



4th ANNUAL  
LONDON & REGION  
FASD CONFERENCE 2023

BRIDGING RESEARCH, CLINICAL, AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

BREAKING STIGMA:  
SUPPORTING SUCCESS  
IN A COMPLEX WORLD

OCTOBER 24 & 25, 2023 | VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

# DAY 2 PROGRAM

AGENDA

LIVED EXPERIENCE SPEAKERS

NEURODIVERSE ARTISTS

PLENARY SPEAKERS

WORKSHOP SPEAKERS

RESEARCH LIGHTNING TALKS PRESENTERS

FASD CONFERENCE 2023 COMMITTEE

CPRI'S ELS DEPARTMENT



CPRI CHILD & PARENT  
RESOURCE INSTITUTE



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## EVENT DAY AT A GLANCE

<b>8:30 – 9:00</b>	<b>Sign into Conference via Zoom</b> • Test your Technology			
<b>9:00 – 9:10</b>	<b>Hosts</b> • Overview of the Day – Technology, COI Readings, & Agenda			
<b>9:10 – 9:20</b>	<b>Hosts</b> • Welcome, Opening Remarks, Introductions, & Land Acknowledgement			
<b>9:20 – 9:25</b>	<b>“He Can Fancy Dance” by Cindy Paul &amp; Edited by Rochelle Lewis</b>			
<b>9:25 – 10:25</b>	<b>Plenary Speaker – Dr. Claire Coles</b> <b>Intervention &amp; Treatment for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders</b>			
<b>10:25 – 10:40</b>	<b>Break</b>			
<b>10:40 – 11:20</b>	<b>Research Lightning Talks</b>			
<b>11:20 – 11:25</b>	<b>Hosts</b> • Introduce Workshops			
<b>11:25 – 12:25</b>	<b>Workshop (Main Room) –</b> Dr. Margaret Newbury Jones  <b>Supporting Sexual Health for Children &amp; Youth</b>	<b>Workshop (Room 1) –</b> Jake McGregor & Michelle Irvine  <b>Navigating Success Though the Teen Years: A Lived Experience</b>	<b>Workshop (Room 2) – Dr.</b> Ashley Bildfell  <b>Social Skills Impairments in People with FASD: Making &amp; Maintaining Friends through the Program for the Education &amp; Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS) at Navigating Onward</b>	<b>Workshop (Room 3) –</b> Angela Geddes  <b>Building Community Capacity for Accessible &amp; Sustainable FASD Assessment Services</b>

<b>12:25 - 1:25</b>	<b>Lunch</b>			
<b>1:25 - 1:30</b>	<b>Hosts</b> • Welcome Back to the Main Room & Conference			
<b>1:30 - 2:30</b>	<b>Plenary Speaker</b> – Dr. Jacqueline Pei <b>Towards Healthy Outcomes: A Framework for Intervention with Individuals with FASD</b>			
<b>2:30 - 2:45</b>	<b>Break</b>			
<b>2:45 - 2:50</b>	<b>Hosts</b> • Introduce Workshops			
<b>2:50 - 3:50</b>	<b>Workshop (Main Room)</b> – Shannon Butt, Darlene Durand, Matthew Sinclair, & Cindy Quinlan-Morrone (Hosted by Angela Geddes) <b>Healing Out Loud</b>	<b>Workshop (Room 1)</b> – Dr. Kelly Harding <b>Disability, Alcohol, &amp; Media: Intersecting Influences &amp; Considerations for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness &amp; Prevention</b>	<b>Workshop (Room 2)</b> – Erin Watkins, Sherry Ball, & Julie Welch <b>FASD &amp; Attachment – Connecting Approaches</b>	<b>Workshop (Room 3)</b> – Dr. Kaitlyn McLachlan <b>Identifying FASD in Criminal Legal &amp; Forensic Settings: Emerging Best Practices for Screening</b>
<b>3:50 - 4:00</b>	<b>Hosts</b> • Research Lightning Talks Winner Announcement • Closing Remarks & Online Evaluations • Knowledge Keeper Jackie Tenute to Close the Conference			

\*\*\* Please note that non-shaded segments in the day are ineligible for claiming accreditation hours. The shaded segments (i.e., Plenary Speaker sessions and Workshop speaker sessions) are eligible for claiming accreditation hours.

