

STATE OF ARKANSAS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual who was exposed to alcohol before birth, with fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) being the most recognizable condition along the spectrum; and

WHEREAS: Prenatal alcohol exposure is the leading preventable cause of birth defects and intellectual and developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS: The exact number of people who have FASDs is unknown, but a recent study estimated that up to 1 in 20 U.S. school children may have a FASD, and given the remarkably high prevalence, the public health effect of FASD is at least on par with that of other neurodevelopmental disorders such as Autism and ADHD, and about 1,800 babies with an FASD are born in Arkansas annually; and

WHEREAS: It is estimated that almost 70% of the children in foster care are affected by prenatal alcohol exposure in varying degrees. Many students placed in alternative learning environments have a FASD. About 60% of individuals with FASD had a history of trouble with the law and 50% had a history of confinement in a jail, prison, residential drug treatment facility, or psychiatric hospital, and the average age of individuals with FASD encountering law enforcement is 12.8 years; and

WHEREAS: The lifetime cost for one individual with FAS (does not include other FASDs) is estimated to be \$2 million, with a combined cost to the United States for FAS alone over \$4 billion annually; and

WHEREAS: Among pregnant women, 1 in 7 reported alcohol use, and of those, about 1 in 20 reported binge drinking in the past 30 days; and

WHEREAS: RTI International reported that the proportion of people exceeding drinking guidelines increased 27% between February and April 2020, and that increase jumped to 39% between February and November 2020. Binge drinking saw an increase of 26% between February and April 2020, with a further increase to 30% between February and November 2020, and being female increased the likelihood of being in one of the risk categories; and

WHEREAS: About 47.1% of all pregnancies are unplanned, contributing to late entry into prenatal care and presenting a barrier to optimal pregnancy management, particularly during the crucial early weeks of embryonic development; and

WHEREAS: The Arkansas None for Nine board and workgroup, as well as many dedicated volunteers, health care professionals, educators, and parent groups are actively participating in this promotion;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ASA HUTCHINSON, Governor of the State of Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim September 2022, as

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

and September 9th, 2022, as

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS AWARENESS DAY

across the State, and I encourage my fellow citizens to join me in raising awareness about the effects of alcohol consumption during pregnancy with the unified message of "Pregnancy and alcohol don't mix. Why take the risk?"

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 17th day of August, in the year of our Lord 2022.



Asa Hutchinson, Governor



Attest:


John Thurston, Secretary of State