Information on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) for NAMI resources.

FASD children and youth are involved in all systems in the community. Here are a few FASD facts:

- In a recent study, estimates are that 1 in 20 school-age children are affected with prenatal alcohol exposure. That makes FASD more prevalent than autism.
- 94% of individuals with an FASD have one or more co-occurring mental health disorders.
- 10% of individuals with an FASD have FAS, the most known of the disorders; but 90% have the "invisible" disorder of FASD with no prominent facial features, but all of the CNS impairment. Most individuals also have normal, or even high IQs, yet due to brain damage, cannot meet age-appropriate expectations.
- The most common misdiagnosis of FASD is ADHD.
- The average age of first contact with the law is 12.8 years.
- If children attend public schools, they will be in special education, even with their high IQs. Many are diagnosed with a learning disorder, such as dyscalculia, and even dyslexia. Behavior and inattention are causes of many school difficulties, and even elopement in the higher grades. RTC placements are often needed if not diagnosed correctly. And due to the child's inability to learn from consequences or have targeted medications, treatment centers are ineffective.
- Parents want and need tools to parent more effectively. Understanding the underlying reason for behaviors and learning differences if affected by prenatal alcohol during pregnancy can reduce stress in the family.
- NOFAS (see resources below) has a support group for birth mothers. This would need to be addressed in any inclusion in the Basics program. Knowing the reason for their child's difficulties, however, gives them the tools to help their child. All parents want this. There is much information on addressing this topic on the website, and NOFAS has a wonderful advocate for birth moms who is a great resource for this information, Kathy Mitchell. With that said, most children with an FASD are not living with their birth moms, but rather are in foster care, kinship care or adopted.
- Early identification and diagnosis offer opportunities for a better life-time outcome for these precious children. NAMI can be an effective partner with FASD awareness by including it in their Basics program. By doing so, NAMI can start to remove some of the "silos" that we know prevents appropriate treatments. That would be amazing!

Listed below are resources for FASD:

1. North Texas FASD Network's link: [https://northtexasfasd.org](https://northtexasfasd.org)
2. National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS): [nofas.org](http://nofas.org)
4. FASDs: Information for Educators: [https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/educators.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/educators.html)
5. Understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: A Comprehensive Guide for Pre-k to 8th grade Educators: [https://sites.duke.edu/fasd/](https://sites.duke.edu/fasd/)
7. FASD and the Criminal Justice system: [https://www.mcfares.org/justice](https://www.mcfares.org/justice)