# THANK-YOU TO OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE SPEAKERS

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Every year, we are grateful to those who choose to share their own personal lived experiences with FASD at this conference. Not only do these speakers bring a unique perspective to our important discussions about care and support, but they also inspire conversations about hope and potential. Despite stigma and other barriers, they know how important it is for personal stories to be told and held with respect.

Today, we are privileged to hear from a video entitled, “He Can Fancy Dance,” by Cindy Paul & Edited by Rochelle Lewis. The 5-minute video includes pictures compiled by Rochelle Lewis alongside the song by Cindy Paul. The description of the video reads that this is, “a video [Rochelle] made dedicated to [her] grandparents and all other residential school survivors and to the families affected by them.” We thank them for being vulnerable and courageous and sharing their stories with all of us at this conference. We are all better for it.

## NEURODIVERSE ARTISTS

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### Virtual Art Exhibition and Competition for Neurodiverse Artists and Their Families and Caregivers

The London & Region FASD Conference, sponsored by The Volunteer Organization of CPRI (VOCPRI), showcases the remarkable artistic talent of individuals that identify as neurodiverse. Artists were encouraged to create drawings, paintings, collages, sculptures, digital art, songs, poems, or any piece of art using any medium. For inspiration, participants were reminded that the theme of this year’s conference is “Breaking Stigma: Supporting Success in a Complex World.”

View the virtual art exhibition here: [vocpri.ca/artgallery2023/](https://vocpri.ca/artgallery2023/)

### Art Competition

The competition awards one winning submission a \$100 prize and two runner-up prizes of \$50 each, decided by a committee comprised of volunteers and local professional artists.

## PLENARY SPEAKER SESSIONS

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INVITED PLENARY LECTURE  
9:25 AM – 10:25 AM • MAIN ROOM

### INTERVENTION & TREATMENT FOR FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS

CLAIRE D. COLES, PHD

The lecture will review the status of intervention and treatment studies for individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). After an initial description of the characteristics of individuals that can be addressed through education and treatment, areas in which research has been done and areas that are less well researched will be discussed. Examples of successful programs and promising innovations will be reviewed.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Learners will be able to identify behavioural areas that are commonly problematic in alcohol affected individuals that have been the focus of intervention.
- Learners will recognize methods that are used to address behavioural problems and learning deficits in FASD.
- Learners will be able to identify areas that require further research.

## ABOUT THE SPEAKER

**Claire D. Coles**, Ph.D., is Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and Pediatrics at Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia, Director of the Center for Maternal Substance Abuse and Child Development (MSACD), and Director of Mother2Baby GA, a teratology information service that provides counseling and information about exposure to prescription and illicit drugs as well as a variety of environmental toxins. Dr. Coles also founded the Emory Neurodevelopmental Exposures Clinic (ENEC) that provides diagnostic and intervention services to alcohol and drug-exposed children. Her research on the developmental and behavioural effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol and drugs and on the interaction of these effects with the postnatal environment was among the first to describe many behavioural effects of prenatal alcohol exposure in infants, young children, and adolescents as well as the effects on brain structure and function in young adults. She also initiated two of the first intervention studies designed for children with FASD, MILE, and GoFAR. Currently, Dr. Coles is one of the principal investigators on a multi-site, long-term study of effects of prenatal alcohol exposure on adult health in middle age and one of the Atlanta site's MPI on the National Multisite HEALTHy Babies/Child Development (HBCD) Longitudinal Study that will follow mothers and babies for the first decade of life and is working with colleagues at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to improve surveillance for FASD.

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INVITED PLENARY LECTURE  
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM • MAIN ROOM

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## TOWARDS HEALTHY OUTCOMES: A FRAMEWORK FOR INTERVENTION WITH INDIVIDUALS WITH FASD

JACQUELINE PEI, PHD, RPSYCH

In this presentation we will discuss Towards Healthy Outcomes (THO), a framework for intervention with individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). We will review the assumptions central to this model and the rationale for adopting a 'healthy development' lens as we work with individuals with FASD. Challenges and opportunities will be examined across developmental domains with consideration for ways in which emerging research, lived expertise, and practical wisdom may be integrated and actioned within our communities. Ultimately, we will reflect on ways in which we can engage in thoughtful and purposeful actions that are responsive to the unique needs and strengths of individuals with FASD.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Recognize and discuss the Towards Healthy Outcomes (THO) framework.
- Assess intervention research, and its application, for individuals with FASD.

