



FASD-CAN

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
Care Action Network

FEBRUARY NEWS

Kia ora Kath



So much for a quiet start to the year – as you can see below, it has begun at speed! There is a variety of great things you can be involved in over the next month or so. Please do scan through so you don't miss out.

A fantastic start to the year was having FASD on the cover of the Listener, with a five-page article inside. [Read more here.](#)

Our first webinar of the year with Professor Raja Mukherjee, MBE may challenge some perspectives. We'll be bringing this to you **twice** on March 12, once live from London and again the same evening (recorded). See below for registration.

You've probably caught up with the big news that we have a new Health Minister, Simeon Brown. This was disappointing for FASD-CAN as the previous Minister, Dr Shane Reti, had made FASD a strong focus. We tautoko / support [this recent article](#) Professor Anita Gibbs wrote on the subject, and we urge Minister Brown to carry on the FASD initiatives that were planned for.

Did you know that one of the Government's priorities is increased student attendance? To help us capture the voices of our whānau raising tamariki or rangatahi with FASD (or possible FASD), we are doing a quick and easy survey (less than 10 yes/no questions!).

This will enable us to tell the real story about why some of our tamariki and rangatahi aren't in school six hours a day, five days a week. See below for link.

Check out our new 'Teens and Beyond' website resource below! Having a background in Special Education, I would have loved having this resource to dip into when working with rangatahi and caregivers as they transitioned into adulthood. It's jam-packed with helpful info...

Finally, here at FASD-CAN we were very sad to hear over the Christmas break of two people connected with us that passed away: Jo Cottrell and Martin Whitta. Jo was pivotal in advocating and spreading awareness of FASD, and collaborative in planning events for professionals and caregivers in the Waikato area. She was a strong supporter of FASD-CAN and will be missed. Martin, who had a love for cycling and art, had recently connected into our young adults group and the IDP activities, attending the November Waikanae weekend event. Moe mai rā e kōrua – rest easy, both of you.

Ngā manaakitanga

Stephanie James-Sadler
FASD-CAN CEO

New 'Teens and Beyond' resource now online!



Our brand-new resource for transitioning into adulthood, Teens and Beyond, is now available on our website. It is a comprehensive guide for rangatahi and adults (18-32 age range) to live interdependently in Aotearoa. With headings such as The Law, Money and Banking, Income Support, and Housing and Living, our aim is to have one place for you and your rangatahi to go for everything you need to know about being an adult.

FASD-CAN gratefully acknowledge NOFASD in Australia for allowing us to use their resources as inspiration for Teens and Beyond, and Whāikaha for helping us with a grant to make it happen.

[Check out Teens and Beyond here.](#)

Upcoming training and webinars

- **Kete into Practice: 10-module FASD educator training**

Starts March 6, 3.30pm, \$199 for all ten modules

Registration is now open for the third year of 'Kete into Practice'. This practical, real-world course has been streamlined, with FASD-informed facilitators who are ready to support and upskill cross-sector educators. Testimonials from last year show how highly this course is regarded.

[Find out more and register here.](#)

- **Raja Mukherjee: FASD, co-occurring neurodiversity and misdiagnosis**

Wednesday March 12, 8.30am (live from London)

AND 7.30pm (recording) - FREE



This FASD expert is in demand globally, so we are excited to have secured some time with him! Raja will be speaking about co-morbidities which can occur alongside FASD including (most commonly) ADHD, and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), as well as vision and hearing difficulties. This free webinar will happen live from London in the morning at 8.30am NZST, and we'll be recording it for another viewing in the evening.

[Click here to go to our events page](#) to register for either webinar.

- **David Junior Gilbert in Aotearoa – two events: Tāmaki Makaurau and Ōtepoti**



Dr Gilbert from the University of Salford in the UK is visiting Aotearoa in late February. His research field is around people with FASD within the criminal justice system. He'll be presenting at two events in Aotearoa NZ while he's here, one in Auckland and one in Dunedin.

PLEASE NOTE: Dr Gilbert is keen to talk to caregivers and whānau who have had interactions with police, the justice system or corrections. Please contact him directly at d.j.gilbert1@salford.ac.uk / [take his survey](#) / check out the [flyer on his FASD and Justice research here](#).

