

FASD News and Views



A Michigan Coalition for Fetal Alcohol Resources, Education and Support (MCFARES) Newsletter



Established in 2003

Questions We Are Asked

Question: *Our son is almost 11-years-old and has been with us since he was 3-years-old. He has a low-average IQ and is very impulsive and hyperactive. Starting around the age of 5, he would unwrap any Christmas present left under the tree before Christmas morning making a mess of the tree and the decorations around it. He tells us that he knows he's not supposed to touch the presents but each year, we'll find that he has gotten to the presents before Christmas morning. Over the last year or two he has started unwrapping presents at parties that we've attended often making the hosts and intended gift-recipients somewhat angry. How do we get him to leave the presents under the Christmas tree and stop opening presents that are not intended for him?*

Answer: Christmastime brings lots of excitement and lots of anticipation. It's often hard for children (and some adults) to refrain from taking a sneak peek at gifts before Christmas morning. The attraction of the presents is often too much to avoid for a child who is impulsive and emotionally immature. We want to arrange the environment to offer our children their greatest opportunity for success. For example, hiding the Christmas presents until Christmas morning will remove the temptation to sneak a peek at the gifts. Since he may go searching for the presents, hiding them off-site will completely remove his ability to get to them.

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For some of our children, the visual reminders of the season create heightened anxiety and impulsiveness. Consider holding off on decorating until very close to Christmas. When you do decorate, decorate minimally and monitor your son's anxiety level. If the decorations create anxiety (too much visual stimuli, too much change to the environment), say nothing to him and remove the decorations when he isn't around to watch.

When visiting during the holidays, review with your son the sequence of events for the gathering and monitor him very carefully. If possible, remove all stimuli, such as presents, that could be enticing to your son. If the event proves too stimulating for him, remove him to a quiet place, if possible, or leave the event.

When attending birthday parties or other events involving presents or other enticing objects, supervise your son closely during the party and find activities for him that will distract him from the presents. When attending parties or other events outside your home, consider the environment and make adjustments that will allow your son to enjoy the event. This article may

provide more insight into making adjustments to the environment to help your son be successful: "Who has to change? Trying their hardest, doing their best!" by Nathan Ory (https://static.fasdoutreach.ca/www/downloads/who_change.pdf). Parenting children who are affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol requires parenting techniques that will help keep the child's world structured and secure. Continue seeking support and information about how you might most appropriately structure his environment.

If you have any FASD-related questions, please send them to Charisse at charisse@mcfares.org

Macomb County FASDay, 2017

Each year, groups around the globe gather on or around September 9th to raise awareness of the dangers of alcohol use during pregnancy. On Saturday, September 9th in Macomb County, a small but mighty group met to recognize International FASDay. We enjoyed a tasty dinner and great conversation. Our group talked about the cause of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and what each of us could do to help prevent it and support affected individuals and families. We then learned about a 5k walk/run that Erin Wiedenbeck and fellow DECA students from Livonia Stevenson High School would be sponsoring for MCFARES. Then our group decorated t-shirts for the walk.



Q: What do you call a fake noodle?

A: An impasta!

From our friends Nicholas, Emily and Lukas

GoodSearch

Please consider helping MCFARES raise funds to support individuals and families who are affected by pre-natal exposure to alcohol. Each time you conduct a search at <http://www.goodsearch.com/>, a donation is made to MCFARES. Please designate MCFARES as your charity of choice. You can also use GoodShop for your on-line shopping needs. A percentage of your on-line purchases will be donated to MCFARES.

Amazon Smile

If you shop on-line with Amazon.com, please consider using this link: A donation to MCFARES will be made each time you shop: smile.amazon.com/ch/35-2394822



Michigan FASD Task Force 2016-2018

Goal #1: Make MCFARES as the NOFAS affiliate the clearinghouse for FASD information in Michigan and accumulate information regarding services and resources available for parents and professionals.