- Estimate the importance of a balanced perspective when working with individuals with FASD.

#### ABOUT THE SPEAKER

**Jacqueline Pei** (R. Psych., PhD) is a Professor in the School and Clinical Child Psychology Program and Assistant Clinical Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Alberta. Dr. Pei began her career as a Criminologist and Forensic Counselor working with incarcerated youth. Motivated by this early work, she returned to academia to study youth at risk, child development, and neuropsychology. Now, as a researcher, and a practicing Registered Psychologist for the past 20 years, her research focus includes identification and evaluation of interventions to support healthy outcomes for youth put at risk, and in particular individuals with FASD. Dr. Pei has over 150 peer reviewed publications and reports, but places the greatest value on her work with various community and government agencies. To this end, Dr. Pei currently leads the Intervention Network Action Team (iNAT) for the Canada FASD Research Network in roles that facilitate the link between research, policy, and practice.

## MORNING WORKSHOP SPEAKER SESSIONS

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11:25 AM – 12:25 PM • MAIN ROOM

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### SUPPORTING SEXUAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

MARGARET NEWBURY JONES, PSYD

Everyone is a sexual being. When a child/youth living with FASD is going through typical sexual developmental milestones, particularly puberty, how does having a body that may be ahead of their social and emotional maturity present? How do we support children/youth living with FASD to ensure they are safe and mature into sexual adults with the knowledge and supports they may require?

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Distinguish between typical developmental milestones through puberty and those of concern.
- Identify basic topics relating to sexual health that all children/youth should be taught.
- Evaluate the individual needs of children/youth living with FASD and their sexual health education needs and support.

#### ABOUT THE SPEAKER

**Dr. Margaret Newbury Jones** (she/her) operates SHADE Consulting and Counselling ([shadeconsulting.ca](http://shadeconsulting.ca)) based on Treaty 1 territory (Winnipeg, MB). She works with neurodivergent and disabled individuals, including those living with FASD, providing training, sexual health services, and trauma counselling.

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11:25 AM – 12:25 PM • BREAKOUT ROOM 1

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### NAVIGATING SUCCESS THROUGH THE TEEN YEARS: A LIVED EXPERIENCE

JAKE MCGREGOR & MICHELLE IRVINE

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This session focuses on learnings through a lived experience. Incorporating culture with a healthy lifestyle, when linked with acceptance of supports, can be a formula for success, especially through the challenges of the teen years. Discussion will be around specific programs and strategies and how they have been helpful in supporting the whole person in Mind, Body, Spirit, and Emotions.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Recognize positive perspectives around the importance of culture when paired with other supports for individuals living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).
- Integrate new perspectives around culture and health goals into future research and interactions in a positive and culturally related way.
- Identify where improvements can be made in order to support success through culture and individual health goals.

#### ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

**Jake McGregor** is a young Anishinaabe man starting his next transition in life by heading to college. When he was adopted, the doctors said that Jake would not be able to participate in normal things like social gatherings and that he would not do well in school. It was because of the negative things that doctors said about living with FASD that Jake was determined to change and be successful. His parents taught him to talk, read and write, and access help from external supports. Jake has many supports and supporters in his life. He has goals to complete college and begin a career in Public Relations. Jake enjoys participating in social activities and gatherings and has a passion for sharing stories and new ideas.

**Michelle Irvine** is the FASD Program Manager for the Anishinabek Nation that services 39 First Nations in Ontario. She has lived experience both as a caregiver to a child with exceptionalities and from being an Educational Assistant for over 25 years.

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11:25 AM – 12:25 PM • BREAKOUT ROOM 2

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### SOCIAL SKILLS IMPAIRMENTS IN PEOPLE WITH FASD: MAKING & MAINTAINING FRIENDS THROUGH THE PROGRAM FOR THE EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT OF RELATIONAL SKILLS (PEERS) AT NAVIGATING ONWARD

ASHLEY BILDFELL, PH.D., C.PSYCH.

