

# FASD News and Views



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

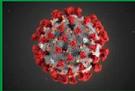


Established in 2003

## Questions We Are Asked

**Question:** *Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the lives of our children have been significantly affected. School has been canceled for the year, we are no longer allowed to visit family and friends, and all of their activities have been canceled. I am still working outside the home and my husband is working at home. The children are worried about me getting sick. How do we help the children to cope?*

**Answer:** To steal from Charles Dickens, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . .” On the one hand, with the cancelation of most activities, families have more time to spend together. Helping children feel safe and cared for should be a high priority. What that looks like would be different for each family. Some children do best if their previous schedule is duplicated as much as possible (i.e., maintaining a school schedule, meals and sleep schedule the same as pre-quarantine times, etc.). Other children will need an uncluttered schedule that places few requirements on them and allows them as much choice as is reasonably safe. Try adding family activities that will help the children remain active without dwelling on the cause for all the changes in your lives. Be aware of how your

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children might be expressing their fears or worries. When stressed, some children may become more talkative, other children will talk less. Some may eat/sleep/play more, others will eat/sleep/play less.

There are safety concerns, especially with you still working outside the home. It is hard to guarantee to your children that you will not become infected. Within their ability to

understand, it might be helpful to explain the steps you are taking to keep yourself and your family safe. It is ok to tell your children that you do not have the answers to all of their questions but that you will do your best to find answers and to support them through whatever is going to come.

None of us knows how long these closures will continue making it hard to plan for the future. These unknowns can cause stress and

anxiety for both children and adults. We can support our children by first taking care of our needs and showing our children, by example, how to deal with the changes we are experiencing due to the Covid-19 epidemic. See the article, Coping with COVID-19 on page 4 of this newsletter for more information on self-care.

*If you have any FASD-related questions, please send them to Charisse at [info@mcfares.org](mailto:info@mcfares.org)*

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## MCFARES Receives Grant

MCFARES has been awarded a two-and-a-half-year Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Community Project grant from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Resources. The grant will allow MCFARES to provide several in-person and webinar education programs. Topics will include: FASD-101, FASD-201, and FASD 101 Train-the-Trainer program. Training for practitioners (case workers, medical professionals) on evidence-based case history interviewing methods is also planned.

If you would like to be added to the MCFARES email list and be notified of upcoming webinars or conferences, please send a request to [charisse@mcfares.org](mailto:charisse@mcfares.org).



## NB This . . .

Sometimes we struggle to know how to most appropriately address our child's behavior in a neurobehavioral manner. Here's a scenario and a response to addressing the behavior using a neurobehavioral approach.



**Scenario:** 9-year-old daughter is playing with her friends and they are trading small toys with each other. When they are done playing, daughter becomes very angry because she wants her toys back.

1. **Neurobehavioral Challenges:** Daughter does not understand the idea that the trades were meant to be permanent and that she would keep her new toys and her friends would keep their new toys.

2. **Scenario Without Accommodations:** When children are done playing, daughter becomes angry because she wants her toys back.

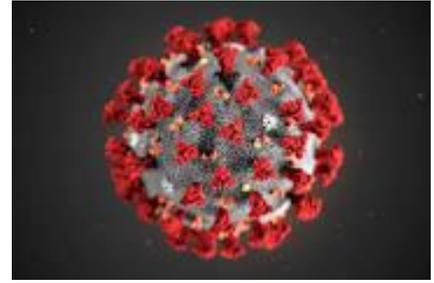
3. **Accommodations:** Supervise play and remind daughter that once the trade is made, her friend will be taking the toy home to enjoy and that she will have new toys of her own to bring home. If this cannot be accomplished, avoid situations where toy exchanges may occur.

4. **Neurobehavioral Approach to Success:** Prior to going on playdates or having friends over, prepare your daughter for such possible occurrences. Role-play the process of trading toys, explaining how trading works, including the giving and getting of toys.

5. **Explanation:** Some children who are on the fetal alcohol spectrum lack the maturity and understanding of cause-and-effect to completely understand the process of trading toys. These children, at times, could be taken advantage of by other children who may not be concerned about fairness or doing what is right. Close supervision and on-going review of rules may be necessary.

