

Dear Educator:

As a representative of the many individuals who contributed to the development of these materials, I want to talk to you teacher to teacher. I have taught for 32 years in middle and high school science classrooms, and it is from that perspective I write.

Why should you consider “one more thing” to do in the midst of standards review, high stakes testing, and the million other tasks that teachers do to keep up? Our work as teachers is a generation away and much of our effort will bear fruit when our students grow into contributing citizens. Of the 10,000+ babies born daily in the United States, approximately 20 are born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). Another 100 will have some negative effects of being exposed to alcohol before birth and be born with a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) are the direct result of prenatal exposure to alcohol and are 100 percent preventable. Yes, 100 percent preventable.

You spend every teaching day guiding students to make good decisions; academically, socially, morally, and physically. It often feels like an uphill battle. But we are on the front line, trained and paid to help young people move through this treacherous passage safely with as little damage to themselves and others as possible. The habits they form today will be their lifestyle tomorrow. Alcohol, adolescents in their teens, and sex are a volatile combination. Babies affected by alcohol exposure are among the negative outcomes. More importantly, mothers 20-35 years old, who drink when pregnancy is possible, give birth to most of the babies with FASDs. The decisions our students make, both now and later in life, are our legacy as teachers.

Teaching is a privilege as well as a profession, and the responsibility is high. Many of us have taught in secondary and middle school classrooms for a number of years and have been awarded and rewarded in many ways. All of you have had confirmation regarding your compassion and effectiveness in your teaching. For many of us, however, it makes little

difference if these awards are present or not, public or private. Our real desire is the affirmation that we made a positive difference in the lives of our students.

The comprehensive lifetime cost of one baby with a FASD could be as much as \$4 million. If, through your instruction and life as a role model, one baby would be born free from the damage of alcohol that might have occurred, your entire lifetime accumulated salary would be saved. Just one. Knowing that positive difference has been made is like getting an additional retirement check before and after you retire.

Please examine these PowerPoint presentations and the associated teaching materials. They are easily accessed and ready for use. State and national standards are included to align with the content of the lessons. I know you will find ways to teach multiple skills of analysis, reasoning and computation using this information about FASDs. You can find a way to introduce information about FASDs and their impact on families and society in our curricula. I know you can find a way of adding to your students' skills in making responsible decisions in an American culture drowning in alcohol. We can and must.

Thank you for your consideration. Please examine these resources. I know the pressure you have to do many tasks and oversee many tests is often overwhelming. Only you know what is best for you and your students. Start simply, but quickly, by infusing this important information into your teaching. Just two steps are needed to start. Prepare your heart for the mission and click on one of the lessons.

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Suggestions for Using Curricula Materials

These curricula materials provide a wide range of opportunities for you to design activities for your students. Only you can determine the correct level of difficulty, sequence of topics, media, structure of activity and assessment with your students. The format of the materials and suggestions that follow can be modified in infinite ways for your use. The Indiana and National Standards are included in this resource to help you align these lessons to them.

These curricula were designed to be flexible for a range of students with differences in age, developmental level, content discipline, and lengths of time in a class period. Although you may choose to teach these lessons with direct instruction, the teacher notes may help you create more student-centered constructivist learning experiences.

Two important principles are incorporated in our teaching suggestions. The first is engagement for both students and the teacher. High attention is required for full participation. Anticipatory sets that bring students to visible inclusion are highlighted. The second principle is connections. Unless students make personal connections, they may not attach their learning to future choices. A connection must be made between behavior and consequences. Cause and effect will need to be emphasized throughout these lessons. Maternal drinking resulting in children with FASDs can generate significant costs to families and social systems. Helping students to make these connections is our task. Suggestions, such as questioning strategies, small group discussion protocols, and student activities, are designed with these principles in mind.

Four separate but similar presentations are included. We designed these lessons for different classes and levels, although parts of each lesson could be modified to address virtually any academic level. The commentary, questions and activities are infused into the sequence of PowerPoint images. In this way, you may customize the lesson to your students and your time schedule as needed.

“FASD Talk- Middle School, Health, and Family and Consumer Sciences” targets middle school or freshmen students in health science. The information is presented and sequenced for clarity and simplicity. This curriculum is designed for high structure and the emphasis is on basic knowledge, personal application and decision-making.

“FASD Talk-Social Science” targets students in sociology, psychology, and social studies with a focus on the impact of irresponsible use of alcohol on social systems. This lesson includes more demographics and social and family dynamics.

“FASD Talk-High School Science” targets upper-level Biology and Anatomy and Physiology students and includes information on the physiological processes, neurodevelopmental sequences, and subsequent disabilities related to FASDs. The vocabulary includes more sophisticated medical terms and data requiring more analysis.

“Working with Kids with a FASD” is designed for faculty and staff members who will be responsible for providing services for children including general and special education teachers.

There is an evaluation form in these materials. Please fill it out and send it to Jim Ignaut at jignaut@isdh.IN.gov. Thank you

Organizations represented in the production of these materials:

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