

Sarnia FASD Conference 2008

February 8th & 9th, 2008

"The Elephant in the room"



FASlink Fetal Alcohol Disorders Society

Bruce Ritchie
2448 Hamilton Road
Bright's Grove, Ontario N0N 1C0
Phone (519) 869-8026
Cellular Phone: (519) 331-6408
Website: www.faslink.org/sarconf2008.htm
E-mail: info@faslink.org

[These pages](#)
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[One page POSTER](#)

What: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and other Disabilities Conference. Continuing education opportunity and FASlink fundraiser.

Who should attend:

Physicians, psychologists and other health workers, teachers, social workers, justice (lawyers, Crowns, Judges, police and corrections), parents (birth, foster, adoptive and grandparents), caregivers and students.

Where: Grace United Church, 990 Cathcart Blvd., Sarnia, ON

When: February 8th & 9th, 2008

Why:

Disabilities may have varying diagnoses but often the needed services are very similar. Many overlap into several fields and agencies. Organizations providing services to those with invisible disabilities are invited to present workshops at this conference.

Conference Registration: (Friday & Saturday)



- Registration includes a copy of the FASlink CD, (210 MB of FASD information, resources, and tools).

A. [Professionals and Agency Registration:](#) [Register](#)

1. Full Conference \$250.00. Includes breaks, lunch, and Friday dinner with entertainment & speaker.
2. Full Conference without Friday dinner \$225.00
3. Friday only \$175.00. Includes breaks, lunch, and dinner with entertainment and speaker.
4. Friday only \$150.00. Includes breaks, lunch. No dinner with entertainment and speaker.
5. Saturday only \$150.00. Includes breaks and lunch.
6. Agencies with group of 3 or more staff attending - 25% discount

B. [Family and Student Registration:](#) [Register](#) Parent(s) of a child with significant disabilities, not representing an agency. Students. Children attend the conference at no charge. Families with disabilities are always in survival mode.

1. Full conference Friday and Saturday. Includes breaks and lunch. \$125.00 for 1 adult or \$200.00 for two adults in the same family attending.
2. Friday evening dinner with entertainment and speaker, add \$25.00 each adult. Children under 12 at no charge.
3. Saturday only. Includes breaks and lunch. \$75.00 for 1 adult or \$125.00 for two adults in the same family attending.

C. **Saturday Evening Fundraising Concert**

After the conference, kick back and relax at an evening concert. A number of guest artists will be sharing their considerable talents. Music styles include easy listening, classical, jazz, R&B, pop and drums. The concert is open to all, including the general public. The purpose is to help raise funds to sustain FASlink.

- [Registration Form to mail](#)

[Who is FASlink:](#)

FASlink is the leading Canadian FASD information, support, advocacy and communications resource, annually serving more than 400,000 parents (birth, foster, adoptive and grandparents), caregivers, adults with FASD, doctors and other health workers, teachers, social workers, judges, lawyers, law enforcement, corrections, students, and government policy makers. The FASlink Archives provide more than 110,000 FASD related documents on-line. The FASlink Discussion Forum shares about 50 letters daily with its hundreds of members. In the summer of 2007, the Great FASD Horseback Ride Across Canada for FASD Awareness trekked from

Halifax to Victoria (4 months and 22,000 km round trip).

Preliminary program: Please check back regularly as the sessions and presenters are updated.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

Overview - [Bruce Ritchie, Moderator, FASlink Fetal Alcohol Disorders Society](#)

A new look at FASD incidence rates. FASD has been grossly under-diagnosed. New research indicates the rate of FASD in the general population is probably over 10%. Under-diagnosis has led to substantial under-funding for family supports, services and research, and for appropriate training for front-line workers. 79% of children are prenatally exposed to alcohol, including 37% prenatally exposed to binge drinking (5+ drinks per occasion). More than 21% of students in a 28,000 student population are receiving Special Education services, most for conditions of types known to be caused by prenatal alcohol exposure. A review of primary and cascade conditions linked to prenatal alcohol exposure.

Diagnosis, Intervention, Medication - [Dr. Ian Connor, Pediatrician](#) and [Bruce Ritchie](#)

Early diagnosis and intensive intervention are keys to success. Canadian Diagnostic Criteria for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. Comparison of diagnostic indicators for FASD with other conditions and co-morbid diagnoses. Useful screening tools. New research directions and tools. Impediments to diagnosis.

