.

6. Try *different ways* – not necessarily *try harder*.
7. Communicate using concrete language and examples.
8. Alter the environment.
9. Be organized.
10. Have consistent routines.

Anderson, S., Baldwin, M., Chudley, Conry, J., Cook, J. & Green, C., (2016)

How to Help a Teen with FASD to be Successful

Provide a stable, safe, structured, sober and nurturing home.

Access support services for those affected by FASD.

Have more people understand FASD.

Obtain an FASD assessment early.

Involve affected individuals and families in plans to develop supportive and social networks.

Core Messages To Deliver

Safest not to drink alcohol during pregnancy.

Drinking can be harmful at any point during pregnancy and can result in lifelong disabilities for the child.

If you drink alcohol and are sexually active, it is important to use effective contraception.

Friends and family can help support those that are pregnant by encouraging healthy choices for their developing babies.

Some individuals may need support to stop drinking if they plan to become pregnant or suspect the possibility of pregnancy in the future.

Talking about FASD with Adolescents

Why we should start the conversation

Education and open conversations with adolescents about FASD and its prevention will support the Prevention Model in these ways:

1) Create broad awareness and health promotion efforts in the community.

2) Direct discussions around the risks of alcohol with women and gender diverse individuals of childbearing age and their support systems.

Educate

The most impactful way to prevent FASD within our community is to educate upcoming generations.

Discuss

Discussing risks with youth before (or at the beginning of) their sexual development will increase awareness around FASD before it happens.

Prevent

Discussing the issue openly with adolescents supports the prevention model.

Teen Pregnancy: Medical Risks and Realities. (2005-2017). *WebMD*

FASD Education and Adolescents

HOW WE APPROACH IT

A

School

Promoting prevention and awareness of FASD to students–knowledge

B

Community

Community have knowledge of FASD and supports

C

Family

Family focused interventions that are culturally and developmentally appropriate.

Tips for Engaging Adolescents

Share information in a way that supports awareness

Atmosphere

Create a safe/brave and supportive atmosphere for an open conversation.

Topic

Present from a health perspective rather than a behavioural intervention.

Approachable

Leave options for further discussion and questions beyond the presentation.

Interesting

Create a variety of methods to present information.

The Youth Prevention Survey Understanding Youth Perceptions of Alcohol, Drugs, and Sex. (2014).

Cultural Awareness

WORKING WITH YOUTH IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

HOLISTIC

Culturally diverse people view education as holistic, lifelong and essential to economic livelihood.

LEARNING

Learning requires both formal and informal opportunities for all ages. Learning development must focus in a holistic manner on spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical selves and acknowledge and foster gifts and abilities.

INTEGRAL

Consider all aspects of one's land, knowledge, skills, language and culture as part of the learning and education process.

OUR BELIEFS

Messages we want to send to adolescents

- **FASD IS PREVENTABLE.**
- **SAFEST NOT TO DRINK ALCOHOL DURING PREGNANCY.**
- **FASD AFFECTS EVERYONE.**

Paradigm Shift

Can you tell if someone has FASD by just looking at them?

PREVENTION
CONVERSATION

LET’S GET REAL ABOUT

CANNABIS

The Alberta Cannabis Scene

After alcohol, cannabis is the most widely used psychoactive substance in Canada.

The cannabis plant contains **more than 400 chemicals.** Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the main active chemical in the cannabis plant that gives people who use it a ‘high.’ THC affects areas of the brain that control memory, concentration, and coordination. Cannabidiol (CBD) is an active chemical in the cannabis plant that’s used for medicinal purposes.

30 GRAMS
PERSONAL LIMIT

18+
LEGAL AGE LIMIT

Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Commission (2020)

Cannabis Quick Facts

- Cannabis can affect **everyone differently**.
- Use of cannabis can **impact your day-to-day life**, well-being and long-term health.
- **Bodies born female** are more sensitive to cannabis (and other substance use) than **bodies born male**.
- **Inhaling cannabis** is the most harmful route of administration.
- **Avoid combining** cannabis with alcohol, tobacco or other drugs
- Ingesting cannabis (edibles) takes longer to take affect
- **Don’t use and drive**
  Cannabis reaction time, coordination and concentration, increasing your chances of being in a motor vehicle collision.
- **No cannabis** during pregnancy is safest.

Although cannabis is legal for adults 18+, your brain continues to develop until your mid-20s. Cannabis can affect brain development.

AGLC, aglc.ca/Cannabis AB, 2020
https://cannabissense.ca/health-effects/cannabis-use-guidelines

GROUP ACTIVITIES

- “Why Don’t & Do Teens Use Birth Control” Brainstorm
- “Excuses & Responses” Condom Negotiation Activity
- “Why Youth Use & Don’t Use Substances” Brainstorm
- Values Activity
- Qualities of a Healthy Relationship
- Problematic Use Brainstorm
- Drug/Alcohol Abstinence Brainstorm
- STI Risk Game

teen talk

Guide Sheet for Facilitators

- Below each of the slides are footnotes for the educators.
- These include discussion questions as well as additional information to discuss with the group.
- It is recommended that the educators familiarize themselves with the footnotes prior to presenting to the group.