Social skills include the abilities to select, make, and maintain appropriate friends; interpret, understand, and communicate feelings; and manage social expectations like respecting personal space. Social skills are an adaptive function and are included in the Cook et al., (2016) Canadian Diagnostic Guidelines for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) diagnosis. While there is consensus in the literature that social skills are impaired in approximately 20% of people with FASD, there is a paucity of research on the specific social skills impairments seen in this population and how to intervene. Haner, McGinn, and Harris (2021) outlined how social deficits, such as superficial friendliness, poor boundaries, and high vulnerability to peer influences in people with FASD, may contribute to their overrepresentation in the justice system and go overlooked by judges, lawyers, and case managers. Therefore, social skills interventions specific for people with FASD are critical, yet lacking. In 2023, Navigating Onward (NavOn) offered the Program for the Education and

Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS) to adolescents and their caregivers with confirmed or suspected neurodevelopmental disorders, including FASD. This workshop will review why the program was developed and the differences in social skills impairments in FASD and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Pre-test and post-test data will be presented alongside a clinical discussion of what worked well and what could be improved to better support social skills development in adolescents with confirmed or suspected neurodevelopmental disorders, including FASD.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe the potential impacts of social skills deficits in people with FASD.
- Identify the differences between social skills impairments in people with FASD and people with ASD.
- Implement clinical strategies that were found to be effective for group management and social skills development in people with confirmed or suspected neurodevelopmental disorders, including FASD.

#### ABOUT THE SPEAKER

**Dr. Ashley Bildfell** is a Clinical Psychologist at Navigating Onward (NavOn). Her research focused on self-regulation in early learners, specifically while writing. Dr. Bildfell has trained and worked in schools, community mental health, primary care, and forensic settings. Dr. Bildfell provides clinical assessments and psychotherapy for children, adolescents, and families. She has a special interest in supporting individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders (e.g., Learning Disabilities, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Intellectual Disabilities, ASD, and FASD), mental health problems, behaviour problems, and those involved in the justice system.

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11:25 AM – 12:25 PM • BREAKOUT ROOM 3

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### BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY FOR ACCESSIBLE & SUSTAINABLE FASD ASSESSMENT SERVICES

ANGELA GEDDES, CYC, BA(PSYCH), MSW, RSW, YTT

The overall goal of this workshop is to inspire interest and provide concrete opportunities to increase skills and capacity for improved screening and assessment for complex neurodevelopmental disorders/Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). This workshop will explore the integral role of Social Workers and front-line practitioners in a variety of settings for identification, direct support, and referrals. Comprehensive training in this area will allow clinicians/Social Workers to fulfill their potential in their role. As a result, the people they support will do better even in the absence of a diagnosis. We will also provide an overview of the multidisciplinary assessment team training which focuses on how to operationalize the FASD Canadian Guidelines for diagnosis. This will be of particular interest to members of existing or emerging assessment teams/clinics. We will share what we have learned about the importance of getting to know the whole person by assessing as much as possible in that point in time given the resources that are available. We believe diagnostic clarification helps people to reach their potential, and we will explore creative and comprehensive ways to work as a team.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Recognize multi-disciplinary team processes and the importance of early screening and identification.

- Employ advocacy for augmented assessment services to be ‘built’ into current service delivery frameworks.
- Demonstrate an ability to lead individuals and families to diagnostic clarity, and to place some of our most vulnerable on a path to relevant and helpful supports even before a diagnosis is made.

#### ABOUT THE SPEAKER

**Angela Geddes** is a Social Worker in private practice with over 25 years in the helping profession. She has a small practice, and she and her team have a particular interest in providing assessment, parent education, and direct support for individuals and families experiencing complex issues, including the impact of prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE)/FASD. She has recently authored a book titled, “A Complicated and Beautiful Brain,” and provides training opportunities aimed to help people affected feel better understood.

