


our northern
FASD process

a timeline
of the events of our northern
FASD community development process

The Northern Family Health Society provides leadership to the Prince George FAS Network, British Columbia Canada, formed in February 1997 from a group of caregivers and front line workers who had been working tirelessly for six years. It grew to include program managers and policy makers with more than 50 individuals representing families and as many as 30 organizations. The commitment was to share our expertise and knowledge from grassroots to service providers to academics and address the issues of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder FASD together, rather than alone.

1987

- Dr. K.O. Asante Studies in FAS prevalence in Northwest BC & Yukon
- BC FAS Research Group forms in partnership with Sunnyhill Hospital



1988

- Conference- Prevention of Childhood Disabilities Prince George introduces FAS to service providers
- Pregnancy Outreach Program, Healthiest Babies Possible, established in Prince George under the sponsorship of the Native Friendship Centre.



1989

- Prince George Chapter of Special Needs Adoptive Parents SNAP established
- BC FAS Research Group presents community FAS workshops in partnership with Healthiest Babies Possible Pregnancy Outreach Program.
- Pregnancy Outreach Advisory Committee forms Northern Family Health Society.

the 1990s

1990-1991

- City of Prince George adopts Bylaw No. 5705, for warning signs of FAS in response to a presentation from the Northern Family Health Society-Pregnancy Outreach Program.
- FAS workshop on behavior management strategies is sponsored by Healthiest Babies Possible and community agency partners.
- Prince George FAS Action Committee is founded in response to community demand for more FAS community education workshops and awareness activities with leadership of the Pregnancy Outreach Program.



1992

- "FAS a Preventable Tragedy", Health Canada document released provides framework for action for the FAS Action Committee.
- 1st National Symposium on FAS in Ottawa is attended by a local SNAP parent active on the PG Fetal Alcohol Action Committee



1993

- Prince George FAS Action Committee becomes FAS Education Committee
- FAS Awareness Campaign implemented by FAS Education Committee in partnership with the Restaurant Association, funded by Alcohol and Drug Programs.

Friends, Family, Community Supporting Mother and Child Healthy Choices ... Healthy Babies ... Healthiest Babies Possible

1994

- Pregnancy Outreach Program staff and advisory committee identify barriers and strategies to promote community integrated services for pregnant and parenting women with substance use issues.
- Letter of Intent by Pregnancy Outreach Program to develop an FAS Prevention program submitted to Health Canada CAPC.
- BC North Central FAS and Drug Resource Coalition of eight communities formed and regional FAS prevention program developed.
- Pregnancy Outreach community advisory committee and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Education Committees join forces to provide an integrated response.

1995

- Joint Pregnancy Outreach/FAS advisory committee host community meetings inviting program managers and policy makers to consider how to make services more accessible and user friendly for pregnant and parenting women with substance use issues.
- Dr. Christine Looch is invited to speak about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effects at Doctor's Rounds at Prince George Regional Hospital.

1996

- BC FAS Consultation Group forms and active involvement begins.

1997

- The Prince George FAS Collaborative Network is formed to begin to address FAS prevention and intervention as a community.
- Community Needs/Capacity assessment facilitated through a Mind Mapping grassroots participatory process
- Population Health Canada FAS Prevention project awarded.
- Ten years of historical FAS action in Prince George is documented.
- Guiding principles, vision and process for addressing FAS through a community based policy response is developed.
- Planning for a Participatory Action Research project begins. The FAS solutions generated by grassroots women with addiction issues will inform the policy development work of the Network.
- Foundational Directions For the Network are documented in "Grounded in Hope: Our Community's Policy Solutions for FAS" forming the next steps of our continuing 3-year FAS project initiative.

