

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS IN MAINE

Why the FASD Respect Act Needs Your Support

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) are lifelong physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities caused by prenatal alcohol exposure.

According to the CDC, FASD impacts as many as **1 in 20** in the US - **2.5x more common than autism**

Maine has limited FASD diagnostic capacity and no mechanism to track FASD

In 2020, in 5 of Maine's 16 counties, **1 in 7 newborns were born substance exposed** – that number jumps to 1 in 6 in Somerset County

Prevalence of FASD is **10x higher among foster children** - there is no mandatory FASD screening of foster children or FASD training for foster parents in Maine

FASD is not tracked in special education under IDEA, and **schools lack training** and supports for students with FASD

By age 13, over **60%** of students with FASD may experience **trouble with the law**

Individuals with FASD often **won't qualify for disability services**, even with a diagnosis

Individuals with FASD, with or without a diagnosis, face **high rates of incarceration and recidivism**

Of the almost 12,000 babies born annually in Maine, almost **600** are estimated to have FASD

Even at half the stated prevalence rate, the estimated annual cost to Maine for FASD is **\$831 Million**

Of children entering state custody in 2019, **51% involved substance use**, 81% in Knox County - the most commonly identified substances were **alcohol and heroin**

Of the 180,000 students in Maine schools, as many as **9,000** may have FASD although few are accurately diagnosed

61% of individuals with FASD may be **expelled, suspended or drop out** of school beginning at age 12

Over 90% of individuals with FASD will develop co-morbid mental health conditions

High rates of older youth and adults with FASD **struggle with independent living, homelessness, and employment**

An estimated **26,800** of the 1.3 million people living in Maine could be impacted by FASD

FASD Maine
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Estimates are based on prevalence rates and projected outcomes from the following studies:

- Streissguth AP et al. (2004). Risk factors for adverse life outcomes in fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects. Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, 25, 228-238.
- A Multi-country Updated Assessment of the Economic Impact of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Costs for Children and Adults (J Addict Med 2018;12: 466-473) – subscription required.
- MacLachlan K et al. (2020). Difficulties in daily living experienced by adolescents, transition-aged youth and adults with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, 44, 1609-1624.
- Astley, S.J., et al. Application of the fetal alcohol syndrome facial photographic screening tool in a foster care population. J Pediatr. 2002 Nov;141(5):712-7
- Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center
- <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/dashboards/child-welfare.shtml>
- OCFS Maine, State Custody Summary SFY 2019