Guide Sheet for Facilitators

Before you Present Consider the Following:

- The age of your group
- The developmental level of your group
- Reading level (the slides have been delivered on average to a grade 7-8 reading level)
- Does the group have any learning or developmental disabilities of which you should be aware?

  *This can impact the type of language you use. If this is the case, you may have to adjust how you deliver the material.
- The community that you are in – be inclusive to cultures, genders, beliefs, etc.
- What has the group being exposed to prior to this presentation in terms of education and awareness?
- What topics are appropriate for your group

  Ex. You may present to a group with religious/cultural background where some of these topics may not be encouraged to discuss

LET'S GET REAL ... About sex and drinking

Guide Sheet for Facilitators

Presentation Breakdown

This gives the educators a chance to determine, based on their group, which slides they may wish to exclude.

Slides 21-30: The topics discussed here are alcohol and how **alcohol** affects brain functioning. Alcohol consumption is not discouraged, but rather the importance of safe drinking is encouraged. If the group you are presenting to belongs to a group where only the abstinence of alcohol message is welcome, skip the appropriate slides accordingly.

Slides 30-38: These slides introduce **sex,** and the role alcohol can play. The very important topic of sexual consent is discussed here. We believe this is an important topic for all groups.

LET'S GET REAL ... About sex and drinking

Guide Sheet for Facilitators

Presentation Breakdown

Slides 37-48: These slides address topics around safe sex and contraception use and types including abortion. If the group you are presenting belongs to a community group where only the abstinence of sex message is welcomed and contraception is strongly discouraged, skip the applicable slides accordingly.

For younger groups or those who may have developmental delays it is still important to discuss the types of contraception available . The message here to present how contraception can prevent unplanned pregnancies and that before a youth is ready to have sex, they should consider a method of contraception.

Highlight the importance of role models or responsible adults they can talk to about accessing contraception.

Guide Sheet for Facilitators

Presentation Breakdown

Slide 33: This slide discuss components around healthy pregnancies. Promotion of healthy pregnancies is we believe beneficial to all age groups and populations.

Slide 44: This slide discusses options if there is belief that a person may be pregnant, including, Plan B, Abortions and pregnancy tests (appropriate for groups that are likely sexually active or thinking about becoming sexually active).

Slides 51- 75: This portion of the presentation introduces FASD. There is a true & false section about the impacts of drinking during pregnancy. Again, we believe that this is important information for youth, regardless of beliefs around alcohol, as we want to promote public awareness.

Slide 75: Video about FASD. If you have time, show the group and ask the discussion questions in the footnotes to help engage the group in conversation, e.g., assumptions people make without knowing a person's history. We want to teach the youth that each person has their own unique story regardless of diagnosis.

Slide 86: This slide introduces cannabis into the conversation as this is now a legal substance in Canada and one that many youth will try. Although the priority of this presentation is about FASD and therefore, alcohol, it is important that we share our clear message that it is *safest not to use cannabis during pregnancy.*

LET'S GET REAL ... About sex and drinking

Guide Sheet for Facilitators

Presentation Breakdown

Group activities

At the end of the *Training Manual* as well as the *Adolescent Presentation*, there are group activities with the appropriate links to the instructions. Educators should familiarize themselves with these activities so that they can then use them during the presentation period. Again, know the group and choose an activity that will be may be most beneficial/impactful for the group.

Guide Sheet for Facilitators

Additional Resources for Educating Adolescents on Alcohol/Sex

• CAMH Publication on Adolescents and Alcohol
http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/a_z_mental_health_and_addiction_information/alcohol/Documents/about_alcohol.pdf

•Alberta Health Services Document- Adolescents and Alcohol
https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/amh/if-amh-alcohol-and-adolescents.pdf

• Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse: Youth and Alcohol
https://www.ccsa.ca/youth-and-alcohol-lrdg-summary

•Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse: Youth and Alcohol
https://www.ccsa.ca/youth-and-alcohol-lrdg-summary

• CanFASD
https://canfasd.ca/

LET'S GET REAL ... About sex and drinking

Guide Sheet for Facilitators

Additional Resources for Educating Adolescents on Alcohol/Sex

•Apps/Online Tools for Alcohol and Adolescents

• SayingWhen App- helps people reduce/quit drinking

• Wellness and Mental Health for Youth: www.Mindyourmind.ca

• **Apps/Online Tools for Alcohol and Sex**

• SexPositive App- talks about STIs and consent

• Sexual Health Guide App- sexual health terms, contraceptives, sexual problems, etc.

•MySexDoctor App- 100 things to know, relationships, puberty/anatomy, etc.

•Website for teens by teens: https://sexetc.org/

•For Educators or Parents on teaching Sexual Health: https://teachingsexualhealth.ca/

•Information about sexual and reproductive health: www.sexualityandu.ca

LET'S GET REAL ... About sex and drinking

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LET'S GET REAL ... About sex and drinking

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LET'S GET REAL ... About sex and drinking

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LET'S GET REAL ... About sex and drinking

Credits

1. The Prevention Conversation: A Shared Responsibility, FASD Initiatives, Government of Alberta, *Let's Get Real…About sex and drinking*

1. FASD Adolescent Prevention Conversation Advisory Team

2. FASD Adolescent Prevention Conversation Development Team (Paul Pringle, Mallory Trepanier, Danielle Perry)

1. Sandfly Marketing Inc. – Branding, design, layout, and revisions