## AFTERNOON WORKSHOP SPEAKER SESSIONS

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2:50 PM – 3:50 PM • MAIN ROOM

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### HEALING OUT LOUD

SHANNON BUTT, DARLENE DURAND, MATTHEW SINCLAIR, CINDY QUINLAN-MORRONE, & ANGELA GEDDES, MSW

This panel’s aim is to focus on Breaking the Stigma and helping service providers and communities to understand the implications of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) on individuals and families in their day-to-day lives and activities. We plan to have two people who have been diagnosed with FASD and two caregivers who will share strategies, successes, as well as challenges from a broader family experience. This panel will be facilitated by a Social Worker in private practice who has been supporting people with complicated mental health and hidden developmental challenges for over 25 years. This panel will have questions to prompt meaningful discussion that will help the audience understand how subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle approaches and misunderstandings can be very stigmatizing and present barriers to service. We will also focus on hopeful messaging by indicating what kinds of inclusive supports can be offered (with simply more awareness and skill rather than financial investment) that provide people with what they need to be better understood and to experience more educational, vocational, emotional, and social successes. We will highlight different therapies and support services that are likely to lead to overall improved health outcomes.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Be able to describe how people who do or may have FASD are often misunderstood, misdiagnosed, and stigmatized.
- Be able to advocate for assessment, diagnostic, and support services based upon knowledge of trauma and the working signs of probable prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE).
- Be able to advocate to their agencies and communities regarding the importance of inclusive, helpful, and relevant supports and services.

## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

After a lifetime of slipping through the cracks of our healthcare system, **Shannon Butt** finally received support for living with the impact of PAE at age 33. Shannon believes in storytelling as a way of sharing perspective; she has created a life around sharing hers to empower others to discover and perhaps speak their own. Shannon is an artist, certified yoga instructor, meditation guide, and self-proclaimed forever student. She insists learning is built into every breath we take and views her own life as a series of lessons. Using her schooling, personal studies, and lived experience with FASD as her lens in which she views the world, Shannon creates an environment where participants feel not only welcomed, but free to be their authentic selves. Shannon is an advocate for disability and accessibility rights, mental health help for all, and an equitable future. Her motto is “Heal Out Loud.”

**Darlene Durand** is a Registered Early Childhood Educator and part-time professor at Fanshawe College in the ECE program. Her passion for FASD was sparked when her family became a foster home for newborn babies. They have been blessed by adoption; their 14-year-old daughter who has FASD is the reason for Darlene’s passion. Finding ways to guide and support her daughter with strength-based modalities has driven Darlene’s advocacy in the community, and most recently in the healthcare system alongside her daughter. Darlene’s passion and energy is supported by her husband, Chris, who is the brakes to her gas pedal at times, but together they find success even amidst some of the most challenging moments on their parenting journey. Team LOVE is what the Durand Family has called themselves as they navigate situations, leading with love. Knowing that to help anyone be the best they can be, they need to know they are loved first and foremost. Team LOVE is also involved in cheering on caregivers and providing opportunities for connection and community, to give those raising children the hope and strength they need to get through each day.

**Matthew Sinclair’s** home community is Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation in Saskatchewan. He resides in London, Ontario. His educational background is a combination of lived experience and academia, as he graduated from the Sault College Graduate Program FASD, class of 2021. He is a professional speaker and advocate in the field of FASD/Addictions, working in the field of education and non-profit organizations. A milestone in his professional career was co-creating and designing a community program aimed to help others living with FASD as the FASD Worker, with partnerships with ER Employment Consulting and Sault Ste. Marie Indigenous Friendship Centre. Matthew is currently the CEO of All Relations Consulting. Additionally, he volunteers with Native Canadian Toastmasters in Toronto. In recent years, Matthew has been the Housing Crisis Worker at Atlohsa Family Healing Services.

**Cindy Quinlan-Morrone** has found her place on this FASD journey as a mama to her incredible daughters who joined their family through public adoption. She and her husband have been parenting neurodivergence for over 20 years. Their parenting trajectory drastically shifted, during a time of family crisis, when it was realized that their daughters experienced neurodevelopmental disorders associated with PAE. Since then, together they are all learning to carry the impact of FASD together with the knowledge that awareness, early and ongoing assessment, accommodation, and support from others is critical. When not moving mountains as an advocate for her family, she practices privately as an Occupational Therapist in pediatrics and she also works as a peer support for families formed through adoption, kinship, and customary care.