1998

- Minister of Health announces Population Health Canada funding for a 3-year FAS Prevention Project in Prince George.
- Visit to Dawson Creek to facilitate FAS Community Readiness/Capacity assessment with community members.
- "Adults Living with FAS: Building Communities, Strengthening Supports" Prince George families are actively engaged in the project sponsored by FAS/E Network of BC and the Children, Family & Community Research Program of the University of Victoria.
- Vancouver FAS Conference - PG Network members present "FAS/E Children in Northern BC: A Study of 148 Children in one Pediatrician's Practice and Grassroots Participate in Finding Solutions for the Prevention of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome".
- Developing a Comprehensive FAS Communication Campaign- Initiated with funding from Health Canada Population Health funds
- Guiding principles adopted by the FAS Network; included a woman's right to choice, an understanding of "drinking and women" that includes the health determinants, the philosophies of harm reduction, grassroots inclusion, a strengths model and participatory action.
- The Network shared the "Grounded in Hope: Our Community FAS Policy Response to FAS" charter with the community at a celebration and workshop during Alcohol and Drug Awareness Week. Guiding principles were validated. The strategic plan was further developed and action steps set out on a time line.
- "Developing a Community Approach to Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Families with Substance Use Issues" cross-agency community workshop. Ways to support women and families, policy and solutions, in partnership with Aurora Centre - Janet Amos and Nancy Poole.
- FAS Community Roadmap pamphlet developed, produced and distributed addressing prevention through intervention supports.



1999

- Website launched www.fas-pg.org with the "Grounded in Hope: Our Community FAS Policy Response to FAS" document.
- Provincial Health Canada Conference for CAPC programs in Manitoba, "Facilitating Grassroots Solutions for a Healthy Community; policies generated by the community for the community", provided an opportunity for a "testing ground" to facilitate transfer of what we have learned in Prince George.
- Debra Evensen, FAS Education Consultant, Alaska facilitates "FAS throughout the Lifespan: Building Success at Home, School, and Community" workshop.
- BC Health Research Foundation Project "Creating Solutions- Women Preventing FAS" 2-year participatory action community based research initiative awarded to the Prince George Community Network.
- Submission of recommendations to the Ministry of Education to address the unique needs of children with FAS.
- B.C. Motherisk help line is launched in Prince George in collaboration with Gideon Koren, Western Brewers Association, Prince George FAS Network members and Northern Interior Health region representatives.
- On the First International FAS Day the FAS Network launched 801 balloons from the Courthouse to represent the number of FAS affected individuals in our city.
- The City of Prince George endorsed Proposed Resolutions on FAS put forward by the Network and moved forward to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.
- The Northern Interior Regional Health Board endorsed two resolutions put forward by the FAS Network and moved them forward to the Health Association of BC and the Canadian Health Association.
- Submission to BC Ministry of Children and Families Minister, Lois Boone urging the Ministry's collaborative leadership beyond the province to inter-provincial and national levels (Prairie Province Initiative) and for core funding support for the role of the Provincial FAS Coordinator Position.
- The Knowledge Network filmed "Creating Solutions" research project story for televising.
- Creating Solutions researchers disseminate their process and findings at the "Building Bridges, Creating an Integrated Approach to Women's Health", conference in Victoria.
- FAS Network becomes a formal partner of the Community Prevention and Promotion Make Children First Strategy and Children's First Call initiative.
- FAS Resource Centre Committee receives grant funds to purchase FAS resources (MCF Make Children First) and to purchase computer technology from Industry Canada.
- FAS Resource Centre Grand Opening.
- "A Roadmap to FAS Community Resources", second production developed and distributed. Physicians are a key audience.
- Mentored Smithers FAS Prevention Committee in the "Mind Mapping Project" process for their community.
- FAS community awareness survey of 352 citizens to gather information on peoples' knowledge, attitude, and awareness of resources with respect to FAS to determine campaign focus and provide a baseline for evaluation.