## Coping with COVID-19

UGH! COVID-19. I was talking with someone the other day and we compared it to being thrown onto a rocking ship with a handful of marbles which all fall to the floor. The ship continues to sway and rock while you're trying to gather the marbles again. This experience is unprecedented. While we all bring to it our own experience, expertise and knowledge we are stretched in ways we have never been stretched before. Each marble represents a responsibility, an internal resource, an external resource, a family member we care for, a routine we are accustomed to, emotions and so much more. To top it all off, we don't know when things will return to "normal". It's unsettling to say the least and so difficult to stay grounded. Maybe you didn't feel "grounded" before and now this. (If this paragraph was hard to understand, it's ALL my fault. Ignore it and just keep reading.)



We all experience stress and the COVID 19 events a little differently. Certainly, an FASD brings more to this experience. It's something no one will completely understand except another walking in the same shoes. In the spirit of trying to throw a life preserver, I'm gonna give it my best effort. Simply put, we are grieving loss and stressed by the changes, uncertainty and concerns about safety. All while managing whatever stress was already there before these events and living our daily lives. Being concrete about time and events is important to understanding what is going on. Yet an unfamiliar invisible virus makes that very difficult. So, in the meantime we survive and hopefully grow from these experiences. To do so, we foster resilience. When things become overwhelming, come back to the basics. Here are some foundational ideas to help you cope with the stress.

- Name your feelings; expressing feelings safely can bring relief.
- Nurture relationships; connect positively to others daily. Social interaction releases Oxytocin...our happy hormone.
- Make Sleep quality a priority; It's so hard to rejuvenate if you are not getting enough sleep.
- Recognize the present moment; It's more difficult to stress about the future when focused on right now.
- Connect with what you identify as "divine" "sacred;" For many this can provide hope and purpose.
- Maintain structure and routine; this helps us take control of our day
- Connect with nature: research tells us how rejuvenating this can be. Reduces stress and depression.
- Physical exercise; Physical exercise brings us back to our body, grounds us, releases stress, improves brain health.
- Restrict your news intake; Knowledge can help us feel more control. It's important to stay updated but don't give fuel to your anxiety by watching more things to be anxious about.

So, here's the thing, when one is overwhelmed providing a list of "things to do" can be overwhelming! Let's face it, it's one more thing to do when we can barely do what we did. Consider this simple perspective; If you are actually taking time to read this article (LOL), you are already functioning at some level. Start where you're at. For goodness sake, don't try to do everything in one day. Choose one. Break it down to the smallest possible step and start there. Each of the suggestions above may look different to each family/individual. "Functioning" means to "fulfill the purpose or task of a specified thing." YOU decide what that is. Here are some very simple ideas to start.

- Name your feelings; Is it safe to express feelings? Consider how you express your feelings and validate the feelings of those around you. Can you say "I'm mad, I need to take a break." Do you yell or shut down? When others are angry or sad, can you help them name their feelings? Playing games about feelings, such as charades, when things are going well can be helpful to building "emotional intelligence."
- Nurture relationships: Tell a joke and laugh together, FaceTime someone you love.
- Make Sleep quality a priority: Notice how many hours of sleep each family member is getting and see what gets in the way. Just notice it. Maybe journal it.
- Recognize the present moment: When washing hands, say "I see myself putting soap on my hands." Feel yourself rubbing hands together and bubbles forming. Slow the water flow down and watch the water slowly rinse the soap away..
- Connect with what you identify as "divine" "sacred": Breathe. Just take a deep breath until you feel it deep into your belly. Then let it out. Repeat. Our breath IS sacred. What other practices are meaningful to you?
- Maintain structure and routine: Every morning, brush your teeth.
- Connect with nature: Look out your window and notice the birds. Hear them sing. Go for a walk if you can.
- Physical Activity: March in place while humming a song... right where you're at. Your child, parent or roommate may think this is hilarious, laugh and you just nurtured a relationship too.
- Restrict your news intake: Decide where you are going to get the most comprehensive unbiased daily updates and just read or watch that. 30-60mins. Then move on. No more till tomorrow..

