



**small actions**  
**make big differences**



# small actions make big differences

## Deliver a healthy future

**Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)** is a term used to describe the range of symptoms seen in some children born to women who drank alcohol during pregnancy.

**Are the following statements about pregnancy and FASD true or false?**

- 1** Children with FASD often have trouble learning and paying attention in class.  
 True     False
- 2** The best advice for women is not to drink when they are trying to get pregnant, when they are pregnant or while they are breastfeeding.  
 True     False
- 3** It is okay for a woman to drink a little bit when she is breastfeeding.  
 True     False
- 4** It is safe to take over-the-counter drugs when you are pregnant.  
 True     False
- 5** Fathers need to be aware of the amount of alcohol they drink as well.  
 True     False
- 6** Supporting a pregnant woman to not use alcohol during pregnancy can help prevent FASD.  
 True     False
- 7** There is no known safe amount of alcohol to drink during pregnancy.  
 True     False

### Answers

1. **TRUE.** Children with FASD often have trouble concentrating, have short attention spans, are impulsive and have memory difficulties. They may also repeat words, questions or actions.
2. **TRUE.** Research shows that stopping drinking, even if a woman is not aware she is pregnant until the second trimester, can have benefits for the child.
3. **FALSE.** Alcohol passes from the mother's blood into the breast milk. The baby can take in enough alcohol to slow the growth of their brain.
4. **FALSE.** Some over-the-counter drugs are harmful during pregnancy. It is important for pregnant women to check with a doctor, pharmacist or community health nurse before taking any drugs while pregnant.
5. **TRUE.** When a man drinks heavily, his sperm may not be normal and he may have a lower sperm count, which makes it harder for him to have a baby with his partner. Also, a father who drinks heavily may not give his pregnant partner the emotional support and care she needs.
6. **TRUE.** FASD can be prevented by not using alcohol during pregnancy.
7. **TRUE.** The best thing is not to drink during pregnancy. And it is never too late to quit.



# small actions make big differences

## Family drug awareness quiz

This is a true or false quiz to test your basic knowledge about alcohol and other drugs. You can use it with the whole family to get a discussion going.

- 1** Chocolate bars contain caffeine.  
 True       False
- 2** Once someone is addicted to drugs, they always will be.  
 True       False
- 3** Alcohol use is the number one drug problem in Canada.  
 True       False
- 4** Kids will not drink if their parents don't.  
 True       False
- 5** Alcohol is a depressant (downer) drug.  
 True       False
- 6** It is okay for kids to take medicine on their own.  
 True       False
- 7** People with drinking problems drink every day.  
 True       False
- 8** Medicines are always safe to take.  
 True       False
- 9** Nicotine is a stimulant (upper) drug.  
 True       False

### Answers

1. **TRUE.** Caffeine is a stimulant drug that is also in tea, coffee, cola, energy drinks, and some headache and cold medicines.
2. **FALSE.** People can get treatment to change their behaviour, even if they have been addicted for a long time.
3. **TRUE.** Alcohol is the most widely used drug in Canada and causes more problems for people than any other drug.
4. **FALSE.** Children can be influenced by peers and society as well as by their parents.
5. **TRUE.** Alcohol slows down the parts of the brain that control behaviour.
6. **FALSE.** Kids should only take medicine under the supervision of a parent or guardian.
7. **FALSE.** Some people with problems do drink everyday. Others only drink on weekends or once in a while, but when they do drink, it causes problems.
8. **FALSE.** They are safe when used properly, but medicines can be just as dangerous as non-medical drugs when they are not used properly.
9. **TRUE.** Nicotine causes the heartbeat and blood pressure to increase.

Adapted with permission from: Parent Awareness Program Workbook, Saskatchewan Health



# small actions make big differences

## Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines

Drinking is a personal choice. If you choose to drink, these guidelines can help you decide when, where, why and how.

### 1 Your limits

Reduce your long-term health risks by drinking no more than:

- 10 drinks a week for women, with no more than 2 drinks a day most days
- 15 drinks a week for men, with no more than 3 drinks a day most days

### 2 Special occasions

Reduce your risk of injury and harm by drinking no more than 3 drinks (for women) and 4 drinks (for men) on any single occasion.