2000-2001

2001

- Prince George National Health Summit- A Women's Health Gathering and March is held by Creating Solutions researchers and community women to address women's health issues.
- What does 888/4444 have to do with FAS? International FAS Awareness Campaign - mystery contest: Linking Prevalence and FAS is an Invisible Disability.
- Enhancing FAS Interventions in the Prenatal and Early Childhood Stages in Canada, Prince George FAS Community Mobilization & Policy Development process and Best Practices for working with Pregnant Women with Addiction Issues documented on Canadian Centre on Substance use website www.ccsa.ca.
- Developing FAS Parent Support Networks, project is initiated in partnership with North Peace River- Liard Health Region, (CAPC)
- FAS Youth Employment project community planning in partnership with HRDC.
- Chetwynd and Fort St John communities visited to assess community readiness and initiate FAS community collaborative strategic planning.
- Agency surveys conducted to identify current practice responses and mandates to support responses to women, addictions, pregnancy and parenting.
- Media Event, Premier Viewing of Video "Creating Solutions: Women Preventing FAS-Understanding Women's Substance Misuse", BC Health Research Foundation Project Dissemination held at UNBC.



2002-2003

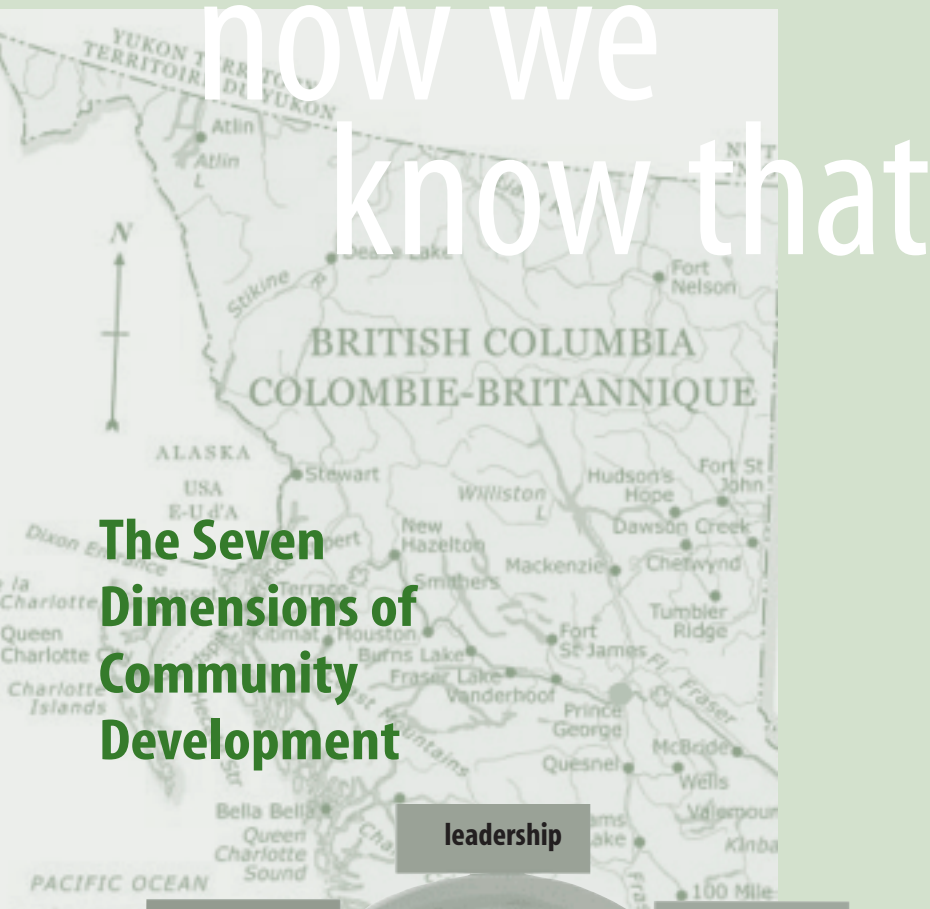
2002

- Perinatal Violence: Developing a Community Integrated Response project initiated, in partnership with BC Women's Hospital Women Abuse Program funded by National Crime Prevention Fund.
- FAS Warning Signage Bylaw and Message revisited through community focus sessions.
- September is FAS Month campaign: Message - "Healthy Communities Support Pregnant Women and their Partners to Avoid Alcohol During Pregnancy".
- "SPOT the KNOT" FASD Youth Campaign messages: know your limits when drinking, use a condom during sex and take care of each other.
- Message: Understanding FASD prevention in context of the social determinants widely presented to UNBC and CNC classes and community groups.
- Joint FASD / Invisible Disabilities Coalition forms.
- "Prairie Northern - Yukon FAS Conference - A Lifetime of Solutions": Creating Solutions researchers present research findings.
