

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: An Explosion of Information!

By Arleta James, PCC

There has been an explosion in the information related to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)! This is wonderful news for pre- and post-adoptive families—domestic and international. Pre-adoption, prospective families will definitely want to familiarize themselves with the long-term impact alcohol exposure can have on a child. Post-adoption, parents of children with FASD need support, resources, parenting tools, educational strategies, etc. Knowledge certainly influences outcomes for adoptees, parents, brothers and sisters!



As the fast pace of life can often make it difficult to sift through the Internet, library, catalogs, etc. to find just the right book, movie, article, blog, listserv or website, I took some time to gather 10+ FASD resources. You can click on the hyperlinks and find what you need—easily and quickly!

Websites

[National Organization for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome \(NOFAS\)](#)

NOFAS clarifies the different terms we now use to describe the child's alcohol-related difficulties in their [NOFAS FAQs](#): What is FASD? What is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome? What is Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND)? What is Alcohol-related Birth Defects? NOFAS provides fact sheets,

- [FASD: What everyone should know](#)
- [FASD: What the foster care system should know](#)
- [FASD: What the School System should know about Affected Students](#)
- [FASD Identification](#)
- [FASD Intervention](#)
- [And more...](#)

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Welcoming a Brother or Sister by Adoption: From Navigating New Relationships to Building a Loving Family (Jessica-Kinsley Publishers - <http://www.jkp.com/>, 2013)

NOFAS has affiliates located throughout the US and England. Like the national office, these affiliates offer free screening, support groups, advocacy and legislative initiatives and educational about FASD. There is also a [state-by-state directory](#) of additional resources available to parents and professionals.

[Children's Research Triangle](#)

Directed by Ira Chasnoff, the Children's Research Triangle has as its vision that all children, no matter what challenges or disabilities they may face, have a safe and nurturing childhood and receive the support necessary to lead happy and fulfilled lives. Much of their work is with children exposed to alcohol and other drugs pre-natally. They offer a full array of services—evaluation through treatment. Dr. Chasnoff is considered a leading expert in alcohol-related effects upon children. Dr. Chasnoff has conducted workshops at several [Association for the Treatment and Training in the Attachment of Children \(ATTACH\) annual conferences](#). Visit the ATTACH website and purchase the CD of Ira's seminar.

Of course, you'll want to look at works by Ira Chasnoff and colleagues including,

- [The Listening Heart](#)—This video chronicles the day-to-day challenges of children, parents, and families who struggle with the consequences of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS).
- [The Mystery of Risk: Drugs, Alcohol, Pregnancy and the Vulnerable Child](#) - distills the complex process of attunement a substance-exposed child and parent undergo as the child grows from infancy to adulthood
- [Risk and Promise: A Handbook for Parents Adopting a Child from Overseas](#)—The first two sections of this book provide prospective adoptive parents with information as it will come to them during the adoption process. Then, there is information that focuses on the impact of specific traumas the child may have experienced. The book concludes with worksheets that parents can fill out, while abroad, to help them collect baseline information that will be helpful in both the short and long term.

Books for Each Member of the Family

More books are available than ever before! Below are titles for each member of the adoptive family!

[My Invisible World: Life with My Brother, His Disability and His Service Dog](#) by Morasha Winokur. This young author is sister to a brother with FASD. She chronicles her experiences, and simultaneously makes public the tragedy of FASD. Wow! A book that offers a view from the siblings' shoes! This is essential reading for parents and professionals!

[Braided Cord: Tough Times In and Out](#) by Liz Kulp, Jodee Kulp and Karl Kulp. The primary author states, "I was born an addict and ever since I was tiny I have overdone, overlooked or overwhelmed myself. I was born with FASD. The most difficult parts of my life are caused from my brain, which was probably the most affected. I have trouble learning new things. I live in a world that is louder, softer, harder, scratchier, noisier, shakier, slippery and more chaotic than most of the people reading this. I want you to imagine what it is like to feel the seams of your socks, the label on your clothes, the flicker of fluorescent lights, the mumbings and rumblings of every noise around you, and then try to learn new things. Overwhelming. Yes, that is what it is often for me." Definitely a book to read to understand your child and gain empathy for their day-to-day struggles! Liz also co-authored, [The Best I Can Be: Living with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Effects](#).

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[Forgetful Frankie, The World's Greatest Rock Skipper, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder](#) by Jill and Katherine Bobula. Forgetful Frankie has FASD. Frankie creates a wonderful world full of fun and forgets about the rules and consequences. He shares the challenges and joys of living with FASD. *Forgetful Frankie* is a book for kids with FASD, and for kids to learn to help learn to tolerate those with difference

[Fantastic Antone Succeeds: Experiences in Educating Children with FASD](#) and [Fantastic Antone Grows Up](#) by Judith Kleinfeld. A dynamic duo covering all aspects of dealing with FASD in the academic arena, the meaning of success for a child with FASD, strategies that work and the types of supports beneficial to these kids and their families.

[Our FAScinating Journey: Keys to Brain Potential Along the Path of Prenatal Brain Injury](#) by Jodee Kulp, [Damaged Angels: An Adoptive Mother's Struggle to Understand the Tragic Toll of Alcohol in Pregnancy](#) by Bonnie Buxton and [Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: A Guide for Families and Communities](#), by Ann Streissguth are classic books that provide a depth of understanding of this disorder and ways to help these children, adolescents and adults.