Goal #2: Educate all who come into contact with individuals who have an FASD for the purpose of improving lifelong outcomes by increasing access to information, to resources, referrals, screening tools, and intervention strategies.

Goal #3: Empower adults with FASD through screening, diagnosis, treatment and interventions, and support.

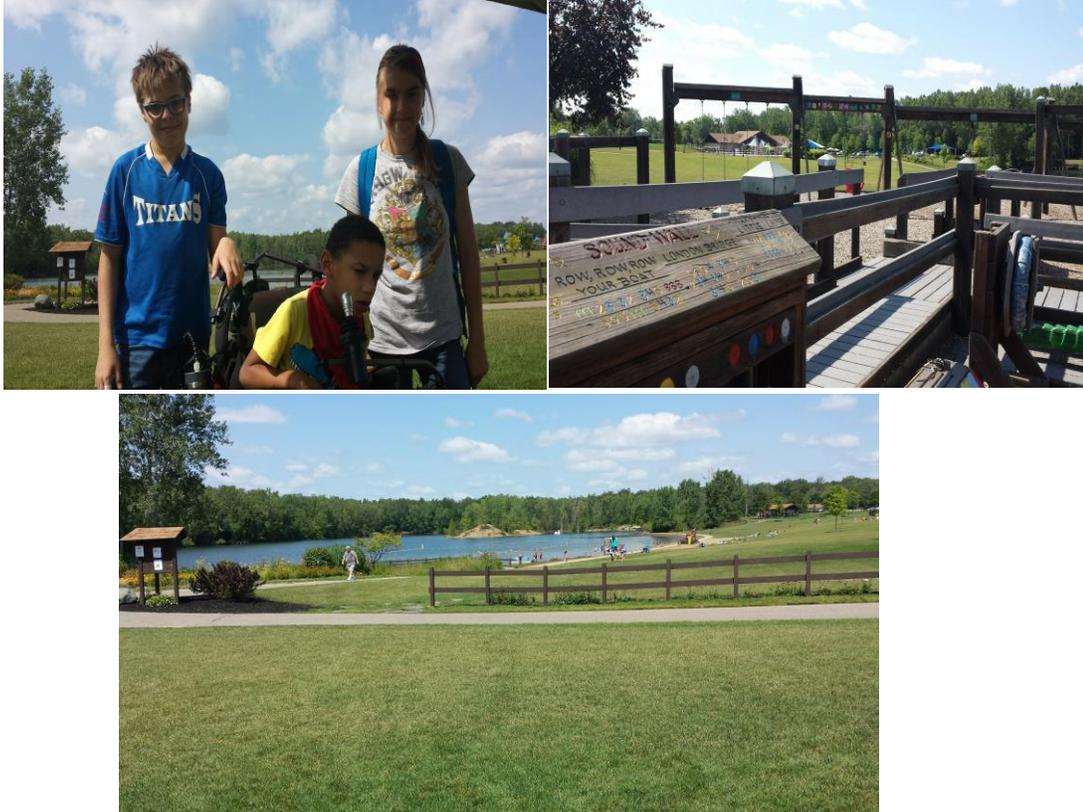
The Middle of Michigan FASD Meet-up

On Saturday, August 19th, two brave families shared a sun filled day at Hawk Island County Park in Lansing, Michigan. Yes, we were hoping for more families and friends but that was not to be for this first meet-up. If you have never been to Hawk Island Park, you are missing out! It is a wonderful slice of peace and beauty in the city. Hawk Island Lake has swimming, fishing and boat rental available. There is a fully accessible splash pad and play structure and lots of green grass surrounded by woods.

The Hagler and Smith families enjoyed lunch and snacks while relaxing, chatting and doing various activities. The day passed quickly. Brian Hagler took son, Chris, into the splash pad to cool off. Duncan Smith ran and scootered a 5K for a charity in Maine, The Least of These, providing food, hygiene products, backpacks and sleeping bags to Boston homeless on Thanksgiving Day. Jennifer Hagler enjoyed catching up on a movie and Gabby, Laurel and Steve Smith took walks, checked out the play structure and dipped in the lake at the beach.

