

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ACKNOWLEDGES INTERNATIONAL FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER AWARENESS DAY

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Health acknowledges that September 9th, 2013 is recognized as International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Day. This year also marks the 40th year since of the creation of the term Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). FASDs are a group of conditions that can cause birth defects and developmental disabilities in a baby whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy.

“Moms have important opportunities to improve the health of their babies before birth,” said state Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “These steps include scheduling regular prenatal visits with a health care professional, taking a prenatal vitamin and avoiding alcohol during pregnancy.”

FASDs are 100% preventable if a woman does not drink during pregnancy. Women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy should make sure to talk with their health care provider about strategies for avoiding alcohol consumption during pregnancy. There is no cure for FASDs, but research shows that early intervention treatment services can improve a child’s development. The Florida Center for Early Childhood, the first FASD clinic in the state, offers screening and diagnostic services for families in need. They can be reached at (800) 587-1385 or via the web:

<http://www.thefloridacenter.org/FASD.php>.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Facts

- Alcohol use during pregnancy can cause birth defects and developmental disabilities collectively known as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs).
- Signs of FASDs can be both physical such as poor coordination or intellectual such as poor memory.
- There is no guaranteed safe level of alcohol use at any time during pregnancy or when trying to get pregnant. All kinds of alcohol should be avoided, including red or white wine, beer, and liquor.
- Alcohol can cause problems for a developing baby throughout pregnancy, including before a woman knows she is pregnant.
- According to the 2011, Florida Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring Survey (PRAMS) 8% of mothers report alcohol use during pregnancy.

To learn more about birth defects visit The Florida Birth Defects Registry www.fbdr.org. For more information on FASDs visit www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd. To join the fight against FASDs visit www.fasd-fl.org

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