- FAS Resource Centre Open House Sweetheart Tea was held Valentine's Day.
- National Conference: "The Prevention, Identification and Intervention of FAS For Aboriginal Peoples in Canada", presented keynote address, Vancouver/Toronto.
- Northern Communities formalize FAS Coalition partnership.
- Youth Containment Centre FASD training needs assessment facilitated.
- Participation in Provincial FAS Prevention Awareness Campaign planning.

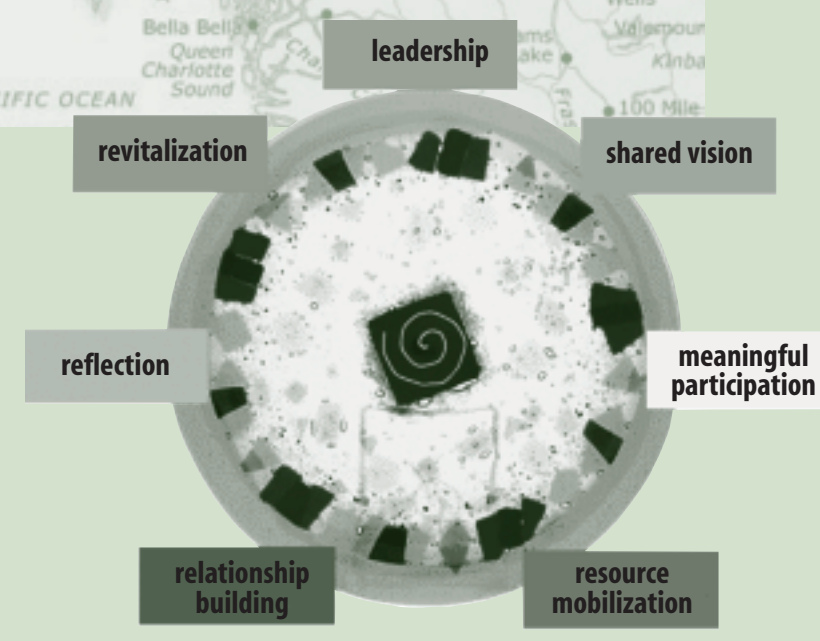


2003

- Violence is a Health Issue community cross-agency training.
- Awarded development grant for Developing Young Girls Competency prevention research project, BC Medical Services Foundation.
- FAS Network Story Dialogue Evaluation/Self Care Celebration event.
- 1st Annual Healthy Communities Recognition Award presented to WHA Cougar Hockey Team.
- BBC Great Britain films story of Prince George FAS community historical action.
- FASD Prevention & Intervention Training implemented in Northern Health Region by NFHS as a Provincial FAS Communication Campaign strategy, funded by MCFD.
- Dissemination Vancouver FAS Conference: "Communicating FAS Policy Solutions: Connecting Communities".



The Seven Dimensions of Community Development



- A common understanding of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder FASD is essential to understanding the factors that determine people's health.
- We must all work to shift attitudes towards women who substance misuse and understand their substance misuse in a context of their lives.
- Organizations must shift their environment and reduce barriers to support our best responses towards women.
- Grass roots involvement in the full process as well as their meaningful participation is the only foundation on which to build a solid community response.

We are proposing that the key point in doing effective health promotions for community development is in building sustainable grassroots participation in the creation of knowledge, resources and relationships. We have found in our work that authentic knowledge is the knowledge created by the group for which it can do the most good.

