

Federal Government supports DrinkWise Australia's Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Program

The Hon. Greg Hunt, Minister for Health, has today launched two educational advertisements - featuring Deborah Mailman and Aaron Pedersen - as part of DrinkWise's Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Program which coincides with International FASD Awareness Day, on 9 September.

Of the important initiative, the Minister said it's essential that Australians recognise the risks of consuming alcohol while pregnant.

"The Morrison Government is committed to reducing alcohol-related harms for all Australians no matter where they live. This is a deep personal passion. By preventing FASD in our community we will safeguard the health and wellbeing of the next generation of Australians," Mr. Hunt said.

The Federal Government's support will facilitate increased FASD awareness across Australia, providing access to these educational resources to over 250 rural and regional medical practices over the next six months as part of a broader DrinkWise two-year program.

The advertisements will create awareness of the preventable disorder and reaffirm the risks of drinking alcohol while planning a pregnancy, during pregnancy or breastfeeding.

Australian actor and mother of two, Deborah Mailman said the message was an important one for the entire community to understand, particularly expectant mothers.

"As a mum, the health and wellbeing of my children is most important, so when I was pregnant I made the important decision to abstain from drinking alcohol, which was a small sacrifice for the life-long health of my children.

"I hope that after seeing these videos, expectant parents, their family and friends will understand more about FASD and that it can be prevented as long as the baby is not exposed to alcohol at any time during pregnancy." Ms Mailman said.

DrinkWise CEO, Simon Strahan said the support will assist in generating awareness amongst Australians about FASD to reduce and ultimately eliminate the disorder.

"DrinkWise is committed to reducing alcohol related harms for all Australians. The support of the Federal Government will assist us to communicate the importance of abstaining from alcohol while pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding. We are dedicated to communicating this message because FASD is 100 per cent preventable.

"DrinkWise wants to ensure all Australians are aware of the risks of drinking while pregnant. We have and will continue to encourage women to abstain from alcohol for the health of their baby, and the next generation of Australians." Mr. Strahan said.

For more information about DrinkWise or FASD, visit: www.Drinkwise.org

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ABOUT FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD)

FASD is a diagnostic term for severe neurodevelopmental impairments (you may see these as difficulties with physical activities, language, memory, learning and behaviour) that result from brain damage caused by alcohol exposure before birth.

ABOUT DRINKWISE

DrinkWise is an evidence-based social change organisation dedicated to changing the Australian drinking culture to one that is safer and healthier. We do this through national education campaigns, partnerships with community leaders and organisations, and the development of practical strategies and resources that better support the community in relation to the responsible use of alcohol. DrinkWise is funded through voluntary industry contributions across the alcohol sector, and has previously been in receipt of funding from both Coalition and Labor governments.