

Development of an Internet Learning Environment to Support FAS Related Programming

The Internet is more than a learning environment. It is a community organizing tool. This technology increases the availability of a wide diversity of ideas as well as facts. The information that is shared is seldom "filtered" by our media, corporations or government. We believe the Internet provides great promise as a forum to influence political discourse and thereby affect policy and practice in the area of FAS.

We also see that equal access to this tool is a relevant issue that must be addressed. Our Network has worked to ensure computer and Internet access to our families and to FAS affected individuals. Inter-connectivity is a prerequisite of being a part of a community and larger society. Access to this technology can assist our families in feeling connected and supported.

The challenge will be learning strategies that assist this group of users with gaining success with this often-frustrating technology. We have attempted to use visuals where we can and would recommend to others that are hoping for primarily FAS affected and family users to address the literacy issue.

Regionally, individuals in remote, rural and isolated areas can tap into our local knowledge, resources and experiences. We can share ideas, information and importantly we can dialogue our successes in prevention and intervention work for FAS/ARBD.

Fundamentally, our work is directed by the belief that through building in successes, those without power, FAS affected and their families, will be empowered.

Though often frustrating in its complexities and required new learning, the Internet has the potential to build strong networks of dedicated people.