Arriving at 11 a.m., we were able to set up our 2 shade coverings right by the splash pad and bathrooms. Perfect spot to be! The view was terrific, overlooking the lake and swimming beach. By early afternoon, it became rather crowded at the park, but there is enough room for many, many parties there.

Both the Hagler and Smith families would like to continue to have Middle of Michigan FASD Meet-up in the summer. We thought the end of July, 2018 would be nice. It would probably be the last Saturday in July.



MCFARES Fundraiser

Sponsored by Livonia Stevenson High School DECA Program

On Saturday, September 23rd, students from Livonia Stephenson High School DECA program sponsored a 5k walk/run to benefit MCFARES.

It was a hot, steamy evening for the Livonia Stephenson High School 5K run to benefit MCFARES. There were about 20 brave runners & walkers along with lots of support people. Everyone was very pleased to meet us. Two young men zipped around the course quickly. They are cross country runners, so it was a short run for them. With temperatures in the low 90's, it was still tough.



Braggs

Shianna, age 7, . . .

is loving her new day treatment school. She is focusing on peer interaction skills and has been much more regulated at home!

Megan, age 19 . . .

is in Hospital Housekeeping class, training at Henry Ford Macomb and Martha T. Berry hospitals. She is excited to learn new work skills.

Her softball team took 2nd place at Special Olympics Fall games.

Gabby and Duncan . . .

celebrated her 15th birthday a few days early while visiting Disney World in late September. Both Gabby and Duncan got to sit in the pilot's seat before take-off to fly to Florida.



Donate Time – Work with Us!

Do you have a few hours to spare? We have several different opportunities to help you put your spare time to good use. Do you like kids? Maybe you can enjoy Project S.A.F.E. with us and supervise the children after dinner so that parents have some time to talk. Do you have website-building skills? We'd love your help re-designing and updating the MCFARES website. Do you have newsletter-designing skills? We could use your help putting the quarterly MCFARES FASD News and Views newsletter together (we'll develop the content and you can organize it into the newsletter).

Kid Funny

Her: Mom what's your favit thing to do?

Me: sleep

Her: that's boring. What's your willy favit thing to do in the day?

Me: my favorite time is snuggle time with you. What's yours?

Her: being naked in the snow.

Pure Michigan



Tahquamenon Falls

FASD Brains

Gabby's interesting insight the other day: "Mom, how do you remember stuff from one day to another day? My brain doesn't do that even if I try to. Everything just goes away and I have to remember it again, brand new. Do you do that with a notebook or with a computer app? How did you know things for school tests if there weren't computers?"



Vision: The Coalition strengthens served communities' ability to eliminate prenatal alcohol exposure and provide support to persons and families impacted by fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) by delivering exemplary professional education, public awareness, and support.

Mission: Bridging the gap between individual needs and community services

To find out how you can help us work toward our vision and mission, contact us at info@mcfares.org.

Macomb County Summer Socialization Program

Feedback from Families

Students from Macomb and surrounding counties have the opportunity to attend a summer socialization program in Macomb County coordinated by the MISD. One student who attended this year said she “liked the scavenger hunt in the outside mall, going to Vik's diner and going to the Metro Park, even though no one else would paddle with me! I liked making new friends.” Another student stated that he “liked making new friends who have the same interests, going to Metro Park and going to the Coney restaurant.” He said it was great to do the talent show too. One parent reported that she liked that her daughter “got to learn some life skills--paying for lunch and leaving a tip, working together as a team, learning to make their pizzas at California Pizza Kitchen.”

If you are interested in having your child attend the program next summer, please send an email to Charisse at charisse@mcfares.org.

