



Alcohol and Pregnancy & FASD Research Team



PREVENTION



DIAGNOSIS



THERAPY & MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH SUMMARY

WARAJANGA
MARNTI
WARRARNJA
Together we
walk on country

This project is funded
by

BHP

*Fetal Alcohol
Spectrum Disorder
(FASD) is
characterised by
brain damage from
prenatal alcohol
exposure, the effects
are lifelong and may
not be seen at birth.*

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What are we doing?

The Telethon Kids Institute is working with Wirraka Maya Health Service and BHP to make FASD History in the Pilbara.

Our team is working with the community to find ways to:

- Stop children being born with FASD
- Diagnose children who might have FASD
- Support children and families affected by FASD

We are working with communities in:

- Hedland
- Yandeyarra
- Warralong

The research is targeting:

- Aboriginal women who are pregnant or have recently been pregnant
- Partners of Aboriginal women who are pregnant or have recently been pregnant
- Aboriginal community members, including Elders, community leaders, children and young people, women of child bearing age and their partners and extended families

There are three distinct parts to this research:

Prevention

- Baseline data collection which includes 'knowledge, attitudes and practices' surveys with people in Hedland, Warralong and Yandeyarra
- AUDIT-C alcohol use in pregnancy collected by midwives
- Health promotion materials delivering the message that 'no alcohol in pregnancy is the safest option'

Model of Care

- Development of pathways for referral and diagnosis
- Conduct diagnostic clinics and diagnostic training clinics

Therapy and Support Interventions

- Implement and evaluate the Alert Program[®] with local schools
- Conduct qualitative interviews with families with a child with FASD to describe the lived experience, strengths and needs of these families.
- Build capacity of community services providers to support children with FASD and their families

We will also recruit community members to conduct community research and provide them with ongoing training.

We will also advocate for FASD to be recognised as a disability for school funding purposes and for alcohol management plans in the Hedland region.

Who is taking part in this research?

Chief Investigators and Community Leads:

- Glenn Pearson
- Dr James Fitzpatrick
- Associate Professor Roz Walker
- June Councillor

Project Team:

- Kaashifah Bruce
- David Tucker
- Michelle Gray
- Tracy McRae
- Sangita Daniel
- Margaret Ramirez
- Rebecca Pedruzzi

Key partners:

- Wirraka Maya Health Service
- Hedland FASD Network
- Hedland Community Reference Group
- WA Government – Health (WACHS), Mental Health Commission (Drug & Alcohol Office) Education, Child Protection & Family Support, Justice, Police, Corrective Services

Key community stakeholders:

- IBN Group (Yinhawangka, Banyjima and Nyiyaparli people)
- Gumala Aboriginal Corporation
- Karilka Nyiyaparli Aboriginal Corporation
- Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation
- Wangka Maya Aboriginal Language Centre
- Pilbara Indigenous Women's Aboriginal Corporation (PIWAC)
- Community Councils
- Mothers Against Drugs
- Youth Involvement Council
- Bloodwood Tree Association

How are consumers and the community involved in this research?

The Hedland Community Reference Group (CRG) has representatives from the local community to provide advice to the research team, research partners and the FASD Network on engaging Aboriginal community groups and organisations in Hedland, Warralong and Yandeyarra. The CRG will ensure the cultural and ethical conduct of research in Aboriginal communities with a key focus on strengthening community empowerment, healing, connectedness to country, spirituality and local family capacity building.

Community members and community researchers have told their stories through videos

[Alfred's story](#)

[Sissy's Story](#)

[Adrian's Story](#)

[Tracey's Story](#)

[June's Story](#)

[Find out more about this project](#)

How will this research help?

We are doing this to 'make FASD history' so children can live happy, healthy and productive lives

Alcohol and Pregnancy & FASD Research Team at Telethon Kids Institute

We have a comprehensive program of research in partnership with community & stakeholders to achieve our goals of developing prevention strategies; building the capacity of health, justice and other professionals to recognise and diagnose FASD; and implementing and evaluating programs for children and young people with FASD and their families.

For information on alcohol & pregnancy, FASD, our research projects, resources and publications visit our website: www.alcoholpregnancy.telethonkids.org.au

There is no safe time or amount of alcohol to drink while planning a pregnancy, when pregnant and when breastfeeding which is why the Australian Guidelines state 'not drinking alcohol is the safest choice'.

