

# **FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) 101**

This group is meant for anyone caregiving a child who has prenatal alcohol and/or meth exposure. We will discuss what has changed in the child's brain and how this affects their behaviors. There will be discussion about how to interact successfully with the team involved in the child's life. This team will include the school personnel, therapists, other family members and often other agencies including the Department of Social Services. This 8 week class will meet for an hour and a half per session.

## **Itinerary**

### **Week 1-FASD Alphabet Soup**

This session will go over all of the acronyms involved in the diagnosis process. What the diagnosis means and how can you get this if the prenatal exposure is present. This session will also just be the introduction to the group process and participants.

### **Week 2-Brain Basics**

This session will be a little bit of an anatomy lesson for participants. Participants will learn what areas of the brain are typically affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol and/or meth. During this process of learning about how the brain is affected the behaviors that are typically seen by these changes are discussed so that participants can begin to see how FASD behaviors are related to brain damage.

### **Week 3-FASD and the attachment paradigm**

This session will explore how the damage to the developing brain affects the ability to attach in a prenatally exposed child. Most prenatally exposed children will have some sort of attachment issue present. This can impede the relationship with their caregiver and cause a great deal of guilt and trauma to the caregiver if not properly understood and supported.

### **Week 4-FASD and sensory processing**

This session will look at how the sensory system is affected and what can be done to help a child with FASD. A guest speaker Occupational Therapist will be available to discuss what this looks like and some tools used to help calm the brain when a child is struggling.

### **Week 5-FASD and secondary disabilities**

This session will look at what disabilities present over the lifetime. There will be materials provided to look at what interventions help to curb those disabilities and what resources are available to help navigate the different systems present in your child's life.

**Week 6 & 7-FASD and the school system**

This session will discuss the issues often present for a prenatally exposed learner. Discussion will center around the process of an IEP and/or a 504 plan. A guest speaker will come to discuss what language is needed to help a parent/caregiver to utilize the tools available to them. There will be resources given to be shared with school systems and teachers about how to help and FASD learner to be successful in all learning environments.

**Week 8-Wrap up and questions**

In week 8 we will discuss what has helped and what is needed for further support for each participant. We will also discuss ways of supporting the caregiver so that caregiver burnout is not happening. Tools will be given to help caregivers understand all of the resources available to them.