**Angela Geddes** is a Social Worker in private practice with over 25 years in the helping profession. She has a small practice and she and her team have a particular interest in providing assessment, parent education, and direct support for individuals and families experiencing complex issues, including the impact of

PAE/FASD. She has recently authored a book titled, “A Complicated and Beautiful Brain,” and provides training opportunities aimed to help people affected feel better understood.

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2:50 PM – 3:50 PM • BREAKOUT ROOM 1

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## DISABILITY, ALCOHOL, & MEDIA: INTERSECTING INFLUENCES & CONSIDERATIONS FOR FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER AWARENESS & PREVENTION

KELLY D. HARDING, PHD

Media reflect and affect social understandings, beliefs, and values on a diversity of topics, including the lives of individuals with disabilities. However, little formalized research has been conducted that utilizes traditional media (e.g., television) and social media (e.g., TikTok, Instagram) in the context of disability, particularly Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). These media sources may serve as primary sources of public knowledge about individuals with disabilities and therefore it is essential that such portrayals avoid stigma and stereotyping. This presentation will blend findings from multiple research projects that explore the portrayals of FASD and FASD prevention in media, particularly on television, TikTok, and Instagram. Findings that provide evidence of the constant tension and debate around FASD as a disability and FASD prevention will be explored. Recommendations for messaging in light of these findings will also be discussed.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Interpret the role that media plays in discourses about FASD and FASD prevention.
- Recognize the existing tensions between discourses about FASD and discourses about FASD prevention and women’s substance use.
- Identify how representations of FASD and FASD prevention in popular media (e.g., television, social media) both promote and refute stigma.

### ABOUT THE SPEAKER

**Dr. Kelly Harding** is an interdisciplinary feminist women’s health and disability scholar. She received her PhD in Interdisciplinary Rural and Northern Health from Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. Dr. Harding is the Director of Research Administration and a Research Associate with the Canada FASD Research Network. She is also an Adjunct Faculty member in the Department of Psychology at Laurentian University. She has worked in the field of FASD since 2010 and is involved in diverse research projects in the areas of FASD prevention and women’s health, FASD assessment and diagnosis, family well-being, social media, mental health, and human rights.

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2:50 PM – 3:50 PM • BREAKOUT ROOM 2

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## FASD & ATTACHMENT – CONNECTING APPROACHES

ERIN WATKINS, DSW, SHERRY BALL, & JULIE WELCH, ECE, BA, MA

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Many children exposed to alcohol prenatally are also impacted by relational trauma. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and early negative life events can both result in confusing behaviour that doesn't respond to typical strategies. Caregivers are often surprised to hear how complimentary attachment-focused and FASD-informed approaches are. Join us to hear more about the connection between these interventions and to learn to use a user-friendly chart to plan for managing difficult behaviour through an attachment and FASD lens.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Create and implement creative tools for caregivers for everyday situations.
- Actively engage the parent/child voice within a FASD and attachment framework.
- Respond and reframe challenging behaviours within a FASD and attachment lens.
- Indicate common approaches for FASD and attachment challenges.
- Demonstrate basic strategies to prevent and respond to behaviour rooted in FASD and attachment.
- Develop a planning chart for specific behaviours.

### ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

**Erin Watkins** is a Developmental Services Worker currently working as a Community Behaviour Consultant within the Attachment Consultation and Education Service, a specialized outpatient clinic at CPRI. She works extensively with biological, foster, adoptive, and kinship caregivers who are raising children with an early history of negative life events. These children have experienced abuse, neglect, trauma, or instability in their young lives, which can then manifest into difficult-to-manage behaviours. Erin is a certified facilitator of the Connect attachment-based program for caregivers. She has been deemed reliable to utilize the Secure Base-Safe Haven coding technique under Dr. Bob Marvin of the Ainsworth Attachment Clinic in Virginia. Erin is also reliable in the Emotional Availability Scales for children 0-5 and is trained in using this framework with children 6-14 years of age under Dr. Zeynep Biringen, Psychologist, Colorado. Both assessment tools allow Erin to complete video-mediated relational assessments within the framework of parent-child relationships. Erin has co-created a therapy group for children who have experienced developmental trauma and a caregiver education program based in trauma and attachment. Erin firmly believes that all people do the best they can with what they have available to them at the time.

