



FOR RELEASE
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Yukoners asked to consider others on International FASD Awareness Day

WHITEHORSE—The Health and Social Services and Justice departments want people to take a moment at 9:09 a.m. on Tuesday, September 9—International FASD Awareness Day—to think about how they can support women who are pregnant to have healthy babies.

"It is important to remind people that Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a complex issue and people who struggle with addictions, including expectant mothers, need our compassion and support," Health and Social Services Minister Doug Graham said. "I would like to acknowledge the programs and services, both in the non-government sector and within government, that support families and individuals with FASD."

International FASD Awareness Day has been recognized since 1999 when bells signifying a "Minute of Reflection" were rung at 9:09 a.m. at Mt. Albert Methodist Church in Auckland, New Zealand. Since then, the movement has grown around the world.

"Many Yukoners are affected by FASD—not only the people diagnosed with this incurable condition—but also their family members and friends," Minister of Justice Mike Nixon said.

FASD clients access services and supports through a wide variety of government-funded programs.

The Health and Social Services department funds Options for Independence which recently received national recognition for its housing project specifically for individuals with FASD. In addition, the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon (FASSY) is being supported to deliver another session of case-management training on how to work more effectively with individuals with FASD.

"However, there are many factors that influence a woman's decision to drink while pregnant, and there are no easy solutions," Nixon added. "The Yukon government continues to deliver on the commitments we made to address FASD, including implementing the FASD Action Plan."

In addition to government supports and services, FASSY also provides outreach services, prevention and education in the territory. For more information about how you can support moms to have healthy babies, visit www.FASSY.org.

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