TRY THIS:

**3 Minute Meditation:** \*There are many variations of this meditation. This is a good foundation.

- Pause, Sit with your feet flat on the floor.
- Take a deep breath. Notice your feet in contact with the ground.
- Rest your hands on your stomach and take 2-3 deep breaths. Notice your stomach rising and falling with each in and out breath.
- Close your eyes gently or focus your sight on a point on the floor in front of you..
- Now, as you keep breathing deeply into your stomach, count each breath to 5 and repeat. If you lose track, that's ok, just begin at 1 again. (Repeat)

Here is a more challenging tool for those who are up for it. Write down everything you are worried about. Then mark the ones you actually have control over. What are the things you don't? What actions can you take? What can you let go of? It's not effective to try and solve every problem at once. Breathe through those you have no control over and focus on those you do. This isn't easy. Takes repeated practice and insight.

Most of all, give yourself credit for the little things. In times like these little things matter. Did you wake up, eat a meal, take a shower? We tend to set high standards for ourselves. That's fantastic, but not at the expense of our self worth. Honor the fact that we are evolving human beings doing the best we can at a very challenging time. Most of us have never experienced anything like this before. Let's give ourselves a break.

Last but not least, if you are a caregiver, prioritize your own well being then care for others. We've all heard the saying "put your mask on first." We can only give that which we have to give. Chances are you're doing better than you give yourself credit for. Ultimately, life is hard and it's OK to ask for help. There are many virtual resources popping up these days. Many therapists are now offering TeleHealth options. It's OK to ask others to join your team; we are not meant to do this thing called "life" alone.

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## Self-Care Linked to Greater Confidence in Parents of Children with FASD

A new study out today from Dr. Christie Petrenko's lab at U. of Rochester looking at the role of FASD caregiver self-care on caregiver and family outcomes.

1. Caregivers who were **more confident in using self-care** also reported that they had reduced parental distress, higher family needs met, and greater parenting satisfaction.
2. The **more self-care you do**, the better your confidence that self-care actually helps.
3. **More self-care doesn't change** child behavior, parent-child interactions, or perceived parenting effectiveness.
4. Caregivers report self-care is **hard to fit in** their busy lives.

You can read more about this study here: <https://bit.ly/2x0gItE>

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## Documentary Viewing

MCFARES has a copy of the documentary film “Moment to Moment: Teens Growing Up with FASDs” by NTI Upstream. We would like to arrange viewings of the film around the state. If you are interested in viewing the film and/or are able to host a viewing, please contact Charisse at [charisse@mcfares.org](mailto:charisse@mcfares.org).



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## FASD and the Brain

*Consider this:*

J, age 7, who typically enjoys school and interacting with teachers and other students, did not want to participate in Zoom meetings during the school shutdown. After much theorizing, questioning and investigating, J’s mother learned his reason: J believed that since the meetings were held on TV, they were not real because things that happen on TV are not real.

J was not being difficult or defiant; he just had an alternate understanding of the situation.

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## Pure Michigan



**Stony Creek Metropark,  
Shelby Township, Michigan**

Photo taken by John P.

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## Macomb Project SAFE Coordinator and Michigan Project SAFE Consultant Update

By Laurel Smith, Macomb Project S.A.F.E. Coordinator and State Project S.A.F.E. Consultant

Hi there! I hope everyone is enjoying their COVID-19 Stay Home break! Yes, that is the level of my humor these days. If I can't try to laugh about something, it takes me down to the dumps quickly.

This is Laurel Smith, your friendly, extremely hard of hearing MCFARES Project SAFE State Coordinator. With the Stay Home order from the governor, it really puts a crimp in face to face, group meetings. If this order goes on for much longer, I was wondering if we might do a zoom, Skype or Facebook messenger call? The Macomb county meeting is usually the second Saturday of the month. To give us a little planning time, let's make it a week later. Would parent/caregivers from anywhere in the state like to have a Facebook messenger call on May 16 from 6-8? I would love to "meet" parents from all over; the UP, the West side, the northeast, the northwest, the middle...

I think I would need to be friends with you on Facebook for me to call you on messenger. By being friends, I don't need any other personal information from you such as a phone number or email address. I would love to brainstorm some ideas for different ways idea for different ways to get local groups together during normal times. Granted, we will all need to miss a meeting and no time will be perfect for all the local people, but we can try, right?

