

## December 2020

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### Get in touch

We love to hear from you.

If you need support, have questions or would like to share your story, ideas or just want to say hi, you can reach us in the following ways:

#### Facebook

FASD-CAN NZ Parent and Carer Support Group

#### Email

[enquiries@fasd-can.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@fasd-can.org.nz)

#### Website

<https://www.fasd-can.org.nz/>

### A word from our Chair – Claire Gyde

As 2020 comes to an end, many will be looking forward to closing the door on what has been an extraordinary year. From lock-downs, home schooling, and panic buying to long walks through neighbourhoods, searching for teddy bears and lots of home cooking; 2020 has definitely brought us highs and lows.

Through all of this, there have been some significant and positive events for our FASD community:

- We helped in the success of getting mandatory warning labels on alcohol.
- We partnered with Disabilities and Children’s Commissioners to present a comprehensive report on FASD to the Prime Minister and finally,
- We have secured some funding for the next two years.

I am grateful for these ‘silver linings’ of a difficult year. The stress of a global pandemic has brought extra challenges for some of our children and young adults so I hope that things are slowly returning to your ‘normal’ now.

Kia hora te marino  
Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana  
May peace be widespread  
May the sea be like greenstone (may there be calm)

Wishing you all a very happy festive season.



### Who we are

#### Committee Members

Claire Gyde – Chair  
Lee Tempest – Secretary  
Leigh Henderson – Treasurer

Anna Gundesen  
Gythlian Loveday  
Jessica Harris  
Michelle Boardman  
Cherryl Smith - co-opted

**Patron:** Judge Tony Fitzgerald  
**Clinical Advisor:** Dr Valerie McGinn

## FASD-CAN receives Ministry of Health Funding

FASD-CAN has been operating since 2013 entirely on donations and volunteer effort. This has limited our ability to reach families and provide the mentoring, training, and networking opportunities that we feel is necessary for our FASD community.

As you may have seen, we have ended 2020 with some fantastic news, having recently signed a funding agreement with the Ministry of Health. This funding has been made available through the Proceeds of Crime with the contract period of two years commencing 1 January 2021.

The money received will go towards developing and implementing new initiatives to help caregivers and parents who care for people with FASD.

To find out more information, check out the FASD-CAN website <https://www.fasd-can.org.nz/funding-from-moh-to-fasd-can/>

## Learning more about FASD

Supporting someone with FASD is a lifelong journey of learning, presenting new challenges and successes as we navigate our way around changing environments, ages, schools.

If you have spare time over the festive season, we recommend checking out one of the resources below.

### Jeff Noble – Podcast Series

Jeff has a huge amount of information on his website and through his podcasts, some with short “quick tips” that are easy to listen to and hold some fascinating information.

<https://www.podbean.com/podcast-detail/dxyci-b5bbb/The-FASD-Success-Show-Podcast>

### Te Pou FASD Training

If you'd like to consolidate your learning further, Te Pou offer online, modular training on FASD. Check out the link below:

<https://www.tepou.co.nz/disability-workforce/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-fasd/239>

## Christmas Tips from the Committee

Christmas Time can be a bit of a rollercoaster, so I checked in with our committee to find out their approach to surviving Christmas.

*“For me, it’s all about realistic expectations. It’s taken a long time, but I’ve finally come to terms with the fact that while I’d love to go on daily adventures and make the most of our holidays together, that sometimes it’s going to be best to stay home. Sometimes our outings won’t last as long as I’d like them to and sometimes we will have one of those magical moments when it all comes together. And any of those scenarios is fine by me. My expectations are that we do what we can, when we can” Jess (two girls aged 10 and 7)*

*“My tip for surviving Christmas is to be aware of sensory overload which can lead to dysregulated behaviour. Things such as Christmas lights, decorations and presents under the tree can be overwhelming for many of our FASDlings, as can a change of routine. Keep it simple and keep expectations low”. Lee*

*“Christmas has always been a very special time of year for us, full of family, friends, food and tradition. It is the traditions and rituals that help bind us together. There’s no big surprises in these traditions, they are expected and provide a consistency around what can be a chaotic time of year. For me it is about creating beautiful memories around these traditions.” Claire*

*I find it helpful to keep things as low key as possible in between the exciting times, which might mean just one on one time and / or physical activity like a scooter ride away from the larger group. I also try to be on to it with keeping our Ms 12 well watered and lots of protein which helps her keep regulated (especially in the presence of lots of sugar and carbs). I try and stay connected with her too amongst the larger whanau group, so she knows I have got her back so to speak. Also, loads of acceptance and empathy for what presents, both for myself and for her”. Anna*

## Support through the holidays

The most important thing to remember over the holiday period is that it’s okay to not be okay. Reach out to friends and family if you need to and be kind to yourself.

Our Facebook page is full of people who understand what life can be like and it’s a key connection point for our member community. Ask questions, share your good days and seek support on your not so good days.

Wishing everyone a safe and Meri Kirihimete.