



# Alcohol and Pregnancy

## 'One Drink' campaign

As part of the Mental Health Commission's (MHC) Preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Project, the MHC in partnership with non-government agency partner, Cancer Council WA have developed the new Alcohol.Think Again 'One Drink' campaign.

Alcohol use in pregnancy can cause miscarriage, stillbirth and permanent damage to the brain of the developing baby, resulting in a range of severe and lifelong physical, mental and behavioural disabilities known as FASD.

FASD are the leading preventable cause of non-genetic, developmental disability in Australia, and there is concern that as many as 2% of all Australian babies may be born with some form of FASD. In 2019, there were approximately 34,000 live births in WA, and a 1-2% incidence rate of FASD would have resulted in between 340 and 680 babies born with a FASD.

The 'One Drink' campaign aims to increase the proportion of the Western Australian community who are aware that there is no safe amount or time to drink alcohol when pregnant, and that it is recommended women who are pregnant and planning pregnancy should not drink alcohol.

The campaign is consistent with the evidence base and the National Health and Medical Research Council's revised Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol.

The campaign has been developed following a robust research and consultation process which included engagement with men and women from metropolitan and regional Western Australia, and was guided by an Expert Reference Group that comprised public health, social marketing and FASD experts.

### KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

Research commissioned by the MHC in 2019 to inform the campaign development revealed that:

- While the majority of Western Australians (80%) believe women should not drink alcohol during pregnancy, one in five (20%) consider a 'small amount' of alcohol to be okay.
- There is uncertainty around how much alcohol is okay to drink at different trimesters of pregnancy, with one in three (30%) women reporting some alcohol was okay in each trimester.
- Only 54% of Western Australians feel confident in their knowledge of the risks associated with drinking alcohol in pregnancy.
- Over half (58%) of Western Australians report being aware of FASD; but one in four (25%) associate FASD with the consumption of large amounts of alcohol. Only 38% believe low levels of alcohol use could result in a baby being born with FASD.
- Self-efficacy to not drink alcohol is supported by having strong beliefs that alcohol use in pregnancy is not okay and evidence to back that decision, but the drinking culture makes it difficult for pregnant women to abstain.

### KEY CAMPAIGN MESSAGES

- The placenta does not protect a baby from alcohol.
- Any amount of alcohol a mother drinks, the baby drinks.
- There is no safe amount or time to drink alcohol during pregnancy.
- Women who are pregnant or planning pregnancy should not drink alcohol.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

The primary target audience is women and men within Western Australian (18 to 44 years) who consider a 'small amount' of alcohol at any stage in pregnancy to be okay.

The secondary target audience is the general Western Australian adult population (18 to 44 years).

## CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

- Decrease the proportion who consider a 'small amount' of alcohol to be okay at any stage of pregnancy.
- Increase the proportion who believe alcohol use when pregnant can result in a range of lifelong harms to the baby.
- Increase the proportion who are aware it is recommended women who are pregnant or planning pregnancy should not drink alcohol.

## KEY CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

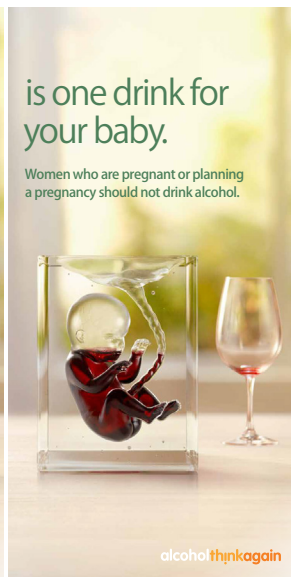
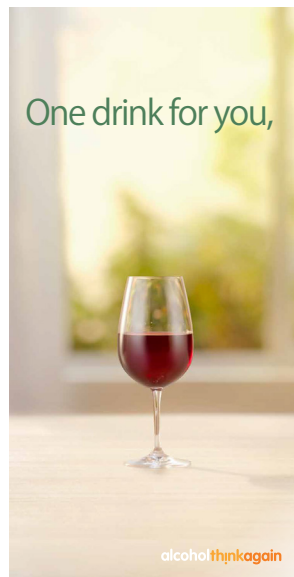
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