

# Is there a cure for FAS?

- There is no cure for FAS.
- If children with FAS get help early, they will do better.
- If you think your child has FAS, or if you drank alcohol while you were pregnant, you should talk with your child's doctor as soon as possible.
- Talk with counselors at your child's school so that they can get help for your child.

# How can I prevent FAS?

- Do not drink alcohol if you are pregnant or planning to be pregnant.
- If you think you might be pregnant, stop drinking *now*.
- Do not wait until you know for sure that you are pregnant.
- If you have trouble stopping your drinking you should use birth control so you do not get pregnant until you can stop drinking.

# What if I need help to stop drinking?

- Stopping drinking can be very hard. But there are many people who will help you.
- You can get free help from people who know what you are going through.
- Call Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The number is in your phone book.
- There are also many alcohol treatment centers who will help. Give them a call.
- Even if you have tried to stop drinking before, try again. Don't give up.
- Use birth control so that you do not get pregnant until you can get your drinking under control.

For more information about FAS and other ways to make sure you have a healthy baby, contact your local Arc office.

The Arc Dearborn / Dearborn Heights  
313-562-1787

The Arc Detroit  
313-831-0202

ARC Downriver  
734-283-0710

The Arc of Northwest Wayne County  
313-532-7915

The Arc of Western Wayne County  
734-729-9100

Did you know that if you drink  
alcohol when you are  
**pregnant**  
you can hurt your  
unborn baby?

*If you are—*

- Pregnant now.
- Want to get pregnant.
- Having sex, but not using any birth control.

# Think Before You Drink

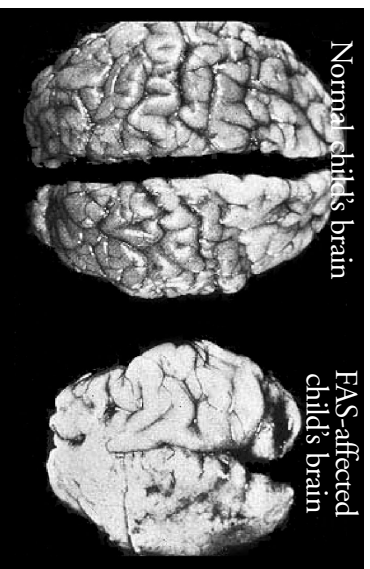
The Arc



CDC  
CENTERS FOR DISEASE  
CONTROL AND PREVENTION

## Why is drinking alcohol while I'm pregnant such a bad thing?

- If you drink alcohol while you are pregnant you can hurt your baby's brain, heart, kidneys, and other organs.
- Then the baby could be born with a problem called fetal alcohol syndrome or FAS.
- Babies born with FAS have faces that do not look "normal."
- They may be small and not weigh as much as other babies. This means they are not off to as good a start in life as other babies.
- Some babies with FAS will have mental retardation.
- Other babies will have a hard time learning and controlling how they act.
- These problems do not go away. They last a lifetime.



Source: Streissguth & Little 1994

## What if I'm not planning to have a baby yet?



- Lots of women do not plan on getting pregnant. But it happens—every day.
- And most women do not know they are pregnant until they've missed at least one or two periods.
- Women who drink alcohol and do not use birth control when they have sex may get pregnant and expose their baby to alcohol before they know they are pregnant.

## Is it O.K. to drink a little during pregnancy, as long as I don't drink hard liquor?

- No. There is no safe level of alcohol you can drink during pregnancy.
- A 12-ounce can of beer has the same amount of alcohol as a 4-ounce glass of wine or a 1-ounce shot of straight liquor.
- Some drinks, like wine coolers or malt or mixed drinks, may have more alcohol in them than a 12-ounce can of beer.
- The best choice is not to drink at all when you are pregnant.

## I drank before I knew I was pregnant. What should I do now?

- It is never too late to stop. The sooner you stop drinking, the better it will be for both you and your baby.
- Make sure you get regular prenatal checkups and tell your doctor or nurse you have been drinking.
- They can give you tips on what to do. Follow their advice.

## If I drank when I was pregnant does that mean my baby will have FAS?

- It is not always easy to tell if a new born baby has FAS.
- Alcohol can affect unborn babies in different ways.
- Even if a baby does not have all the problems of FAS, the baby may be born with other problems if the mother drinks alcohol while she is pregnant.
- Some babies will have trouble learning or behaving.