

Hello, Thank-you for allowing me to speak to you today about the parent's perspective of raising children with FASD.

My husband and I are blessed to be the parents of six children. Three of our children we adopted. Our family has also done foster care in the state of Colorado for 20 years.

Our three younger children were all alcohol and drug exposed pre-birth. They all have varying degrees of special needs. They struggle with educational goals, at times they are misunderstood by their peers and the community. They have to work many times harder to accomplish seemingly easy life skills. They will face many challenges along their life path. The cost of raising children with FASD can be overwhelming at times, not only to their parents, but to the community. Many needs go by the wayside because of availability and cost. We do the very best we can.

How many times their dad and I have wished that their birth mom's would have understood that alcohol consumption during pregnancy would do permanent neurologic damage, and affect the quality of life for these precious children.

Not only do we live daily with the reality of FASD in our children at home, but of the 40+ children that we have cared for over the years, 90-95% of those children were also drug and alcohol exposed. Alcohol exposure pre-birth is not uncommon for children placed in foster care.

We love our children dearly. They all are wonderful in their own way. They have strengths in different areas and we hope and pray that they will live happy lives, grow, learn what they need to survive, and become productive adult citizens.

Passing Bill #1139 would be taking active steps in promoting awareness to pregnant women. It could possibly save a child from the struggles caused by neurologic damage when there is alcohol consumption pre-birth.

Again, thank you,
Cynthia Eikenberg