

**Celebrations in January:**

- ☞ **National Mentoring Month**
- ☞ **March of Dimes Birth Defects Month**



# PRAIRIE RIDGE

**PREVENTION SERVICES**

**“CLEAN MIND; CLEAN BODY; CLEAN SPIRIT; DRUG FREE”**

## Newsletter

**Vol. 2 Issue 1  
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**Did You Know?**

- ☐ 68% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders surveyed in Iowa reported that it is “often” or “always” that adults go to activities that the students are involved with.
- ☐ 70% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders surveyed in Iowa reported that it is “often” or “always” that someone at home helps them with their homework.

**62% of youth in Iowa responded “strongly agree” or “agree” that adults in their community spend time talking with them.**

*---2005 Iowa Youth Survey*

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**March of Dimes Birth Defects Prevention Month**



**January 2007**

**Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)**—is one of the leading known causes of birth defects. It is one of the most severe effects of drinking during pregnancy.

Signs of FAS include abnormal facial features such as misshapen eyes, smooth philtrum (groove between nose and upper lip), and thin upper lip. Growth deficiencies and central nervous system defects are also common characteristics of children with FAS.

Please help increase the public’s awareness about this important issue. Encourage women to stop drinking when they are pregnant, planning to get pregnant, or at risk of becoming pregnant.

**Food for the Brain**

*By Kelly Grunhovd*

1. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is 100% \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Every drink for a pregnant woman is one too \_\_\_\_\_.
3. One in ten women \_\_\_\_\_ while pregnant.
4. Alcohol related birth \_\_\_\_\_ could include damage to organs, bones, or muscles.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ causes, by far, the most serious neurological effects in the fetus.
6. Alcohol can cause \_\_\_\_\_ damage to a developing fetus before most women know they are pregnant.
7. 40,000 babies are born each year suffering from \_\_\_\_\_ Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).
8. FASD may affect physical, mental, \_\_\_\_\_, and/or learning abilities.

The correct answers can be found in the puzzle below.

D	R	T	E	T	A	T	L	B	E	S
P	R	E	V	E	N	T	A	B	L	E
E	E	I	E	S	Y	I	D	E	O	R
R	D	E	N	A	L	E	E	H	E	Q
M	A	N	Y	K	F	E	W	A	S	Z
A	R	L	D	E	S	X	C	V	R	A
N	O	A	C	A	M	L	S	I	L	S
E	L	T	L	O	G	J	P	O	E	O
N	S	E	O	C	H	Z	Q	R	H	A
T	W	F	F	E	F	O	J	A	H	E
T	Q	C	R	A	T	E	L	L	A	L

**Prevention Team:**  
**Rolena Hadwiger, MPH**  
*Prevention Manager*  
**Kelly Grunhovd**  
*Prevention Specialist*  
**Jay Pedelty**  
*Prevention Specialist*  
**Trisca Sheimo**  
*Prevention Specialist*

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 Mason City, IA 50402  
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**National Mentoring Month Celebrations!**

January is National Mentoring Month. Throughout the country, Mentoring Partnerships are encouraging adults to mentor a child. Mentoring is about adults helping youth succeed. Mentors can be any caring adults who care about youth and are willing to support and offer encouragement.

**Why be a mentor?** Youth with mentors improve their self-confidence, improve their attitudes, increase their interest in staying in school, improve relationships with peers and families, and are less likely to get involved in dangerous behaviors such as drug use and alcohol use.