### 3 When zero's the limit

Do not drink when you are:

- driving a vehicle or using machinery and tools
- taking medicine or other drugs that interact with alcohol
- doing any kind of dangerous physical activity
- living with mental or physical health problems
- living with alcohol dependence
- pregnant or planning to be pregnant
- responsible for the safety of others
- making important decisions

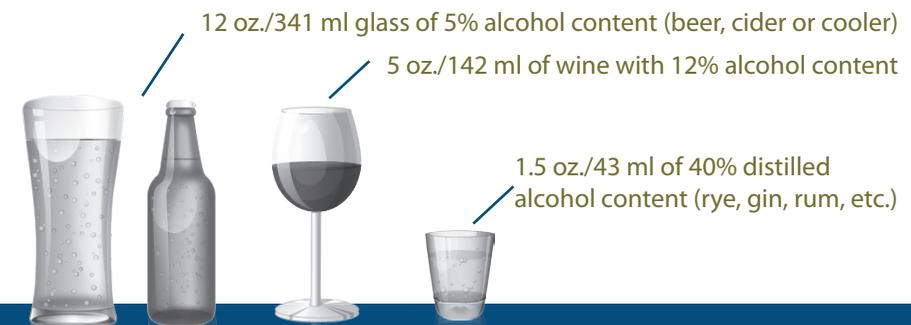
### 4 Pregnant? Zero is safest

If you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or about to breastfeed, the safest choice is to drink no alcohol at all.

### 5 Delay your drinking

If you are a child or youth, you should delay drinking until your late teens. Talk with your parents about drinking. Alcohol can harm the way your brain and body develop.

#### For these guidelines, "a drink" means:



#### Reference:

Butt, P., Beirness, D., Gliksman, L., Paradis, C., & Stockwell, T. (2011). *Alcohol and health in Canada: A summary of evidence and guidelines for low-risk drinking*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.  
Developed by the National Alcohol Strategy Advisory Committee



# small actions make big differences

## Rate the decisions and the risks

Below are situations in which people are gambling or using alcohol or other drugs. Rate the physical, social or legal risks as **HIGH**, **MEDIUM**, or **LOW**.

List reasons for your choice. Your own **values** (the things that are important to you), **attitudes** (how you think and feel about things) and **beliefs** (the things you accept as true) will influence how you rate the risks.

**1** After school 10-year-old Corey is hanging out with his older brother Brad. Brad and his friends are smoking cigarettes. They want Corey to try. "Just one won't get you hooked," they say. He decides to try smoking for the first time.

High  Medium  Low

**2** Mike, a 15-year-old, always smokes a joint at lunch to help him make it through his afternoon classes.

High  Medium  Low

**3** Marla is 16 years old. Ever since she was 14, her parents let her have a glass of wine with Sunday dinner.

High  Medium  Low

**4** Hasan and some of his high school teammates are having a card game on the bus to a tournament. Hasan is worried that his losses will leave him short of food money for the three days they'll be away, but he doesn't want to drop out because he's down \$45 and needs to win it back.

High  Medium  Low

**5** Fred goes over to his friend's house every Saturday night and drinks until he passes out.

High  Medium  Low

**6** Sarah goes into the washroom at the arena. Two of her friends offer her a small white pill to help her feel alert and energetic. She takes it.

High  Medium  Low

**7** Aisha is out with her boyfriend. He gets drunk and passes out. She is supposed to be home at midnight. John, who has also been drinking, offers her a ride home.

High  Medium  Low

Risk can be lowered by the presence of strong protective factors in a young person's life, like relationships with caring adults, connection to school, participation in healthy activities, and friends who don't use drugs or alcohol. The best way to reduce risk is to prevent or delay the onset of alcohol or other drug use.



# small actions make big differences

## Test your knowledge about alcohol, drugs and gambling

- 1 More Canadian children smoke marijuana than in any other developed country. True or False?
- 2 What percentage of traffic collision fatalities in Alberta are alcohol-related?
- 3 Marijuana does not impair your ability to drive like alcohol does. True or false?
- 4 On what type of gambling do Albertans spend the most money?
- 5 Drinking black coffee is a good way to sober up quickly. True or false?
- 6 Among Alberta college students, what percentage have done something while drinking alcohol that they later regretted?
- 7 What are the three “invisible” drugs?
- 8 A person who uses marijuana heavily will have increased motivation and interest, as well as better memory and concentration. True or false?
- 9 Which drink contains the most alcohol: a 12-ounce (341ml) bottle of regular beer, 1.5 ounces (43ml) of distilled spirits or a 5-ounce (142ml) glass of wine?
- 10 How much alcohol can a pregnant woman safely drink?
- 11 Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death for teens. What two factors contribute to these accidents?

### Answers

1. True. A 2013 Unicef report identified that 28% of Canadian children aged 11-15 had used marijuana in the last 12 months.
2. On average in Alberta, 1 in 5 (or 20%) of drivers involved in fatal collisions have been drinking.
3. False. Use of marijuana can distort your perception of time and space. It can also impair your coordination and concentration.
4. In 2012, Albertans spent \$15.6 billion on slot machines, \$7.4 billion on VLTs, and \$744 million on lottery tickets.
5. False. Drinking coffee does not change the rate at which the liver breaks down alcohol. It takes an adult one to two hours to metabolize a standard drink.
6. 40%, including forgetting what they did, having unplanned or unprotected sex, or injuring themselves.
7. Alcohol, nicotine and caffeine are called invisible drugs because they are so commonly used and most people think they are not drugs.
8. False. Heavy use of marijuana may result in decreased motivation and interest, and difficulties with memory and concentration.
9. All of the above drinks have the same amount of pure alcohol.
10. No safe limit has been established. Most experts recommend that women drink no alcohol during pregnancy.
11. Alcohol use and high speeds.



