

Network News

May 2007, Issue 13

A Note to Readers

by Beverly Palibroda

Hello All. As many of you may know, the FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan has recently requested your input through an online survey. Thank you so much for your responses. The feedback from communities across the province will be extremely valuable as we plan activities for the coming year. Watch upcoming issues of the Network News for notices of projects and activities.

We hope you enjoy this issue of Network News. If you would like more information about any of the contents of the newsletter, about FASD and related issues, have a story idea or request for the next issue please call us toll free at 1-866-673-3276.

Did You Know???

FASD Support Network Annual General Meeting

June 2, 2007, 10:30 am

Room 140 John V Remai Building, 510 Cynthia Street, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Great FASD Ride Across Canada

This cross Canada horseback ride event will raise awareness about FASD. The ride will begin in Halifax on May 17th and end in Victoria on September 9th. The provinces visited will be Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC.

Contact: Claudia Park Julien Tel: (506) 732-9092

Website: <http://www.faslink.org/Ride01.htm>

E-mail: fasdride@gmail.com

Plenary Sessions Online: The 2nd International Conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Research, Policy, and Practice Around the World plenary sessions are available online. This is a good opportunity to see the sessions if you were unable to travel to the conference.

Website: <http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/FASD.htm>

Excellent New Website: FASD and the Justice System

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Justice committee of Ontario launches website and awareness campaign

Website: <http://fasdjustice.on.ca/>

Mark these Dates on your Calendar!! Major Events!!

Canada Northwest FASD Partnership Conference

May 21 - 24, 2008

Location: Banff, Alberta, Canada

Website: <http://www.cnfasdpartnership.ca/index.cfm>

Third National Biennial Conference on Adolescents and Adults with FASD

FASD and Mental Health: The Wisdom of Practice

April 10-12th, 2008

Location: Vancouver, BC

Website: <http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/Adults.html>

Abstract Submission Deadline: September 15, 2007

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Living Skills for Youth and Adults with FASD: Food Preparation

Pause for just a moment. Think about the activities of your day. Think about how you have chatted with a friend, prepared a meal, gotten dressed, made a phone call, attended an appointment, made a big decision, picked out and paid for groceries or taken a daily medication. Each day we all complete multiple tasks that are sometimes referred to as daily living skills or adaptive functioning skills. Individuals affected by FASD are known to have some difficulties in successfully completing daily living skills. This is mostly because of differences in how their brains work. Because of brain differences, individuals may need extra support and specialized teaching strategies to help them become as good at these skills as they can be. It is important for family members, caregivers and mentors to keep expectations fair and reasonable. Keep in mind that not every person will need as much support in every area of life. Some people may never gain a certain skill but might be really good at other things.

Parents often wonder how they can best help a youth or young adult affected by FASD build and strengthen skills in the home. It is a common mistake to assume that because a household task is easy for us it is just as easy for everyone else. Tasks like cleaning up, doing laundry or keeping a home organized and safe are all important household skills that each of us needs. Preparing simple and healthy meals is an especially important and rewarding skill that promotes good health and well being. Sharing a meal with friends and family can be a joy in life and one that many individuals affected by FASD can accomplish. Food preparation is complicated and there are many things to learn including what food to buy, how to plan a meal, deciding about healthy and less healthy foods, knowing how to be safe when handling food and kitchen equipment, storing food safely, and how to use recipes to make meals that turn out right and taste great.

Here are some basic tips and strategies to help an individual with FASD to learn about food preparation. You will probably think of a lot more ideas but these can get you started.

1. Be well prepared with the items needed and a positive attitude. Have fun learning about food preparation.
2. Set the space up for learning. Teach skills when other family members are away, get rid of dis-

3. Simplify all tasks. Break more complicated jobs into small steps. Keep in mind the strengths and limitations of the individual.
4. Write down all the steps in a task, number the steps and laminate the list for easy reference. This is sometimes called a task analysis. These lists can be stored in a binder in the kitchen along with a menu and recipe cards.
5. "Fridge proof" all recipes and instructions. This means use the kind of words that you use for a note on the fridge. Recipes can be rewritten in plain language, get rid of words like sauté, zest, fold, whip, use words like stir, mix, and fry.
6. When teaching, use demonstration and practice sessions. Go through instructions or demonstration at a pace that works allowing time for processing. Most people learn best by doing. If reading is hard pictures can be used along with plain language instructions. If you know someone can follow verbal steps really well, consider making a tape they can listen to.
7. Think about how you can change the environment to create success. Use of timers, easy to use measuring cups, bowls with handles, labels on drawers, pre-measured ingredients, or pre cut vegetables can make a big difference.
8. Create laminated instructions for kitchen equipment that is more difficult or used less often.
9. Think about safety. Purchase appliances with automatic shut offs, teach about fire safety, keep baking soda and a large pot lid handy in case of fire. Teaching to use the right utensil for a task can reduce risk of accidental cuts.
10. Consider arranging a service like the Good Food Box or purchasing groceries together if choosing food is hard or money gets used on other items and there is none left for food.
11. A rotating menu can be created. Include affordable foods and food preferred by that individual. Meals on the menu can be simple to prepare yet still be healthy and well balanced.
12. Teach to store leftovers safely. All leftovers should be labelled, dated and tossed after 3 days if not used. Have a good supply of containers with lids available.



Handy Kitchen Hints

Hint: Post a list of names and phone numbers on the fridge. This list of a few trustworthy people that can be called on when an individual with FASD has kitchen questions. This is a great way to help a young adult build skills and confidence in the kitchen.