Furthermore, mentors reported that having a youth to mentor improves their morale and they learn more about themselves. One mentor stated that it improved his own values and gave him a fresh perspective on life. Mentoring benefits two people—the child and the adult. Mentoring pays off. **Share what you know. Become a mentor.**

If you are interested in mentoring a child in your area please contact the following:

**Worth County**  
Kristie Parks  
Worth County Public Health  
95 9th Street North  
Northwood, Iowa 50459  
641-324-1741  
fax: 641-324-2195  
[kristie.parks@worthcounty.org](mailto:kristie.parks@worthcounty.org)

**Hancock County**  
Shirley Brown  
One on One Mentoring  
605 Lyon St.  
Garner, IA 50438  
641-923-2632  
[sbrown@garner.k12.ia.us](mailto:sbrown@garner.k12.ia.us)

**Cerro Gordo**  
Mason City Youth Task Force  
10 1<sup>st</sup> St. NW.  
Mason City, IA 50401  
641-421-2708  
[mcytf@masoncity.net](mailto:mcytf@masoncity.net)



**Floyd County**  
Pam Durrwachter, Coordinator  
Y-PALS Mentoring Program  
Charles City Family YMCA  
800 Hulin Street,  
Charles City, IA 50616  
641-228-2254 (YMCA)  
641-228-7491 (home)

**Mitchell County**  
Rae Ann Havig  
Bridges Mentoring Program  
415 Pleasant St. Suite 100  
Osage, IA 50461  
641-732-3566

### Will You Make A Good Mentor?

#### Mentors are

- Good listeners
- Non-judgmental
- Reliable
- Consistent

#### They also

- like kids
- have a good sense of humor
- possess good communication skills

**Wanted:** People in Mitchell County interested in being a part of a county wide substance abuse coalition please contact Jay Pedelty at 1-866-429-2391 ext. 247

**Questions & Answers:** by Trisca Sheimo

**Question:** What does it mean when newborn babies are diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or FAS?

**Answer:** If a woman drinks alcohol during her pregnancy, her baby can be born with FAS, a lifelong condition that causes physical and mental disabilities. FAS is characterized by abnormal facial features, growth deficiencies, and central nervous system (CNS) problems. A newborn baby with FAS might have future problems with learning, memory, attention span, communication, vision, hearing, or a combination of these. These problems often lead to difficulties in school and problems getting along with others. FAS is a permanent condition. It affects every aspect of an individual's life and the lives of his or her family.

**Question:** What are the characteristics of children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)?

**Answer:** Physical characteristics include a small size for gestational age or small stature in relation to peers along with facial abnormalities such as small eye openings. Other characteristics include poor coordination, hyperactive behavior, learning and developmental disabilities, mental retardation and/or low IQ, problems with daily living and poor reasoning and judgment skills. Children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome are at risk for psychiatric problems, criminal behavior, unemployment, and incomplete education.

**Question:** Are birth defects preventable and if so, who can prevent them and how?

**Answer:** All Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders (FASDs) are 100% preventable—if a woman does not drink alcohol while she is pregnant. If a woman is drinking during pregnancy, it is never too late for her to stop. The sooner a woman stops drinking, the better it will be for both her baby and herself. Mothers are not the only ones who can prevent FAS and other possible birth defects. The father's role is also important in helping the mother abstain from drinking alcohol during pregnancy. He can encourage her to not drink alcohol by avoiding social situations that involve drinking and by not drinking alcohol himself. Significant others, family members, schools, health and social service organizations, and communities can also help prevent FAS through education and intervention.

## Upcoming Events

**January 20<sup>th</sup> and third Saturday of every month** Survivor of Suicide Support Group. United Way of Central Iowa, 600 1<sup>st</sup> St. NW, Mason City. 10:00 a.m.-noon.

**January 22-25, 2006 Adolescent Prime for Life** at Prairie Ridge (West Wing) in Mason City. The training will start from 4:00-7:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

**January 25, 2006 Thank Your Mentor Day.** This is your opportunity to join others in honoring an important mentor in your life. Millions of Americans are expected to reach out to thank or honor those individuals who encouraged and guided them, and who had a lasting impact on their lives.

**February 9-10, 2006 Adolescent Prime for Life** in Osage. The training will start from 4:30-8:30p.m. Friday and 9:00-5:00 p.m. Saturday. For more information please contact the Prairie Ridge Mason City Office 1-866-429-2391.

For more information about any of the events, please contact us by phone or e-mail as shown below.