AUCKLAND EVENT: Beyond Verbal Testimony: Considering prenatal alcohol history in forensic interviews

Tuesday 25 February, 1pm-2pm, Room 507, LG002, Centre for Addiction Research, Grafton Campus - in person and online.

Dr Gilbert will discuss his findings from a recent study of 11-16 year-olds with FASD who have interacted with the justice system. The results suggest they are 'significantly more susceptible to leading questions, negative feedback and suggestibility... compared to their neurotypical peers'. Combined with poor memory, sometimes lower IQ and heightened impulsivity, miscarriages of justice are all too common.

[Click here for further info and your Zoom link](#) (no registration required).

DUNEDIN EVENT: Truth and Suggestibility: Addressing the Needs of People with FASD in the Justice System

Thursday 27 February, 3pm-4.30pm, University of Otago, R6N4, 6th Floor, Richardson Building – in person only.

[Click here for further info](#) (no registration required).

EXTRA DUNEDIN EVENT (informal) for caregivers – coffee with Gilbert!

Friday 28 February, 11am, at Otago Museum

Professor Anita Gibbs would like to invite any caregivers in Ōtepoti / Dunedin to join her and Dr Gilbert for an informal Q&A session. Just turn up, no registration required – coffee will be provided!

FASD-CAN Online Group Meetings

Our online groups are a fantastic way to get together with your peers, learn, network and discuss. Click the links to go to the relevant registration pages.

For our professional groups this year, the format has changed a little to now happen once a term/quarter, with a presentation from a sector expert.

- [Ngā Tupu Rau](#) online group for **educators** (once a term) – 4pm, Tuesday March 4
The presentation for NTR in March is the ‘Top Five Cognitive Challenges for Students with FASD.’
 - [LANSAS](#) online group for **social workers and support workers** (quarterly) – 4pm, Tuesday May 13
 - [Online Caregiver Support Group](#) (monthly) – 12:30pm, Friday February 14.
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FASD in Education Survey



Is your child or young person attending school part-time? Have you had experience with your child being stood down or excluded or quietly being shown the

door? We need input from the voices of lived experience to support our advocacy around children's rights and inclusive education.

[Please click here](#) to participate in this important survey. Deadline 28 February, 5pm.

Our advocacy in 2024

We were busy last year! FASD-CAN kaimahi/staff were deeply involved in researching and presenting so that people with FASD and their whānau can live better lives. From ministerial meetings to select committees, we advocate for disability reform, health, mental health, education, justice and more.

[Click here](#) to find out what happens behind the scenes.

We are already well into our advocacy this year. Our Chair Dr Leigh Henderson and Principal Advisor Kim Milne recently prepared FASD-CAN's oral submission for the Parliamentary Select Committee against the proposed legislation to designate Young Serious Offenders and enable the set-up of 'military academies' (aka boot camps) for youth aged 14 to 17. They have also been working on submissions for the Treaty Bill and the Mental Health Amendment Bill.

Education Advisory Group (EAG)

Did you know we have a team of specialised, FASD-informed educators from across the sector who voluntarily advise us on aspects of education for neurodiversity? [Find out more about our EAG here.](#)



One of our EAG team, Trish Porter, has just retired from the group after years of valuable input. We'd like to express our gratitude for her mahi and support, and we hope she enjoys more time with her whānau!

If you would like to join our EAG, please contact Kim Milne (our Principal Advisor) at kim.milne@fasd-can.org.nz

New laptops still needed!



We are still rather desperate for funds to upgrade six staff laptops, which are now over eight years old.

We are reaching out to ask for donations to replace the outdated laptops. Your contribution will help ensure our kaimahi can continue to provide essential services and resources to our community while our very limited funds are directed towards the work we do for you!

[Click here](#) if you're able to help us out with donations – OR if you know of any company who may be upgrading their own laptops and could donate computers to us, that could work, too.

That's all for now – enjoy the rest of your summer!

Mauri ora
Your FASD-CAN Team

Stay in the know about FASD in Aotearoa. If you've been sent this email by someone else, please join us as a member to receive newsletters!

If you would like to donate to FASD-CAN, to help us in our mahi, [click here](#) to go to our donation page.

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