# small actions make big differences

## Remarkable role models

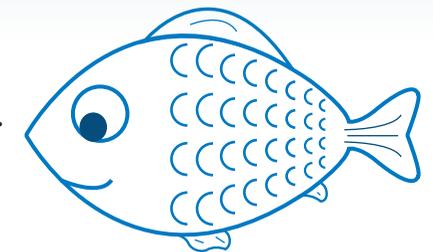
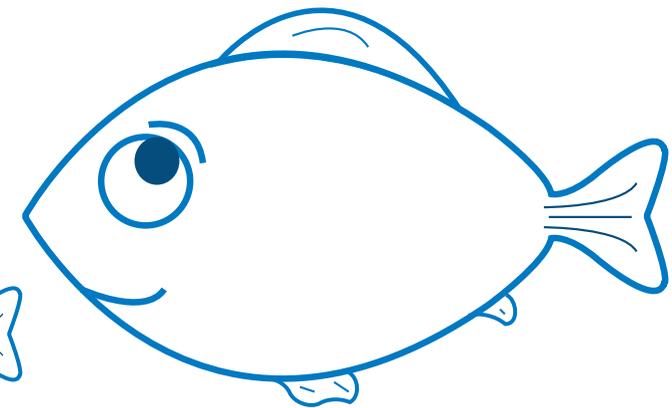
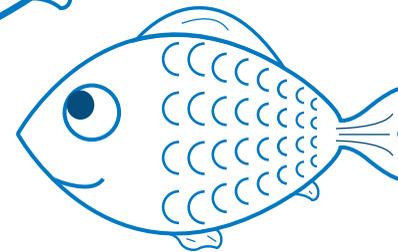
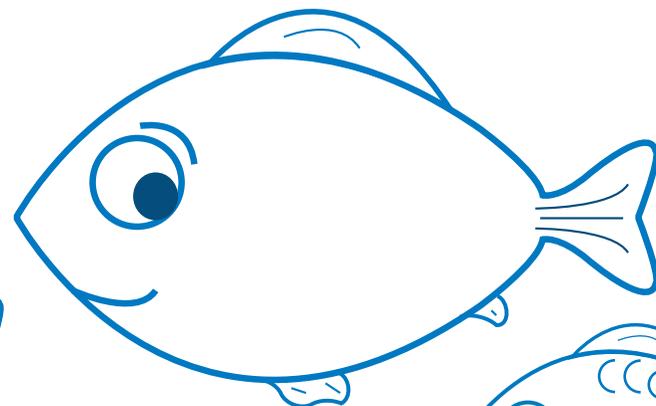
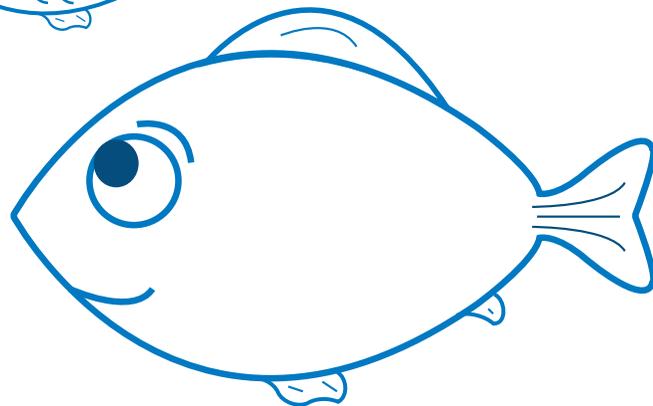
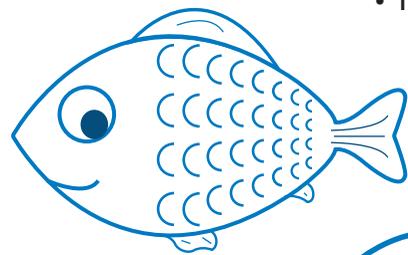
**A role model is a person who is a positive influence for others**

A role model:

- sets a positive example for others
- works hard to achieve personal goals
- has positive qualities

Inside each of the large fish, write the name of a person who has been a role model for you (such as a family member, a friend, a coach or a teacher). Write down how each person has made a difference in your life.

With a positive example to follow, young people have somebody to trust and lean on for support.