**Sherry Ball** has been a FASD Service Coordinator with the Community Services Coordination Network (CSCN) for over four years in Elgin/Oxford County. In her role as FASD Service Coordinator, she provides education, coaching, service coordination, and caregiver support to those families affected by FASD, whether diagnosed or suspected. Sherry is also a member of the provincial FASD Community of Practice (COP) as well as the Elgin/Oxford COP.

**Julie Welch** is a FASD Consultant for Huron-Perth and currently works with the CSCN. She has over 15 years of experience working in the field, helping families understand FASD, supporting families in navigating services and supports, educating community partners in FASD informed practice, and promoting FASD awareness in our communities.

## IDENTIFYING FASD IN CRIMINAL LEGAL & FORENSIC SETTINGS: EMERGING BEST PRACTICES FOR SCREENING

KAITLYN McLACHLAN, PH.D., C.PSYCH.

Many individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) come into contact with the criminal legal system but are not appropriately recognized, understood, or supported. The focus of this workshop will aim to characterize the state of evidence on current practices and needs for FASD and screening across a range of criminal legal and forensic contexts and share emerging best practices for FASD identification and screening in these settings.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Be able to describe up-to-date research about FASD in the criminal legal system.
- Assess the need to improve recognition and response to FASD in criminal legal contexts.
- Outline emerging best practices for implementing FASD identification and screening procedures in criminal legal settings.

### ABOUT THE SPEAKER

**Dr. Kaitlyn McLachlan** is an Associate Professor in the CPA-accredited Clinical Psychology program at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, and a member in good standing of both the College of Psychologists of Ontario and British Columbia (out of province status). Dr. McLachlan completed graduate training in Clinical Psychology (MA, PhD) with a forensic specialization at Simon Fraser University, and subsequent postdoctoral training as a Fellow with the Kids Brain Health Network with concurrent appointments in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Alberta, and the Child and Family Research Institute, Developmental Neurosciences and Child Health, at the University of British Columbia. The overall focus of Dr. McLachlan's research seeks to improve outcomes for vulnerable individuals, including those with neurodevelopmental disabilities and FASD, as well as a specific focus on justice-involved individuals, across the lifespan. Dr. McLachlan is the current Research Lead for Justice with the Canada FASD Research Network, and her scholarly activities focus on developing and translating evidence to inform effective policy responses in the criminal justice system and more broadly.

## RESEARCH LIGHTNING TALKS PRESENTERS

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10:40 AM – 11:20 AM • MAIN ROOM

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The London & Region FASD Conference Committee invited established and up-and-coming FASD researchers and experts to present their latest work. The Research ePosters reflect important and interdisciplinary topics on current FASD research.

Research ePosters will be available for preview beginning October 24 and throughout the two event days. View the Research ePosters here: [vocpri.ca/research-eposter-presentations/](https://vocpri.ca/research-eposter-presentations/)

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Of the 11 abstracts that were submitted, 3 Research Lightning Talks presentations were selected based on their diversity, timeliness, and significance to the FASD community. These presentations are condensed, 10-minute overviews of the critical work being conducted by the authors. Please note that primary presenters are bolded/underlined and trainee presenters are indicated (\*) below.

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>MorpheusQ as a method for measurement of palpebral fissure length in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders</b>
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Diego Gomez <sup>1</sup> , <b>Morgan Baker<sup>2*</sup></b> , Colin Carter <sup>3</sup> , Ganz Chockalingam <sup>4</sup> , Edward Riley <sup>5</sup> , Joseph L. Jacobson <sup>6</sup> , Sandra W. Jacobson <sup>6</sup> , Omar Rahman <sup>7,8</sup>
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<p><b>Background &amp; Research Objectives:</b> Short palpebral fissures are one of the cardinal facial features of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). Measurement is commonly performed live using a clear ruler, which makes evaluations through telehealth platforms challenging. This study aimed to assess the accuracy of MorpheusQ (University of California San Diego, CA), a facial photographic analysis software that utilizes smartphone facial identification to measure palpebral fissures.</p> <p><b>Methods:</b> Left palpebral fissure length (PFL) was measured in 69 Cape Coloured (mixed ancestry) children in Cape Town, South Africa. Two independent clinical geneticists used a clear ruler while a third investigator employed the MorpheusQ app.</p> <p><b>Results:</b> The cohort was composed of 39 females (57%) and 30 males (43%) with an average age of 7.11 years (SD, 0.61). Mean PFL measured by clinician 1 and 2 were 2.49 mm (SD 0.13) and 2.48 mm (SD 0.15), respectively. The mean PFL measured using the MorpheusQ frontal scan was 2.58 mm (SD, 0.07), while the rotational scan was 2.4 mm (SD, 0.13). Interrater variability showed an R2 = .76 (p&lt;0.01). Moreover, comparison between clinician 1 and the MorpheusQ rotational scan had an R2 = .72 (p&lt;0.01).</p> <p><b>Conclusions:</b> The use of technology for facial measurement has become a useful diagnostic aid in assessing craniofacial anomalies. This study demonstrates that facial imaging software may be a reliable tool for palpebral fissure measurement.</p>	

