

# November Newsletter



## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Raising children with FASD can be challenging and overwhelming. As a caregiver, it's not uncommon to constantly put the needs of your child before your own. But, your child's unique needs and challenging behaviour may cause you to feel fatigued and lacking in energy. The demands of parenting a child with FASD require that you take good care of yourself – the better you treat yourself, the more energy and enthusiasm you will have for your child.

## SELF-CARE STRATEGIES

Don't take your child's behaviour personally: Remember that your child's tough behaviour is a symptom of their FASD, not a reflection of you as a parent.

Take time out for yourself: A long walk, relaxing bath, or evening out with your spouse or friends can give you some much needed time away from your children. Don't feel guilty for allowing yourself time for rest and relaxation.

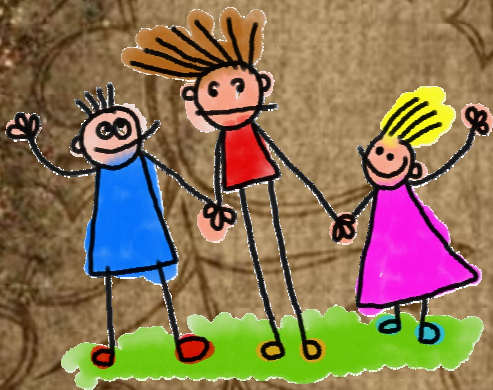
Find someone to talk to: Connect with other parents of children with FASD, join or start a support group, or meet with a counselor. Call your Family Coach 780-926-3375

Talking to someone can be helpful to vent your frustrations, seek advice, and connect with others who understand what it is like to parent a child with FASD.

## LEST WE FORGET

### QUICK TIPS

- ◇ DO THE BEST YOU CAN DO – DON'T TRY TO BE PERFECT.
- ◇ TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF FIRST. IF YOU ARE STRESSED AND TIRED, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GIVE YOUR KIDS ALL THAT THEY NEED.
- ◇ GET ENOUGH SLEEP, GOOD FOOD, AND EXERCISE.



Information is courtesy of;  
Lutherwood 519-884-1470  
[www.fasdwaterlooregion.ca](http://www.fasdwaterlooregion.ca)

## Social Isolation & Loneliness

What is social isolation? Social isolation happens when a person has little or no contact with other people. Isolation may be over a short or long time period. It's a physical state of not being around others.

What is loneliness? Loneliness is a feeling of being alone, empty, or separated from others. It's an emotional state. It can be felt even when people are surrounded by others. Just being around other people isn't a "fix" for loneliness. All people feel lonely from time to time. It can become a problem when the feeling becomes chronic.

How do social isolation & loneliness impact each other? Isolation may lead to loneliness, and sometimes, loneliness may make isolation worse. Sometimes isolation and feelings of loneliness may happen at the same time without one being caused by the other. Social isolation or not being around others for a long period of time can leave people feeling lonely.



Loneliness may come on due to being socially isolated, but it can be caused by other things including the death of a loved one, breakups or divorce, or moving. Feeling lonely for a long time may make it hard to engage with others and lead to a fear of rejection. This may lead to social isolation.

Social Isolation, Loneliness, and Health Isolation and/or loneliness can affect anyone. Experiencing social isolation and/or feeling lonely can be bad for your health. They're related to health problems like cardiovascular disease (e.g., stroke, heart attack), mental health problems (e.g., depression, cognitive decline, dementia), and pre-mature or early death. Isolation. A person may be socially isolated and not feel lonely. Loneliness. A person may be surrounded by people and feel lonely

It's ok to not be ok. when possible, reach out to a loved one or someone you can trust. Step out to mental health services. There is no shame in talking to a professional. They might have some resources that could be beneficial to you and your family. Reach out to your family coach. we are here to listen without judgement. Give yourself credit for the things you do. Some days making it through a day is really an awesome accomplishment.

### **Commentary:**

As parents of individuals suspected or diagnosed FASD , we have usually lived in isolation before the Pandemic. Often we felt it was best to isolate at home to protect our children, ourselves and family. However, social isolation of the world around us feels different. Before, we could stop by someone's house for a tea and a talk. Now, when our kids are in school or otherwise occupied, we can't even do that.

The isolation during COVID is harder than our self-imposed one before COVID. We don't have support groups where we could sit and share some food, ideas and debrief. We use the phone less because we don't want to bother anyone else. Everyone is so busy!

We are not too busy here at the NWR FASD Society – Mackenzie Network in our NEW Sheltering Arms Building! Stop by and we will give you a tour. Coffee, tea is always on.



If you want to try to get together through ZOOM, we can do a topic of conversation one day and see how it goes.

We have missed you and want to catch up. Stop by.... Coffee/tea is waiting!

Wanda Beland , parent, Executive Director

