

September **FASD** FASD TSAF

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

Awareness Month



ABLE2 is participating in the national campaign raising awareness of hidden disability.

(September 7, 2023) On September 9, 2023, the **Ottawa Sign in the ByWard Market** in Ottawa will be lit up **red** as part of a national campaign to **raise awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)**.

September 1st marks the start of FASD Awareness Month. Landmarks and monuments in provinces from coast to coast will be lighting up red on **International FASD Awareness Day on September 9th and throughout the month of September.** This year's national theme for FASD Awareness Month is *Uniting Our Strengths: Finding Solutions Together*. FASD is a very complex issue that intersects with many different fields. The impacts of FASD matter to the whole community. We all have a role to play and need to work together to find solutions.

FASD is a lifelong disability that impacts the brain and body of individuals who were exposed to alcohol during fetal development. Despite being one of Canada's leading neurodevelopmental disabilities (impacting more than autism, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome combined), FASD is often overlooked by community members and leaders alike. This campaign hopes to shine light on this hidden disability and promote action to address it.

Saturday, September 9, 10:00 to 11:00 am: Ottawa FASD Walk, City Hall

The **Ottawa FASD Walk** in partnership with **Health Nexus** will consist of a 0.9 km walk (representing the length of time for a full-term pregnancy) around the perimeter of the City Hall grounds, **Deputy Mayor Gower proclaiming September 9th as International FASD Awareness Day in Ottawa, Keynote speaker Shannon Butt, a dance performance by Ottawa's Propeller Dance and the raising of the FASD flag.**

ABLE2 will be hosting two virtual **educational webinars on FASD** through its ABLE2 Grow Education Series:

Tuesday, September 5, 6:00 to 8:30 pm via Zoom: *FASD 101*

To launch FASD Awareness Month, the ABLE2 Fetal Alcohol Resource Program (FARP) will be giving an introductory presentation on fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). This presentation is for anyone in the community who may not know anything about FASD but want to learn about a disability that impacts approximately 4% of the Canadian population.

FASD 101 will give a general overview of how FASD is acquired, how it impacts a person with FASD both internally and externally, and what considerations need to be made to accommodate people who have FASD. This will be an one-hour presentation with time at the end for questions or discussion.

<https://www.able2.org/events/able2-grow-fasd-101/>

Wednesday, September 27, 6:30 to 8:00 pm via Zoom: *FASD and the Criminal Justice System: Clinical and Legal Perspectives*

Individuals living with FASD are often over-represented in the criminal justice system, whether they are accused persons, witnesses, or victims of crime. While FASD research has contributed to a better understanding of how FASD affects individuals involved in the justice system, challenges still exist.

Join ABLE2's Reach Legal Services for a roundtable discussion on the clinical aspects of how FASD affects individuals involved with the justice system as well as legal implications. Topics of discussion will include legal considerations available for individuals with FASD at all stages of the criminal process, how individuals with FASD navigate the system as witnesses or victims of crimes, what supports are available, what needs to improve with the current system, and recommendations going forward.

Join Panel Speakers:

Dr. Mansfield Mela, Professor with the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Saskatchewan

Dr. Katharine Dunbar Winsor, Executive Director of the FASD Newfoundland and Labrador Research Network,

Dr. Kaitlyn McLachlan, Associate Professor at the University of Guelph

<https://www.able2.org/events/able2-grow-fasd-and-the-criminal-justice-system-clinical-and-legal-perspectives/>

ABOUT ABLE2:

ABLE2 believes in an inclusive community where all people are seen as able, respected, and valued. People with disabilities face many challenges including stigma, accessibility, social isolation, discrimination, and inequity. Our programs and services empower persons of all ages across the disability spectrum and their families to build lives of meaning and joy as valued members of our community.

QUOTES:

“To launch FASD Awareness month ABLE2 is hosting the annual Ottawa FASD Walk with our partner Health Nexus to celebrate International FASD Awareness Day and conducting two education webinars. The Ottawa FASD Walk will bring together people with FASD, their families, stakeholders, and partners to raise awareness, educate the community and celebrate the accomplishments of people with FASD. Each person with FASD has both strengths and challenges and needs support to assist them to live the lives they want, lives of meaning and joy.” **Heather Lacey, Executive Director, ABLE2**

BACKGROUND:

First celebrated in 1999, FASD day is devoted to raising awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and to improve prevention, diagnosis, and support for individuals with FASD and their families. FASD Day was first started by three (3) parent advocates from Canada and the United States and is now a global movement. The International FASD Awareness Day, which is observed on September 9th (the 9th day of the 9th month representing 9 months of pregnancy) was chosen to highlight the importance of going alcohol free for the full nine months of pregnancy.

In 2013 Red Shoes Rock, which started as grass roots movement, has now gained global recognition, sees people who attend FASD events wearing their red shoes to bring attention to this disability.

In 2020 the Government of Canada officially recognised September as FASD awareness month.

Contact:

Nancy Oakley
ABLE2, Director of Development and Community Engagement
noakley@able2.org
613-513-7799

#ABLE2FASD
#FASDMonth2023

Facebook: [facebook.com/ABLE2Ott](https://www.facebook.com/ABLE2Ott)

Twitter: [@ABLE2Ott](https://twitter.com/ABLE2Ott)

Instagram: [@able2ott](https://www.instagram.com/able2ott)

Ottawa Light Up: tag [@ottawamarkets](https://www.instagram.com/ottawamarkets) when sharing photos

For more information on ABLE2 its FASD Awareness Month Activities, please visit:

<https://www.able2.org/events/>

For more information on ABLE2’s Fetal Alcohol Resource Program (FARP), please visit

<https://www.able2.org/programs/fetal-alcohol-resource-program/>

