**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS? WHAT WOULD YOU INCLUDE?**

**DISABILITY PROFESSIONALS’ PERSPECTIVES ON FASD PREVENTION**

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**Background:** Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a diagnostic term used to describe the lifelong impacts of prenatal alcohol exposure on fetal development. Alcohol use during pregnancy has been identified as a significant public health concern, as up to 15% of Canadian women report consuming alcohol during pregnancy. However, there is confusion about “safe levels of alcohol” during pregnancy and the long-term consequences of prenatal alcohol consumption. Current FASD prevention efforts have been heavily criticized for their harmful and stigmatizing nature. For example, fear and guilt have often been employed to discourage women from consuming alcohol during pregnancy. Consequently, many women do not seek assistance for decreasing their alcohol consumption or abstaining from alcohol during pregnancy. Providing clear and consistent information about the risks of drinking is critical, as recent misinformation and misinterpretation of the facts propagated by the media have muddied the waters and created more challenges for individuals who work in FASD prevention.

Informed by our previous research looking at medical professionals and the advice they give to pregnant women and individuals of childbearing age (e.g., Coons, Watson, Yantzi, Lightfoot, & Larocque, 2017), we sought to create a supportive and effective FASD campaign for Northeastern Ontario. In collaboration with Public Health Sudbury and Districts, our research team has been conducting interviews and focus groups with undergraduate students and community participants over the past 3 years. The objectives of the larger study include: (1) exploring attitudes about alcohol use during pregnancy; (2) generating perspectives on existing international FASD prevention campaigns; and (3) generating recommendations for non-stigmatizing FASD prevention campaigns for Northeastern Ontario.

**Proposed Workshop:** In this interactive workshop, participants will learn about what a sample of individuals of childbearing age in Northern Ontario know about FASD, plus how physicians and midwives provide advice around alcohol consumption during pregnancy. The presenters will also discuss media messaging around alcohol consumption during pregnancy as well as FASD prevention.

**Objectives:** In this interactive workshop, participants will:

1. Engage with their peers in small and large group discussions
2. Contribute their professional and personal opinions on existing FASD prevention campaigns
3. Provide recommendations for effective and non-stigmatizing FASD prevention messaging
4. Compare their perspectives with data collected from focus groups and interviews in Northeastern Ontario

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