Vision Issues - [Dr. Murari Patodia, HBSc, MD, FRCSC, D.Amer. B. Ophth. Eye Physician & Surgeon](#)

Prenatal alcohol exposure can manifest from minor to profound vision problems.

Autism Spectrum Disorders - [Susan Fentie, RN, Past President, Sarnia/Lambton Chapter of Autism Society Ontario, Cofounder, Ontario Autism Coalition](#)

Educating children with FASD - [Allan Mountford, B.A., B.P.E., B.Ed., M.Ed.](#)

Our children can learn and succeed. They just do so differently.

Parenting -

Strategies, not solutions. Shadow siblings - Children growing up with siblings who have special needs. Living with FASD.

Keeping the family together - [David Ashdown - President, CCMF - Community Concerns for the Medically Fragile.](#)

Households with disabilities are always in "survival mode".

Having a child with special needs is a constant, never-ending series of challenges - emotional, financial and physical, and the stress can easily overwhelm even the strongest and most positive individuals. There are a number of strategies that you can employ to help you cope with the never-ending roller coaster ride, which can help to preserve your relationship, make it stronger, and help keep your life in balance.

Nutrition -

Prenatal alcohol exposure can cause major issues in eating and swallowing (choking), food taste and texture sensitivity, digestion, and elimination of waste, including bowel insensitivity/constipation and late development of bowel and bladder control.

Many children with FASD have gluten and/or casein intolerance. This can cause significant behavioural issues along with physical distress. A change in diet can often result in a major improvement in behaviour. The section on gluten and casein intolerance is based primarily on the work of Diane Black, Ph.D. in the Netherlands. She has provided a summary of nutritional measures which have helped children with FASD. None of these measures are new, indeed many of these ideas come from literature on alcoholism, autism, schizophrenia or other mental disorders. Dr. Black is a biochemical researcher. If any of the ideas seem applicable to your child, discuss them with your doctor, nutritionist, or naturopath.

Trauma & Loss - [Joanne Morris, B.A., E.C.E., O.A.T.R., B.Ed.](#)

Failure, rejection, depression are part of FASD. Joanne will introduce the concept of using art therapy and play therapy interventions to help children with FASD cope with anxiety due to issues relating to trauma and loss. Joanne is a Registered Art Therapist, certified as a School Specialist and Consultant in Trauma and Loss. She is a certified Primary/Junior Teacher with Special Education qualifications. Joanne has received referrals and provided structured Trauma and Loss programs for pre-school, school-age children and young adults in her studio/playroom since 1994 in Bright's Grove.

Justice - [Doreen Reid](#), FASD Project Coordinator, Community Justice Division, Department of Justice, Government of the NWT, Yellowknife, NT.

Individuals with FASD are highly concrete in their thinking, are impulsive, may not learn from past mistakes, may not recognize social cues, and may not be able to predict consequences of their actions. All laws are abstract rules of a society's customs. Often the difference between courting and seduction versus sexual assault is merely finesse. Punishment does not cure brain injury; yet the vast majority of inmates can be diagnosed with FASD. There are those with FASD from whom the public needs protection and those with FASD who need to be protected from society's predators. Alternatives.

Alcohol issues - [Connie Swift](#)

has been part of AL-ANON, a support group for family and friends to understand the disease of Alcoholism.

Screening, intervention, treatment, recovery.

Supporting families at risk -

Adults with FASD - [Margaret Sprenger](#)

Succeeding as an adult. The need for an external brain is ongoing, but with the right supports in place, adults with FASD can be successful and productive. Paying bills on time, staying off the streets and out of jail. Mother Hen.

Careers - [Connie Burrowes](#) and [Morrell McCurrach](#)

jobStart - Your Path to Success... (Community Living Sarnia-Lambton)

jobStart is a free eight -week interactive job readiness program for persons with disabilities which focuses on job retention. It is funded by Service Canada's Opportunities Fund. Due to the changes in the ODSP Employment Supports system, pre-employment activities and assessments are no longer funded. This workshop allows us to assess participants before we contact employers, ensuring they are job ready and to make the best job match. We have confidence they are motivated and have the ability to be successful in keeping the job.

