



OTTAWA



**FASD**

**AWARENESS  
WALK**

## FACTS

### About Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a diagnostic term used to describe impacts on the brain and body of individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol. FASD is a lifelong disability. Individuals with FASD will experience some degree of challenges in their daily living, and need support with motor skills, physical health, learning, memory, attention, communication, emotional regulation, and social skills to reach their full potential. Each individual with FASD is unique and has areas of both strengths and challenges. (*CanFASD, 2019*)

People with FASD are resilient and have many strengths to offer. Although FASD is a spectrum, research shows that early diagnosis and appropriate intervention can make a positive impact and improve outcomes for those with FASD.

**There is no safe amount, no safe type, and no safe time to drink alcohol during pregnancy. We all have a role to play!**

**2-3%**  
of 7-9 year olds  
estimated to have FASD in a  
greater-Toronto Area study<sup>1</sup>

**4%**  
or 1.5 million  
Canadians  
are living with FASD according  
to current studies.

**\$9.7 billion**  
estimated annual costs in Canada  
attributed to FASD treatment.<sup>2</sup>

FASD is an 'invisible disability' so these numbers are likely an under-estimation.<sup>3</sup>

**It is often undiagnosed or misdiagnosed.**

**People with FASD are resilient and have many strengths to offer.**





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## About the Walk

**Date: Saturday, September 9, 2023**

**The event coincides with International FASD Awareness Day, observed all over the world on September 9th (the 9th day of the 9th month) to represent 9 months of pregnancy.**

**This is the 6th year for the walk, with over 500 people having participated in previous years.**

This year the walk will take place at Ottawa City Hall, the 0.9 kilometre route will draw together over 100 people, including families and friends of people with FASD, medical practitioners, caregivers, and local FASD program partners from Ottawa, Prescott Russell, and Stormont, Dundas & Glengary.

## Why Red Shoes?

RED SHOES became a symbol for FASD in 2013, when a Canadian adult with FASD, RJ Formanek, decided to wear RED SHOES to stand out, be noticed and have some fun starting the FASD conversation with strangers. Back then it was all about:

- Turning invisibility into visibility
- Creating conversation
- Changing stigma into understanding and acceptance

**RED SHOES of any style have now become a visual representation of people living with FASD and a focal point to begin talking! Many participants in the FASD Awareness Walk will be wearing red shoes (or the colour red) on the day of the event.**