

FASD NEWS AND VIEWS

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

Super Kids, Smart Choices Summer Socialization Program

The Macomb Intermediate School District, Fraser Schools and MCFARES will sponsor the 3rd annual Super Kids, Smart Choices Summer Socialization Program for students ages 5 and up.



The program will be held in July in Fraser and the cost will be \$25/child. Please contact Charisse at Charisse@mcfares.org for more information.

WINTER, 2010

Contents:



Super Kids, Smart Choices Summer Socialization Camp 1



Questions We Are Asked 2



Member Spotlight 3



Support Groups 5



Help and Thanks 7

Save the Dates: MCFARES Meetings

Meetings are generally held on the fourth Monday of each month from 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. at the Arc-Macomb offices. Contact Charisse at Charisse@mcfares.org for more information.

April 26, 2010
 May 24, 2010
 June 28, 2010
 July 26, 2010
 August 23, 2010
 September 27, 2010
 October 25, 2010

November 22, 2010
 December 20, 2010
 (tentative lunch meeting)

Questions We Are Asked

Our daughter is 8 years old. Mornings are so chaotic. Before getting meds, she is unable to do anything independently; she can't make her bed, get dressed, eat, brush her teeth and she instigates everyone in the house. What can we do to make mornings more enjoyable?



Mornings are sometimes tough for our kids but we can make the morning routine a bit more enjoyable with just a few adjustments to our routine.

Yes, mornings are tough for many of our kids. Here are a few things we've tried over the years. For a while, we gave our son his meds before he got out of bed. We'd bring him his meds (keeping the lights out and the mood very calm) and a cup of water (making sure he swallowed them before leaving the room). We'd let him fall back asleep for about a half hour before getting out of bed. Once he was out of bed, we minimized all distractions: no tv or video games; occasionally low soft music; other family members were asked to be calm and quiet. We helped him focus on getting ready by asking, "What's next?" and directing him to eating his breakfast (sometimes he wasn't hungry because the meds kicked in so we'd offer high protein, high calorie foods and sent snacks to school for him to eat during breaks), getting dressed, brushing his teeth, combing his hair. Some days he'd need a lot of direction and supervision and other days he'd need just a reminder. Some families use a picture board showing each task that a child must accomplish before leaving for school. Our school helped us develop one and my son would refer to it sometimes. Some families develop a social story and review it with the child as needed (for more information on social stories, see <http://www.ecasd.k12.wi.us/departments/student-services/special-education/teacher-resources/social-stories/index.html>).

Do you have a question you'd like us to answer? If you do, submit it to Charisse@mcfares.org.

Things We Overhear

Teacher: I just can't seem to remember which pile to put these flash cards in. My brain is just not working right today.

12 year old fetal alcohol-affected child: Now you know what it's like to be me.



STATE TASK FORCE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Betsy Soden, Parent, Advocate, Public Speaker

1. How did you learn about FAS/FASD?

I retired from teaching in 1989, the same year Michael Dorris' *The Broken Cord* was published. My husband and I had adopted a nine and a half month old Native American child in 1968 and had experienced many challenges with him over the years: sleep, memory and behavior problems and eventually drug problems and incarceration. Counseling had not helped and we were mystified, frustrated and sad. Looking for volunteer opportunities in my retirement I answered a request for a Parent Aide Program - working with young pregnant women, often drug abusers, and met Barbara Wybrecht, nurse and also an adoptive parent. As I talked with Barb about our son she suggested the possibility of prenatal alcohol exposure, I read *The Broken Cord* and saw our son in Dorris' description of his son. Both boys were Native American from South Dakota, adopted in the same year and exhibiting the same behaviors. Almost 10 years later Barb arranged for our son to be seen by Dr. Sheila Gahagan, who gave him a diagnosis of Static Encephalopathy, alcohol exposed, based on knowledge of his mother's alcoholism and his

own history. By then he was already receiving Social Security benefits and services from Community Mental Health and our local Arc.

2. When did you begin your support groups?

In 1992 Barb Wybrecht and her husband Ted invited a number of Ann Arbor families who had adopted children with FASD to meet at their home to share challenges in their lives. Eventually we began to meet monthly at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital's Education Center where we continue to meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month. About 3 years ago another parent from our support group and I approached a supervisor at our local CMH about sponsoring a support/recreational group for young adults with FASD and this group also meets monthly for planned recreational events, e.g., bowling, laser tag, ice skating, EMU football and basketball games, etc. The young men range in age from early 20s to 40's and really enjoy getting together.

3. How did you begin to offer presentations on

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FASD?

In 2001 the Michigan Department of Community Health offered training on giving presentations on FAS/FASD. Barbara Wybrecht arranged for my husband and me to receive this training and we have been speaking ever since. Among those we have talked to have been middle and high school students, university public health, nursing and social work students, staff of service provider agencies, probation, parole and corrections officers. It has been gratifying to see some families come to the U of M's Fetal Alcohol Diagnosis and Intervention Clinic as a result of these talks.

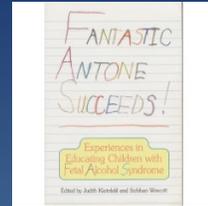
4. What other activities are you involved in related to FASD?

My husband and I are staff members of the U of M's clinic. He uses a software program from the University of Seattle to help analyze patients' faces and I meet with parents in the waiting room, offer them resource packets and support. Also we are members of the state task force on FASD.