Between now and May 16, please send me a friend request on Facebook (Laurel Bačiulis Bačiulytė Smith) and think about times, places and small, fun projects kids can do while the adults meet. I find the older teens and young adults don't want to help or do most projects but the little kids up through mid teen kids have some fun having a project to do. Of course, if you are meeting in a park, maybe a list of things to find might be a good project. The same if you get together for a short hike and some snacks.

So, I look forward to becoming friends with people from Marquette to Monroe to Benton Harbor to the Soo. Once we become friends, please shoot me a note on messenger to tell me to invite you to the video meeting. Between my 2 Russian teens and my fibromyalgia, I forget more things than I remember these days. Take care & go wash your hands!

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## Project SAFE Groups

**Macomb County Project SAFE:** Macomb Project SAFE is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month in Sterling Heights. Monthly meetings are announced on the MCFARES Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/groups/MCFARESFASD](http://www.facebook.com/groups/MCFARESFASD)). For more information, contact Laurel at [mama2russians@gmail.com](mailto:mama2russians@gmail.com)

**Kent County Project SAFE:** If you are in the Kent County area and are interested in getting together with other families, please contact Juline Lloyd at [jules@pilloyd.us](mailto:jules@pilloyd.us).

**Lansing Area Project SAFE:** If you are in the Lansing area and are interested in getting together with other families, especially families with school-aged children, please contact Brian Hagler at [haglerb3@gmail.com](mailto:haglerb3@gmail.com).

**Mid-Michigan/Central Michigan Area Project SAFE:** Cathy Mielke is working with children with FASD in 11th grade and above with self-advocacy and support in the mid-Michigan and Central Michigan area. Please contact her at [cathymielke1@gmail.com](mailto:cathymielke1@gmail.com) if interested.

**Other:** If you would like to start a Project S.A.F.E. group in your area and would like some pointers about how to get started, contact Laurel Smith at [mama2russians@gmail.com](mailto:mama2russians@gmail.com).

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## Caregiver Meeting Via Zoom

An FASD-informed social worker has offered to moderate an online meeting (Zoom or another platform) for caregivers. If you are interested in joining an online support/information group, please send an email to [charisse@mcfares.org](mailto:charisse@mcfares.org). Include your preferred meeting times and suggested topics of interest. We hope to set something up very soon.

## MCFARES and FoFASD Update



MCFARES Friends of FASD had planned a couple of great activities for this fall. Concerns about COVID-19 have necessitated a re-evaluation of these plans.



A 5k run/walk on Belle Isle was planned for September in recognition of International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day. Funds raised would be made available to help families obtain FASD-related services and supports. At this time, plans are to hold a virtual 5k run/walk. Further information will be shared on the MCFARES Facebook groups and via email.

The second event was a conference planned for November featuring nationally-known speakers. That event has been put on permanent hold.

Events planned by MCFARES Friends of FASD will be posted on the Facebook pages and sent out via email.

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### This is Me

Hi there! This is Kai, he's 7. He is unable to ride a bike without training wheels, but he's too heavy to continue to use training wheels. He has a new Green Machine recumbent bike! He has mastered bike riding now, and we've taken several family bike rides, which we were unable to do before! Kai conquered his fear of riding on the road, and is enjoying his new found freedom! Go, Kai!!



(If you would like to be featured in our next "This is Me" column, please send your story and a picture to [info@mcfares.org](mailto:info@mcfares.org).)

# Michigan FASD Champion Spotlight

Amy Park-Goeddeke



**Tell us 3 things about yourself (two things are true, one is false):**

1. I used to live in Korea
2. My last vacation was to Vegas
3. One of my favorite animals is a snake

**What is your favorite season and why?** I really love the mild Fall days when a sweater is just enough to stay warm and I can walk through the woods and hear leaves beneath my feet.

**It is a warm, sunny spring day. You are free all day to do whatever you wish. How will you spend your day?** I be walking the trails at Lake St. Clair Metropark. I love their wet lands; lotus, and cat tails are among my favorite plants.

