# New National Awareness Campaign on the risks of drinking alcohol during pregnancy launched

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### More than one in four Australian women (29 per cent) who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy, or would consider having a baby are unaware that drinking alcohol during pregnancy could cause FASD.

More than one in four Australian women (29 per cent) who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy, or would consider having a baby are unaware that drinking alcohol during pregnancy could cause Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), despite it being the leading non-genetic developmental disability in Australia.

A Kantar Public study of almost 1,500 Australian women aged 18-44 years surveyed also found that:

* almost half (51 per cent) of the women surveyed were not aware that alcohol use could cause harm even in the first few weeks after conception
* more than two thirds (69 per cent) didn't know that alcohol freely crosses the placenta to the developing baby.

The data was released to coincide with Australia's first national awareness campaign on the risks of drinking alcohol during pregnancy and while breastfeeding which officially launched today.

Developed by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) and endorsed and funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, the National Awareness Campaign for Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Women (the Campaign) aims to raises awareness of the risks of drinking alcohol while pregnant, planning a pregnancy, or breastfeeding and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

The first instalment of the Campaign titled '*Every Moment Matters’,* highlights that every moment matters in pregnancy when it comes to drinking alcohol, starting from the moment a person starts trying to conceive. Alcohol consumed at any stage of pregnancy passes directly to the baby and can damage their developing brain and organs.

With the tagline 'The moment you start trying is the moment to stop drinking', the Campaign will feature nationally on television, radio, digital and out-of-home channels and run until July 2024.

FARE CEO Caterina Giorgi said the *Every Moment Matters* campaign will help address the mixed messages people often receive about alcohol and pregnancy.

 "There is a lot of misinformation about alcohol and pregnancy, and it makes it hard for people to find the latest accurate information," Ms Giorgi said.

"The Campaign will provide clear information to Australians about the risks of drinking alcohol at every stage of pregnancy, to support all Australian families to be healthy and well.

Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, said the Government is committed to raising awareness of the risks of drinking alcohol during pregnancy, including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

"We can all play a role in supporting women and families to have healthy pregnancies and in raising awareness of FASD," Minister Hunt said.

"Every Moment Matters highlights the risks of drinking alcohol during pregnancy, to inform the broader community that alcohol should not be consumed during pregnancy.”

Sophie, a biological mother to a teenage son diagnosed with FASD, said that this Campaign is vital to increasing awareness.

"You always want to do the right thing by your baby to keep them happy and healthy. When I was pregnant, I read lots of information and changed many of my behaviours while pregnant, including reducing my caffeine intake and giving up soft cheeses," Sophie said.

"My husband and I hadn't expected to become pregnant so quickly, and we drank socially on several occasions before pregnancy confirmation at six weeks. As soon as I realised I was pregnant, I stopped drinking socially with friends and reduced my consumption to half a glass a week.

"My son was diagnosed recently with FASD. I want everyone to know that the guidelines are very clear, and for people who are pregnant – it's crucial that they don't drink any alcohol at all," said Sophie.

Australia's leading body on health and medical research, the National Health and Medical Research Council, advise that women who are pregnant or planning pregnancy should not drink alcohol.

For more information about drinking alcohol while pregnant, visit e[verymomentmatters.org.au](http://everymomentmatters.org.au), call the NOFASD hotline on 1800 860 613, the Alcohol and Other Drugs hotline on [1800 250 015](tel:1800250015) or speak to a health professional.

[view media release as pdf](https://fare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/301121-New-National-Awareness-Campaign-on-the-risks-of-drinking-alcohol-during-pregnancy-launched-.pdf)

[view the research report](https://fare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/263406881_Alcohol-and-pregnancy-Topline-report_FINAL-1.pdf)

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