Shared Vision

A collective picture of success indicators that a community is striving for in FASD development. Grassroots community members are engaged in the process. A set of agreed upon principles and values guide the process.

Our Community Action:

- Principles and values collectively determined
- Understanding Women and Substance Use Issues
- FASD and Women Centered Health
- Woman Abuse as a Health Issue
- Prevention and Early Intervention Initiatives
- Perinatal Violence-Developing a Community Integrated
- Best Responses for prevention and support
- Employment Support Program for Single Parents with Multi-Barriers
- "Building Social Competencies and Mentorship with Young Girls"



FASD Resource Mobilization and Development

Resources are the human talents and gifts, property, funds and capital forming the foundation of assets in a community. Each of us brings special gifts to our involvement. If we learn to respect and honour each of these gifts and to look for the ability in everyone, we will have resources aplenty. Recognize and access the unique resources your community possesses. Bringing people together increases your resource base for problem-solving and action. Identify gaps in resources and develop a plan to share or develop resources to overcome the disparity.

Our Community Action:

- Developed Prince George FASD Resource Centre
 - Two partnering BC Northern FAS Coalitions developed a joint proposal to develop FAS Parent Support Networks for Northern families.
 - The Prince George FAS Network of over 50 organizations was created and sustained
 - Community Readiness Capacity and Needs assessment
 - Mind-mapping: grassroots individuals voiced solution focused ideas of what they need for the prevention of FASD and support to families
- Grounded in Hope: Our Community's Policy Response to FASD documents vision and strategic plan
- FASD community awareness survey
- Best Practices Community Survey
- Develop multi-faceted FASD Communication Campaign
- International FASD Day activities (1999-2001)
- September is FASD Awareness Month activities (2002)
- Presentations and Workshops



FASD Leadership

Champions who earn respect and regard through leadership work with FASD facilitate sharing of knowledge and the fostering of relationships. They Mentor and develop new leaders. They recognize the value and "gifts" in everyone and create an environment where voices can be heard equitably.

Our Community Action:

- Worked in ways to create a common ground for working 'with', not 'for' the grassroots
- Mentored Smithers FAS Prevention Committee project coordinator in their community mind mapping process to raise FAS awareness and develop a community plan,
- Provided mentorship to grassroots women through a participatory action research project
- Provided mentorship to leaders of the northern BC communities of Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Chetwynd, and Ft. Nelson in the development of FAS community mobilization committees with grassroots involvement
- Assisted in the development of the Victoria, BC FAS Circle 2002



Relationship and Coalition Building

Collective mentorship, collaboration, knowledge and power-sharing, decision-making and action. A cohesive human community is developed through trust, respect, shared beliefs and a sense of connectedness. Grassroots representation is essential to ensure an informed response. Work towards a power-with and ultimately a power-within approach. Work in ways to reduce barriers to enable people to participate-provide nutritious snack or lunch at meetings, offer transportation, and child-minding.

Our Community Action:

- Prince George FAS Action/ Education Committee 1999
- BC CAPC North Central Fetal Alcohol and Drug Effects Resource Coalition 1995
- BC FAS Consultation Group 1996
- Prince George FAS Community Network 1997 sub-committee of PG Make Children First Coalition 2000
- National FASD Best Practices Committee 2000
- BC Northern Partnerships Coalition 2002

Meaningful Participation and Shared Ownership

Community members are valued and have a purpose in the process. Members have a shared democratic voice. Participants have opportunities for knowledge and skill development. "Knowledge is power" and together we have "power with" one another that leads to action. Equal participation is encouraged through removing barriers to participation.

Our Community Action:

- Creating Solutions to the Prevention of FAS: participatory action community based research project
- Prince George Northern Family FAS Resource Centre
- Ongoing mentoring of grassroots women in the community
- Global dissemination of our "knowledge" through videos, news casts and the internet website