**Favorite Color** – purple

**Favorite Sport** – Tai Chi. Is that a sport?

**Favorite Store** – Barnes n Noble. Sometime we just go to drink tea and stare a new book. If only the Library had tea.

**What is your favorite movie? Why?** (I don't really have one but this one came to mind) I enjoy "fantasy" genres. "My Neighbor Totoro" (1993) comes to mind. The director Hayao Miyazaki has many fun movies. Totoro is wonderful! It's Animation fantasy. Wonderful for imagination. There is mention of a parent being sick and fear of losing mom. Something to explore before showing to your children. However, the movie centers around the children's relationship with Totoro and their adventures.

**What is one thing you could not go without during your day?** Tea and, at least touching base with, family.:-) Everywhere I go, I drink tea. If you see me with a travel mug, there is probably tea in it. Unless its morning then it may be coffee. :-)

**Tell us about your job:** I wear several hats but will only talk about one. I have a very small mental/behavioral health private practice where I get to partner with amazing individuals and families to get the most out of life, offer consultation, and provide professional development. FASD became an organic part of my work after meeting a beautiful little girl in 2003 with FAS. I had no clue how to help her. I look back on that relationship often and she continues to motivate me though I don't see her anymore.

**What attracted you to your current job?** I enjoy partnering with others to improve their lives and relationship with self. I started my own practice because I wanted to have the freedom just do what I felt was best and what I was most passionate about.

**What, in your opinion, is the biggest need related to FASD in Michigan?** Those impacted feeling connected. I'm concerned that the stigma, lack of informed supportive services, and behavioral concerns common with an FASD results in feelings and experiences of isolation. Yet a united voice is important for emotional health and to influence change. So glad MCFARES is there!

**#2 is false**

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# Simple Ways to Help Raise Funds For MCFARES

## 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](https://www.amazon.com/ch/35-2394822)

## Kroger Community Rewards

Please consider registering MCFARES as the beneficiary of rewards using your Kroger Plus card. The MCFARES organization number is **GK535**. 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.

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## Pure Michigan



**Stony Creek Metropark, Shelby Township**

Photo taken by John P.

## 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. If you have time to help us out with any of these activities, please send an email to Charisse at [charisse@mcfares.org](mailto:charisse@mcfares.org).

Here are some opportunities that require only a few hours a month or less:

- **Non-profit Accountant:** *Frequency:* probably 2-3 times/year. *Location:* from your office. *Time commitment:* probably no more than a couple hours/year.
- **Non-profit Lawyer:** *Frequency:* probably 1-2 times/year. *Location:* from your office. *Time commitment:* probably no more than a couple hours/year.
- **Project S.A.F.E.:** *Frequency:* about once a month. *Location:* varies. *Time commitment:* about 3 hours for each activity.
- **MCFARES FASD News and Views newsletter:** *Frequency:* four times/year. *Location:* varies. *Time commitment:* your choice.
- **Literature Packets:** *Frequency:* as your schedule permits. *Location:* your community. *Time commitment:* your choice.




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## Now that's Silly

**Q: Why was the baby strawberry sad?**

**A: Because his mom was in a jam.**

Submitted by: Jennifer K.

## Looking for Resources, Education and Support? Help is Just a Click Away

If you are looking for resources, education and support for FASD, consider joining us online on both of the MCFARES Facebook pages.

MCFARES hosts a public Facebook page, where new research and information about FASD is discussed with Michiganders and folks interested in FASD from around the globe. We also make announcements about Project SAFE meetings and other events. Visit our public Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MCFARESFASD>

If you prefer a space on Facebook that does not post to your own newsfeed, then consider joining the MI FASD group--MCFARES social networking spot for families, practitioners, and self-advocates. We offer new research and information about FASD in this space. It is also a group that allows parents/caregivers, practitioners, and self-advocates to ask questions and receive support from people who "get it". Most of the members are from Michigan, but we do have a number of national members including some national presenters on FASD. Visit our closed support group space here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mifasd/>



Consider joining us online to help gain a better understanding of the disorder and find a support network of your peers!

## Coping with COVID-19 Closures

Jay, age 7-1/2, and his family have been spending a lot of time outdoors. Jay designed and built this "Minecraft" fort. He helps to feed the hens and collect eggs. He also helps bring water to the outdoor animals.