The content will include:

- Eligibility for the Workshop
 - Curriculum content - ice breakers, group activities and exercises; providing participants the skills to be better employees
 - Effective facilitating ensuring all learning styles are addressed
 - Community Partnerships including guest speakers, employers
 - Marketing Workshop
 - Self Esteem Workshop
 - Placement ideas that result in jobs
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Awareness - [Bruce Ritchie](#)

FASlink provides research, support, information and communications for more than 400,000 people annually through the website at www.faslink.org . The online FASlink Archives provide free access to more than 130,000 FASD related documents. The online FASlink Discussion Forum serves more than 500 professionals, families, groups and students who share about 50 letters daily.

The Great FASD Horseback Ride Across Canada 2007 was the first Canadian national FASD awareness campaign. The trek took 4 months and covered 22,000 km and yielded 2,700 photographs and 7+ hours of video. Events were held in communities across Canada.

Prevention and Intervention -

Resources - Financial and Legal

Government programs; Discretionary Trusts and Wills.

Many resources for supporting children, families and adults dealing with disabilities are not well known. This session will discuss government programs and resource such as Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities, Assistive Devices Program, Special Services at Home, Ontario Disabilities Support Program. It will also discuss support organizations such as FASlink.

Costs - [Bruce Ritchie](#)

Prenatal exposure to alcohol costs everyone dearly. The beverage alcohol industry contributes about \$3.2 billion annually to governments in Canada. The fallout costs are far greater in health care, education, justice, social services and education budgets as well as the costs of accidents, business productivity losses and in family violence. Police services across Canada estimate that more than 80% of occurrences they deal with involve alcohol. The direct costs to prenatally affected individuals and their families are astronomical. This section will examine the various costs.

Learning Disabilities - [Joanne Cully](#), President, Learning Disabilities Association of Lambton County.

Hearing Issues - [Christine Feige BC-HIS, Board Certified Hearing Instrument Specialist](#)

Prenatal alcohol exposure can affect both physical hearing and cause Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD).

Stress and Distress - [Lin Oliver, CEO, Sarnia Holistic Healing Centre](#)

Presenters confirmed to-date:

Bruce Ritchie, QS, BA, FMC, ITP, APWFASD - Moderator, CEO, [FASlink Fetal Alcohol Disorders Society](#). Parent with 20+ years in the FASD field. Recipient of the Toronto St. Michael's Hospital "Award for Pioneer Work in the Area of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder". Led the Great FASD Horseback Ride Across Canada for FASD Awareness (2007 - 4 months & 22,000 km). Recipient of First Nations' Eagle Feathers and Métis Nation Honour Sash. A founding director of the Fetal Alcohol Support Network in 1991.

He designs knowledge management systems and is a life-long advocate for children's issues. He publishes the FASlink website, CD's and other educational material and is Moderator of the very active on-line discussion forum that shares about 50 letters daily with the members. He also deals with many direct queries from the general public and speaks regularly at seminars and conferences. He has established precedents in family law and courtroom procedure, was a charter member of Family Mediation Canada, and is a published researcher, author and musician. He has served for many years on School Councils and has been active in youth services, such as Scouts Canada, as well as serving on the Board of Directors of the International Symphony Orchestra.

David Ashdown - President, CCMF - [Community Concerns for the Medically Fragile](#).

Through the years, Community Concerns for the Medically Fragile (CCMF) has advocated the needs of medically fragile children, youth and adults in our society. These individuals, often the most vulnerable of our citizens, have not been forgotten because of the passion and belief of those who speak for them. It was that passion and belief that eventually brought about the construction of the home for the medically fragile located behind Pathways at 1212 Michigan Avenue in Sarnia Ontario. This was a joint venture of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Ontario March of Dimes, The Rotary Club of Sarnia and CCMF. It has shown what can be accomplished when different caring groups come together for a common good.

Allan Mountford, B.A., B.P.E., B.Ed., M.Ed. Writer and researcher. Allan teaches for a large district school board in southern Ontario in a Section 20 program for aggressive adolescents, many with FASD. He presents to educators through university additional qualification courses, and to health, police service and corrections organizations. He has participated on numerous committees with Health Canada and HRDC. Allan works with First Nations communities across Canada toward FASD solutions. He has authored two handbooks for educators of children with FASD, "Cause it's not my fault: A handbook for educators of adolescents with FAS", and "The Golden Hoop of Life A Community of Hope: A handbook for caregivers of children ages 3 to 6 with FASD". For several years he sat on the Council of the Native Cultural Centre f Durham Region, and follows the teachings of his Ojibway heritage. (Wolf Clan). Allan is from Viewlake, ON. He can be reached at (705) 324-7801 or, on-line at mountfrd@allstream.net

Dr. Ian Connor, MD, Paediatrician. Well known and respected Sarnia paediatrician. Recently retired from daily office practice but continues serving the Lambton County hospitals neonatal units.