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Sex-specific DNA methylation dysregulations in late-gestation placentas as a consequence of early preimplantation alcohol exposure</b>
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**Background & Research Objectives:** Prenatal alcohol exposure is known to alter the epigenetic profiles of cells during brain development and is part of the molecular basis underpinning Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) etiology. However, the impact of alcohol exposure on the future epigenetic profiles of the placenta remains mostly unknown. We think that alcohol exposure during preimplantation will initiate DNA methylation dysregulations on the embryonic epigenetic program and cause abnormal establishment of DNA methylation profiles in the developing placenta. Our objective is to identify if early embryonic ethanol-exposure leads to DNA methylation errors in late-gestation placenta.

**Methods:** We subjected pregnant mouse females to ethanol at 2.5 days (E2.5), corresponding to embryos at the 8-cell stage. We collected E18.5 embryos and dissected placentas of ethanol-exposed and control embryos. We established genome-wide DNA methylation profiles of placentas by Methyl-seq and performed bioinformatics analyses.

**Results:** We uncovered 991 differentially methylated regions (DMRs) in male and 1309 DMRs in female placentas. Interestingly, gene ontology analysis of genic DMRs in male placentas are related to synaptic transmission, neuron development and morphogenesis, whereas in female genic DMRs gene ontology reveals implication in inflammation, cell morphogenesis and cytoskeletal organization. Using a machine learning approach, we found a DNA methylation signature of the placenta that efficiently discriminate control and ethanol-exposed samples.

**Conclusion:** Our results show that an early acute alcohol exposure generates long-lasting sex-specific DNA methylation perturbations in the developing placenta and that those dysregulations could be used to identify ethanol-exposed embryos.

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Pre-COVID-19 pandemic prevalence of women's reported alcohol use while pregnant and breastfeeding and associated health determinants: Canadian Community Health Survey</b>
<b>AUTHORS</b>	<b><u>Lisha Di Gioacchino</u></b> <sup>1</sup> , Danijela Dozet <sup>2</sup> , Svetlana Popova <sup>2</sup>
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**Background:** This study presents the most recent cross-jurisdictional Canadian prevalence rates of women's reported alcohol use during pregnancy and/or breastfeeding and associated determinants. These data are benchmarks to evaluate the impacts of COVID-19 containment measures on families and communities and inform health promotion and care planning, including substance use prevention.

**The Objectives of this Study were to:** i) estimate prevalence of alcohol use during a) pregnancy and b) breastfeeding and ii) assess the factors associated with this use.

**Methods:** Secondary analysis was conducted with the 2018 cycle of the Canadian Community Health Survey, a population-based cross-sectional survey that collects information related to health status and determinants. A large nationally representative sample of Canadian women (15+ years) who a) had given birth to at least one child and/or b) breastfed their last baby was used for data analysis.

**Results:** The following baseline rates were reported: alcohol use prior to pregnancy recognition (49%), during pregnancy (9.5%), and while breastfeeding last baby (27%). The majority of women who reported alcohol use while pregnant and/or breastfeeding were 30+ years old, had a household income of over \$80,000, had a post-secondary education, were born in Canada, and lived in food secure households.

**Conclusions:** These findings demonstrate the need for preconception prevention initiatives, public education on the noxious substances transmitted via breast milk, and substance use disorder treatment for pregnant women and their partners. Integrated knowledge translation activities will be discussed, with a focus on coordinated FASD assessment, diagnosis and care referrals.

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