## Brag

Clayton, 6 . . . .

loves to care of animals. A few months ago he volunteered to help at a non-profit horse camp to clean up, brush, feed and (of course) ride the horses. He was a big help and was asked to come back next year too. He wants to own an animal shelter when he gets older and help others take care of animals who need homes. His family is so proud of him and his big heart.



Joshua, 25 . . .

has adapted well to staying home due to COVID-19 epidemic. He enjoys his online karate classes.



Joe, age 10 . . .

has been determined to learn how to ride a two-wheeler. After years of frustration and many attempts, he has achieved success. Way to go, Joe!!!



If you would like to feature your brag in the next newsletter, please send the information to [info@mcfares.org](mailto:info@mcfares.org) with "Newsletter Brag" in the subject line.



**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](mailto:info@mcfares.org).

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## What Do you Read, Watch, Listen To?

In our attempts to learn more about fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, we scour libraries, explore the internet, and question anyone who might know about FASD. We'd like to know about your favorite websites, books, articles, videos, support groups, etc. We'll compile the information and include it on resource sheets or on our website. If you've got suggestions to share, please email your favorites to Charisse at [charisse@mcfares.org](mailto:charisse@mcfares.org). Thanks for your help.



### **This Quarter's Recommendation: Web Article**

#### *Neurobehavioural Profiles of Individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders*

This article written by Gemma Barnes, BA, Jessica O'Brien, PhD, and Sarah N. Mattson, PhD from the Center for Behavioral Teratology at San Diego State University offers a profile of behavior that can be helpful in diagnosing children who are on the fetal alcohol spectrum. Awareness of neurobehavioral differences can also be helpful in developing appropriate behavioral interventions. The article can be accessed at: <http://bit.ly/NBarticle>



## **Information/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](mailto:Charisse@mcfares.org)).

#### **Alpena County**

FASD Family Support Group, Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:mary@nemcpi.org) or 989-359-2880 for more information.

#### **Eaton County**

Eaton County Foster Adopt Support Group, Meets 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:besa_93@yahoo.com).

#### **Ingham County**

Lansing: Project SAFE, Meets monthly at various location in and around Ingham County. Contact Brian Hagler, [bhagler3@icloud.com](mailto:bhagler3@icloud.com), or Cathy Mielke, [cathymielke1@gmail.com](mailto:cathymielke1@gmail.com), for more information.

#### **Kalamazoo County**

Kalamazoo Area Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (KAFASD) parent/caregiver support network is a local (West Michigan) closed Facebook support network, with occasional social events, trainings, meetings. Join KAFASD at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/KAFASD/> or contact Robin at 269-731-4577 or Kathy at 269-303-1402 for more information.

#### **Kent County**

West Michigan FASD Support Group, Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 7 – 8:30 p.m. September – May (no December meeting), Westminster Presbyterian Church, 47 Jefferson Avenue, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Contact Sandy Kezenius, 616-648-9259 or [sandnkez@hotmail.com](mailto:sandnkez@hotmail.com); Cory Tait, 616-550-4273 or [taitville@comcast.net](mailto:taitville@comcast.net); or Barbara Wybrecht, 616-485-8665 or [bmwybrecht@gmail.com](mailto:bmwybrecht@gmail.com) for more information.

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Self-Advocates with and FASD in Action (SAFA), generally meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month, September – May (no December meeting). The meeting is for adults age 18 and up who have an official FASD diagnosis. Contact Rob Wybrecht, 616-901-5980 (cell) or [rob1195@yahoo.com](mailto:rob1195@yahoo.com) or [robw436@gmail.com](mailto:robw436@gmail.com).

Adoptive Families Support Group, Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto:sgarcia@afsn.com) for more information.

Kent County Project SAFE, various activities planned around the county. Contact Juline Lloyd ([jules@pjilloyd.us](mailto:jules@pjilloyd.us)) for more information.

### Macomb County

Macomb 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](mailto:Charisse@mcfares.org) or 586-329-6722.

### Muskegon County

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

### 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 Information/Support

MCFARES: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MCFARESFASD/>

Michigan's FASD Advocacy and Social Network: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mifasd/>

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MCFARES is the Michigan NOFAS Affiliate

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## MCFARES Member Agencies

Family members of affected individuals

Developmental Disabilities Institute, Detroit

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.***