

# Prevention...What's the 4-1-1?

## *Birth Defects Prevention Month*

In the U.S., prenatal exposure to alcohol is the most common cause of birth defects. 1 in 8 women reports alcohol use (\*Source: CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1991-2005). Using or abusing alcohol during pregnancy can cause the same amount of harm as using the substance in general.

The effects of alcohol use during the pregnancy period are known as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). The most known of these effects are Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE).

Fetal Alcohol Effects are further separated into two categories:

1. **Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND)**- the mental and behavioral impairments, such as learning disabilities, poor school performance, poor impulse control, and problems with memory, attention, and/or judgment.
2. **Alcohol-Related Birth Defects (ARBD)**- the malformations of the skeletal and major organ systems, such as defects of the heart, kidneys, bones, and/or auditory system.

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs) are 100% preventable. If a woman does not drink while pregnant, then it is not possible for her child(ren) to have FASD. For support, contact The Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) referral line at 1-800-367-0955 or 334-242-3454; your physician; or your local Alcoholics Anonymous group.

*To keep the body in good health is a duty...otherwise we shall not be able to keep our mind strong and clear.  
~Buddha*



Division of Mental Health  
and Substance Abuse Services  
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