# small actions make big differences

## Spit tobacco

**1** Using spit tobacco will not harm my health.  
 True     False

**2** Spit tobacco causes cancer.  
 True     False

**3** Spit tobacco causes other health issues.  
 True     False

**4** Most people who use spit tobacco start as adults (18 and over).  
 True     False

**5** Using spit tobacco will help you to play sports like baseball or hockey.  
 True     False

**6** It is legal for stores to sell spit tobacco to people under the age of 18.  
 True     False

**7** It is easy to quit using spit tobacco.  
 True     False

**8** Flavoured spit tobacco is primarily used by young people.  
 True     False

### Answers

- FALSE.** Spit tobacco has over 3,000 chemicals, including carcinogens, which are cancer-causing agents.
- TRUE.** Spit tobacco can cause cancer of the tongue, gums, jaw, throat, voice box, esophagus, stomach, colon, bladder and others.
- TRUE.** Other health risks include high blood pressure, hardening of the arteries, heart attacks and stroke.
- FALSE.** Most people who use spit tobacco start very young (between the ages of 9 and 10).

- FALSE.** Studies that examine the effects of spit tobacco on reaction time in athletes do not show any improvement in performance.
- FALSE.** It is illegal in Alberta for stores to sell tobacco products to anyone under the age of 18.
- FALSE.** Nicotine is the drug in spit tobacco, which is highly addictive. People who use spit tobacco often have a very hard time stopping even when they want to.
- TRUE:** 70% of young people who use spit tobacco reported using flavoured tobacco in the last 30 days.



# small actions make big differences

## Tobacco- what a burn!

- addictive
- heart disease
- skin aged
- bad breath
- heart speeds up
- smelly hair
- blood pressure up
- irritates people
- smoke
- breathing faster
- stroke
- burn holes
- nausea
- tar on lung
- cancer
- pollutes air
- can't quit
- cough develops
- damaged lungs
- dizzy
- expensive
- fire
- messy

	H			S	P	O	L	E	V	E	D	H	G	U	O	C
R	E	T	S	A	F	G	N	I	H	T	A	E	R	B	S	
I	A	D	D	I	C	T	I	V	E		G	A	I	A	E	E
A	R	E		C	A	N	C	E	R	N		R	A	D	L	X
S	T	G	C	A	N	'	T	Q	U	I	T	T	H	B	O	P
E	D	A	M	A	G	E	D	L	U	N	G	S	Y	R	H	E
T	I	N	E	S		F	N		A		D	P	L	E	N	N
U	S	I	S		T	O	I	U		E	I	E	L	A	R	S
L	E	K	S		R	R	S	R		K	Z	E	E	T	U	I
L	A	S	Y	A		E	O		E	O	Z	D	M	H	B	V
O	S		T		A			K		M	Y	S	S			E
P	E	B	L	O	O	D	P	R	E	S	S	U	R	E	U	P
I	R	R	I	T	A	T	E	S	P	E	O	P	L	E		



# small actions make big differences

## When you were young...

### Remember how good it felt to have a caring adult in your life, someone:

- who was there for you
- who saw the real you
- who listened to what you had to say
- who inspired you to be the best you could be

### Kids who have caring, supportive relationships with an adult:

- have improved mental health, self-esteem and confidence
- are less likely to be harmfully involved with alcohol, other drugs and gambling
- are more likely to stay in school

**Be a positive role model in the life of a child.  
You can make a difference!**





# small actions make big differences

## The workplace can have a big impact on the health of employees.

On average, Canadian workers spend about 60% of their waking hours at work.

### What can employers do to make a difference?

**Educate and inform employees** about topics like addiction, mental health and healthy living.

**Provide resources and support** such as programs to quit smoking, an employee and family assistance program or performance management training for managers and supervisors.

**Create ways for employees to be actively involved in decisions about health**, allowing them to identify concerns and provide feedback.

**Establish policies about health and make sure employees and managers know about them and understand them.** Include areas like

- tobacco use
- safety
- work–life balance: flexible schedules, working from home or job sharing
- vacation
- alcohol and other drugs

**Host fun, alcohol-free, active family gatherings** to celebrate staff and promote family well-being.

**Encourage employees to look after their own health** by avoiding harmful behaviour and finding healthy ways to beat or reduce stress through exercise, a hobby, restful sleep, or talking with a friend or family member.

**A business can save money while supporting the health of their employees.** For example, eight organizations in Halifax calculated that they got a return of \$1.64 for every dollar invested in a comprehensive workplace wellness program.<sup>1</sup>

Your local Alberta Health Services Addiction and Mental Health Services office can help you to set up a workplace health program. To find contact information for your local office, call 1-866-332-2322.

1. Lowe, G. 2012. *Creating healthy organizations: How vibrant workplaces inspire employees to achieve sustainable success*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.