

Fermanagh Drug and Alcohol Forum Remind Parents -

Make Your Baby a Happy Baby - Don't Drink

The Fermanagh Drug and Alcohol Forum promoted International Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Day on 9 September 2013 at an event in the Lakeland Forum. To mark the day, a Family Support and Information Event was held in partnership with Fermanagh Locality Planning Group, and Time2Change Project and brought together a range of service providers offering information, advice and support. Together they remind parents to be alcohol-free.

Pauline Flanagan, Chair of the Fermanagh Drug and Alcohol Forum stated, "This was a fantastic event which brought together a wide range of agencies to support mothers and families. It is clear from the latest research that there is no safe limit of alcohol during pregnancy so we advise that it is best to avoid it all together."

Local politicians Michelle Gildernew, MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone and Alex Baird, Chairman of Fermanagh District Council joined the Forum, LPG members and pregnant women on the bridge to highlight a FASD Knot as a symbol of this global campaign to inform the world about FASD with the broken cord representing the umbilical cord, spinal cord and the nervous system and the loving community in Fermanagh working together to reconnect the broken cord.

Michelle Gildernew stressed "It is hugely important that we provide support to children affected by FASD, and their families, whether that is their birth family, foster parents or adoptive parents. International and local evidence will help statutory agencies, along with groups such as Fermanagh Drug and Alcohol Forum advise expectant parents on alcohol consumption."

Pat Armstrong Head of Services, Family Support and Early Years representing the Western Health and Social Care Trust commented "From a Trust perspective, this development is to be welcomed. It is important to work collaboratively to highlight the impact of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder on children. By getting the message that there is no safe limit of alcohol intake during pregnancy, we will be taking a crucial

step to protect the well-being of the unborn child. The Trust will continue to support such efforts.”

This event was also supported by all the local churches who marked the day by ringing their bells and distributing information leaflets.

If you would like any more information on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) or the work of the Fermanagh Drug and Alcohol Forum, please contact Peter McLaughlin, Community Support Worker for Drugs and Alcohol on 028 8283 5204.

If you would like to hear more about Fermanagh Locality Planning Groups or get involved, ring Priscilla on 028 6632 4181 or visit www.cypsp.org