Dr. Murari Patodia, HBsc, MD, FRCSC, D.Amer. B. Ophth. Eye Physician & Surgeon. Internationally known eye specialist.

Joanne Morris, B.A., E.C.E., O.A.T.R., B.Ed.

Joanne will introduced the concept of using art therapy and play therapy interventions to help children with FASD cope with anxiety due to issues relating to trauma and loss. Joanne is a Registered Art Therapist, certified as a School Specialist and Consultant in Trauma and Loss. She is a certified Primary/Junior Teacher with Special Education qualifications. Joanne has received referrals and provided structured Trauma and Loss programs for pre-school, school-age children and young adults in her studio/playroom since 1994 in Bright's Grove.

Doreen Reid, FASD Project Coordinator, Community Justice Division, Department of Justice, Government of the NWT, Yellowknife, NT.

Margaret Sprenger, Owen Sound FASD support group co-ordinator. Adult support worker and consultant. Recipient of the Toronto St. Michael's Hospital "Award for Pioneer Work in the Area of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders".

Susan Fentie, Past President, Sarnia/Lambton Chapter of Autism Society Ontario. Cofounder, Ontario Autism Coalition, a team that organizes awareness rallies province-wide regarding autism and services needed. Sarnia/Lambton Mayor's Honour List, 2005. "Newsmakers of the Year" list, Sarnia Observer, 2005. Graduated Magna Cum Laude. Associates Degree of Nursing. Featured –

along with her family -- in a DVD highlighting ASO's presence in the community, and programs offered. Frequent guest on Sarnia's CHOK radio. She speaks about autism and the rights and needs of autistic individuals on their hour-long "Talk Back" and also "Live With Lee" show. Interviewed frequently by reporters regarding the challenges, rights, and issues which autistic individuals face. Media Representative, Sarnia/Lambton Chapter of Autism Society Ontario. Active member of the Sarnia/Lambton Chamber of Commerce since 2005. Holds an Associates Degree of Nursing. Graduated Magna Cum Laude. She is a Registered Nurse specializing in high-risk obstetrics / labor & delivery / newborn / post-partum care. Duties included emergency management of patients / staff / anesthesia, staffing of the units for NICU and Labor / Delivery / Post-Partum, rounds for quality assurance and patient relations, scheduling, and physician relations.

Lin Oliver - CEO, [Sarnia Holistic Healing Centre](#)

Christine Feige BC-HIS, Board Certified Hearing Instrument Specialist, President of ActivEars Hearing Centres, Co-Chair of Advisory educational group for Conestoga College's Hearing Instrument Specialist Program. Speaking on Consequences of un-treated Hearing Loss for Adults & Children.

Connie Swift

has been part of the support group, AL-ANON, a support group to understand the disease of Alcoholism. She will speak on what it has taught her and how AL-ANON can help others.

Connie Burrowes

- Working in the social service field for over 18 years, Connie has specialized in Employment for the last 9 and currently supervises the jobStart pre-employment workshop for Community Living Sarnia-Lambton. As a certified Personality Dimensions® facilitator, Certified Lifeskills Coach and Nonviolent Crisis Prevention Intervention trainer, she was instrumental in developing and continues to facilitate the highly successful jobStart workshop by assisting clients with their return to work action plans. Connie has been successful in securing funding from different levels of government including Service Canada and the Trillium Foundation in Ontario.

Morrell McCurrach -

Having worked in over fifteen different fields for the past thirty eight years, Morrell is very familiar with what employers expect from their employees. She is familiar with how important first appearances are, job searching, the interview process, selling yourself and your strengths, having a good work ethic, and motivation. She believes that our self esteem has a great deal to do with our failures and successes and learning how to nurture our own, can greatly improve our chances for success.

Joanne Cully, President, Learning Disabilities Association of Lambton County.