Kroger Community Rewards

Please consider registering MCFARES as the beneficiary of rewards using your Kroger Plus card. The MCFARES organization number is 91150. We thank you for your support. Funds raised will assist MCFARES in providing support to individuals and families affected by pre-natal exposure to alcohol.





Support Groups for FASD in Michigan

(not all groups are specifically for FASD support)

(Please phone or email contact person prior to attending to ensure that group is still meeting. If information has changed, please email Charisse at Charisse@mcfares.org).

Alpena County

FASD Family Support Group, Meets 2nd Thursday of each month; 1:30 – 2:30 p.m., Partners in Prevention office in the First Presbyterian Church at the corner of US23 and Long Rapids Road, Alpena. Contact Mary Schalk at mary@nemcpi.org or 989-359-2880 for more information.

Eaton County

Eaton County Foster Adopt Support Group, Meets 1st Thursday monthly, 6 – 8:30 p.m. Pot-luck dinner at 6:00 p.m. Group/training at 6:30 p.m. Childcare available. Eaton Intermediate School District, 1790 Packard Highway, Charlotte, MI 48813. Located right next door to Walmart. Contact Michelle for more information at besa_93@yahoo.com.

Kalamazoo County

Kalamazoo Area Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Support Group (KAFASD), Meets 2nd Tuesday monthly, 6:30 p.m. Augusta McKay Library, 105 S. Webster Street, Augusta, MI 49012. For more information, contact Robin or Kathy at KAFASDgroup@yahoo.com.

Kent County

West Michigan FASD Support Group, Meets 3rd Tuesday of each month, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Westminster Presbyterian Church, 47 Jefferson Avenue, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Contact Sandy Kezenius, 616-874-9522; Corry Tait, 616-550-4273; or Barbara Wybrecht, 616-241-9126 or bmwybrecht@gmail.com for more information.

Self-Advocates with and FASD in Action (SAFA), generally meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. The meeting is for adults age 18 and up who have an official FASD diagnosis. Contact Rob Wybrecht for more information, rob1195@yahoo.com.

Adoptive Families Support Group, Meets 3rd Tuesday of each month, 6 – 8 p.m., Holy Family Catholic Church, 9669 Kraft Avenue SE, Caledonia, MI 49316-9723. Contact Shelley Garcia, 1-855-MICH-P2P, x705 or sgarcia@afsn.com for more information.

Macomb County

Project SAFE (Supportive Activities for Everyone), Generally on a Friday or Saturday evening from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. at various locations in Macomb County. Families meet for pot-luck dinner followed by supervised play for the children and support group time for adults. Contact Charisse at Charisse@mcfares.org or 586-329-6722.

Brunch Bunch, Monthly, 2nd Tuesday, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m., In Clinton Township, Contact Charisse at Charisse@mcfares.org or 586-329-6722 for location details.

Muskegon County

Support group for foster/adoptive/kinship families. Very active group meets weekly for various activities. Contact Janice Hilleary at Bjhilleary@comcast.net or 231-286-7892 (cell phone).

Washtenaw County

Ann Arbor Support Group, Meets 4th Wednesday of each month except November (meets 3rd Wednesday) and December (no meeting), 7 -9 p.m. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Education Center, Classroom #5, 5305 East Huron Drive. Contact Vern Soden for more information, vsoden@umich.edu.

Statewide List

Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Support Groups by County <http://afsn.org/services/foster-adoptive-and-kinship-support-groups-by-county/> (not all groups are FASD-specific)

On-line Support

Families and Supports Affected by FASD: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FaSAFASD>

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MCFARES is the Michigan NOFAS Affiliate

MCFARES Member Agencies

Arc Services of Macomb
(fiduciary)

Family members of affected
individuals

Michigan FASD Task Force

Kids Belong/ACMH Board
Member

Oakland University School
of Nursing

Parent and Child Services,
Inc.



*MCFARES needs you. Call us at
586-329-6722 to find out how you
can help.*