5. How is your son doing?

He just turned 42. He and his girlfriend, who appears to be a stabilizing influence in his life, live in a mobile home park. He has had a part time job with Applebees cleaning and washing dishes since June of 2006. When he was younger, he rarely held jobs for more than a few days or weeks. He has been sober and smoke free since being released from prison in 2005 and seems to recognize that alcohol was the cause of his incarcerations. He continues to receive services from CMH, the Arc and Social Security benefits. We are hopeful his life is on the right track.

RECOMMENDED READING



Fantastic Antone Succeeds: Experiences in Educating Children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Edited by Judith Kleinfeld
and Siobhan Wescott

This is a great introduction to the complexities of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. *Fantastic Antone* is a collection of articles written by parents of affected children and professionals who work with affected children and families.

The four parts of the book include: *How Prenatal Alcohol Exposure Affects Children and Their Families*; *Parents' Know-How*; *Teachers' Techniques*; *Working with Families of Alcohol-Affected Children*.

Support Groups

Alpena County, FASD Family Support Group, Meets 3rd Wednesday of each month; 6:30 – 8 p.m., Partners in Prevention Office, 3022 US23 S, Alpena. Contact Mary Schalk at maryschalk@verizon.net or 989-734-2877 for more information.

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. Charlotte Assembly of God Church, Charlotte, across from Meijer on M-50. Contact Michelle for more information at besa_93@yahoo.com

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Caregivers and Families Engaged, Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute, Wayne State University, Skillman Building, 100 East Palmer, Detroit, MI 48202. Contact Maureen Rashwan at 248-470-5469 for more information.

Jackson County, Parenting Challenging Children. Meets 2nd Sunday of each month, 1 – 2 p.m. Cascades Fellowship CRC, 2390 W. High Street, Jackson, MI 49203. Monthly meeting includes family lunch, child care, crafts and videos for children and youth. Speaker occasionally scheduled. Contact Rev. Bob Devries or his wife Alice at 517-784-8034.

Livingston County, FASD Living, Meets monthly on the 1st Thursday, 7 - 9 p.m., St. Joseph Mercy Livingston Hospital, west entrance, cafeteria conference room, 620 Byron Road, Howell, MI 48843. Contact Terri Moore for more information, fasdliving@comcast.net or CAP at 517-548-2200.

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.

Macomb County, 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.

Macomb County, Families Supporting Families, Meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday, 7 – 8:30 p.m. CARE, 31900 Utica Road, Fraser, MI 48026. Contact Shelly Bania for more information, 586-541-0033 or sbania@careofmacomb.com

Support Groups, continued

Marquette County, U.P. FASD Support Group, Meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. MARESA, 321 East Ohio Street, Marquette, MI. Contact Karen Twa for more information, 906-225-7706 or twak@michigan.gov

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 Betsy for more information, betsysoden@juno.com

West Michigan Support Group, Meets 3rd Tuesday of each month, Westminster Presbyterian Church, 47 Jeffereson Avenue, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Contact Barbara Wybrecht, 616-391-2319 or bmwybrecht@aol.com or Corry Tait, 616-878-1839 for more information.

On-line support: Families and Supports Affected by FASD

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FaSAFASD/>

If you would like to report inaccurate information or add information for a support group, please contact Charisse at Charisse@mcfares.org.

Here are two resources from the University of South Dakota, Sanford School of Medicine

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Handbook

<http://www.usd.edu/medical-school/center-for-disabilities/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders-handbook.cfm>

<http://www.usd.edu/medical-school/center-for-disabilities/upload/fasdhandbook.pdf>

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Education Strategies

<http://www.usd.edu/medical-school/center-for-disabilities/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders-education-strategies-handbook.cfm>

<http://www.usd.edu/medical-school/center-for-disabilities/upload/fasdeducationalstrategies.pdf>

MCFARES Needs Your Help:

MCFARES is an unfunded Coalition that provides prevention information, support and resources.



We could use your help to continue our mission of providing education about the harmful effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol and to provide support and information to individuals who have been affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol.

Checks can be sent to Arc-Macomb, 44050 N. Gratiot, Clinton Township, MI 48036 (write "MCFARES" on the memo line). Funds will be used to purchase supplies for prevention activities (brochures, giveaways, books, etc.) and for assistance to families (assistance paying for services/supports families couldn't otherwise afford, books, etc.).

Donations of supplies such as printer paper, paper goods for Project SAFE (monthly pot-luck dinner for affected families), postage stamps, gift cards to grocery stores (to provide meals for Project SAFE or to families who are having financial challenges), etc. are always appreciated. Please contact Charisse at Charisse@mcfares.org or 586-329-6722 if you would like to donate any of the above items or if you have any other suggestions.

Thanks to our parents and kids who helped at the Macomb Special Education Fair



Many thanks to Angie Pate, Madison Pate, Gayle Gregorczyk, Sawyer Malinowski, Joshua, Joseph and Jenn Kowalski for volunteering their time on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at the Macomb Special Ed Fair.

Our volunteers answered questions at the MCFARES vendor table, assisted other vendors to set up and take down their tables, assisted speakers, and helped to collect lunch tickets.

Thank you, everyone, for taking the time to help out at this year's Special Education Fair.



MCFARES Member Agencies

- Arc Services of Macomb (fiduciary)
 - Family members of affected individuals
 - Macomb Intermediate School District, Early On
 - Fraser Public Schools
 - Devon Behavioral Consulting
 - Macomb Family Services
 - Macomb County Health Department
 - Madonna University
 - Macomb County Office of Substance Abuse
 - Oakland University School of Nursing
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MCFARES

44050 N. Gatiout

Clinton Township, MI 48036

[Recipient]

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Address Line 3

Address Line 4