Hint: Sign up for the Good Food Box. Here is contact information for various communities.

- [Child Hunger and Education Program Good Food Box](#)
211- 230 Ave R. South, Saskatoon S7M 0Z9 Tel : 306-655-5387 goodfoodbox@chep.org
- Regina Good Food Box (REACH), Box 4482, Regina SK S4P 3W7 Tel : (306) 347-3224
- Hunger in Moose Jaw Tel : 306-692-1916
- Prince Albert Good Food Box
donniemckay@yahoo.com Tel: 306-922-0355
St. John Community School Tel : 306-953-7536
Smart Families Food Cooperative, Tel : 306-763-7459, riverbank@sk.sympatico.ca
- Good Food Box Project Box 654, Tisdale, Sask. S0E 1T0 Tel : 306-873-2299, gfbbox.tisdale@sasktel.net
- Midwest Food Resource Project Inc. (Northwest Saskatchewan) Tel : (306)446-2684, (306) 825-2897, (306)236-1606 debbie.mwfp@sasktel.net
- Battlefords Good Food Box Program 1112-103rd Street, North Battleford, SK Tel : (306) 446-2684 shiela.mwfp@sasktel.net or debbie.mwfp@sasktel.net
- Lloydminster Good Food Box program 4708- 48th Avenue, Lloydminster, SK (306) 825-2897 cheryl.mwfp@sasktel.net or debbie.mwfp@sasktel.net
- Meadow Lake Good Food Box program 618-1st Street East, Meadow Lake, SK Tel : (306) 236-1606, debbie.mwfp@sasktel.net

Healthy and Less Healthy Foods

Try this activity at home

1. Gather a selection of healthy and less healthy foods including a good variety of fresh foods, canned goods, junk food, fruit, dairy products and snack foods.
2. Label two baskets one as **Healthy Food Choices** and one as **Less Healthy Food Choices**.
3. Sit with the youth or young adult and explain that we all like to eat different kinds of food but some food is healthier.
4. Ask the individual to place each item in one of the baskets. Be encouraging and upbeat.
5. Following this activity, talk about the choices they made and discuss why some foods go in each basket. Provide clear and specific praise, ensuring the activity remains fun and helps the youth to learn about healthy and less healthy food choices.
6. Finish up by each of you choosing a healthy food out of the basket of healthy choices. Eat and enjoy together!

Activity Adapted from: David Musgrave; thesis; University of Calgary; 2006



How to do a Task Analysis

Many of the everyday activities that we do without thinking about are complicated and made up of many small steps performed in a specific order. A task analysis can be helpful when teaching about food preparation. Here is what you do:

- It is a good idea to do the task yourself a couple of times. Things like making Jell-O, toast, scrambled eggs, tossed salad are good to start with. Be aware of each step and the order the steps are performed.
- Ask the young adult to show you how they do the task. This will help you to know what they **already** know.
- Decide on the easiest way to do the task based on the skills they already have.
- Create a list of numbered steps in the task. Use as few words as possible but be clear and specific.
- Laminate the list and post in the kitchen or store in a kitchen binder. You could include a photo of the finished food item.
- Remember, the steps in a task may be different for each person because we might like to do things differently. Make changes if something isn't working. Practice and be prepared to re-teach.



Book Review: Why Me? Why my Child?

Anita Grosse (2006)

Review by Beverly Palibroda

I have been thinking lately about the grief and loss that we all face in our lives. It really is an inevitable part of life. Those whose lives have been touched by FASD face a particular combination of mixed emotions including loss and grief. One means of achieving a positive outlook is to actually acknowledge the natural feelings of grief that we are experiencing. But how does one do this?

Anita Grosse, recently retired from her position as Social Worker with the Alvin Buckwold Child Development Program, explores the topic of grief in a booklet titled *Why Me? Why My Child?* This booklet, written for parents of children diagnosed with a disability or serious health concern, is intended to help parents through the confusing emotions that they may feel. Through the years many parents and caregivers have faced difficult news in the warm and reassuring presence of Anita Grosse. Her calm words and wisdom have comforted families who may have felt like their lives were tossed into disarray and turmoil. The grief of these parents is a unique kind of grief and loss, tangled in with hope and optimism, and the love of a parent for a child.

Anita writes for parents in a clear, direct and honest voice. She takes each parent on a journey, asking only for a willingness to be open to their own experiences. She guides her reader through the realities and the possibilities of loving and learning along with a child who, because of health concerns or a disability has a future that the parents did not envision for their child. The journey, according to Anita, is one where parents can face their grief and loss and come to “rediscover joy” and “have a new vision of life” (2006, 12).

I highly recommend reading this booklet. There are nuggets of wisdom throughout. Whether you are a parent, family member or professional I suspect you will discover a worthwhile message. Even if you are quite familiar with this experience

and have perhaps faced your own grieving process, this booklet may prompt you to further ponder this complex topic and come to a better understanding of the intermingling of the grief and joy that life often hands us. Raising or supporting children, youth and adults affected by FASD requires strength, instinct and a certain amount of guesswork. This is not a rule book nor is there a promise that things will go smoothly. This booklet offers only some information that I trust can aid you in your journey.

Why Me? Why My Child? is available from the Kinsmen Children’s Centre Family Resource Room and is provided free to parents. The booklet can be purchased by organizations, professionals and community members for \$1.25. The Network has some copies available and can provide them at no cost to parents, family members and supports of individuals with FASD.

Why Me ? Why My Child ?



Alvin Buckwold Child
Development Program

