



## FASD-CAN

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder  
Care Action Network

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**MAY 2026**

### **Kia ora**

Did you see our [recent article](#) sharing the results of the Carers NZ survey? More than 1700 carers shared their experiences of issues they face with health, employment and finance.

FASD-CAN was saddened but not surprised to see that:

- 87% of carers are women
- 78% receive no funding as carers
- one in three had to cut back on food or heating
- over a third were over 65 years old
- over a third had been injured while caring
- 80% said they were lonely.

These numbers must change. FASD-CAN is an active member of the Carers Alliance Aotearoa group (an initiative of Carer's NZ). We tautoko any advocacy for carers, and this survey has been food for thought for us as we plan mahi to support you, our community.

We have a number of in-person trainings coming up. One of the reasons we aim for kanohi ki te kanohi / face to face learning is to encourage connection and create a supportive FASD community – see below for opportunities. Our caregiver support groups meet regularly in person in our regions too, so [check our website](#) for one near you.

If you can't get to an in-person training or support group, FASD-CAN's online training, webinars and support groups also create community – a number of these are also listed below. And as our [Kaiwhakatere / Navigator service](#) develops, please do reach out – whether you have a specific query or more general concern, our Navigators are there to help.

Finally, to the amazing cross-sector professionals who support those with FASD: there'll be no change for them without you. We know you may be 'swimming upstream' sometimes against the expectations of your profession or workplace – but we also know so many of you who want to be more FASD-informed in your practice. Our quarterly specialist webinars for educators (Ngā Tupu Rau) and social/support workers (LANSAS) have been set up for you to upskill and create communities of practice to transform systems which at times can be traumatising for everyone. See below to register.

Noho ora mai rā

**Stephanie James-Sadler**  
**FASD-CAN CEO**

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## 🔥 LAST CALL!

### **'He Ara Tika' – four-hour FASD 101 training**

We have two final FREE kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) workshops this month for non-clinical kaimahi (e.g. youth workers, AOD counsellors, social workers etc), as well as caregivers and whānau. The trainings run from 10am-2pm, with lunch included.



Some recent feedback:

"The FASD training was very informative and well structured. It enhanced my understanding of how prenatal alcohol exposure can affect brain development, behaviour, and daily functioning. The facilitators were awesome!"

**Be quick! These workshops are nearly full.**

[Click here](#) to register for our He Ara Tika training, Kirikiriroa / Hamilton, May 20

[Click here](#) to register for our He Ara Tika training, Whangārei, May 29

ONLINE now sold out – but do email [training@fasd-can.org.nz](mailto:training@fasd-can.org.nz) to go on our waitlist.

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### **NEW: Announcing FASD-CAN's 'KEA' (Kiwi Education and Attendance) Tracker**



We have long been aware that official data on school exclusions fails to capture the true loss of education hours for ākonga / students with FASD / Te Iho Tātai-ā-Rongo.

Various types of 'voluntary' exclusion are undocumented – this means they won't appear in reports for the Ministry of Education. This lack of data creates a misleading picture of the 'success' of the education system for tamariki and rangatahi with FASD.

To support FASD-CAN's tireless advocacy in this area, we need a robust, real-time database that reflects the actual frequency of these events. This is why we have developed the KEA Tracker, a simple form you can fill in and submit to us whenever an education-limiting event occurs. We'll add your info to a database and use these figures for future advocacy.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

*Please note: the KEA Tracker is to be used for events from May 6 onwards – not for past events).*

**Webinar: FASD-CAN's KEA Tracker and how to use it**  
**Wednesday May 13, 7.30pm-8pm**



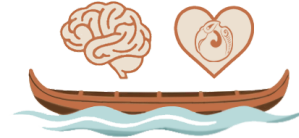
We are presenting a short (half hour) webinar to explain more about our KEA Tracker and how to use it. Join us to help us advocate for realistic data and equity in education for those with FASD!

[Click here to register.](#)

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## **NEW: Life with FASD 2 – ONLINE**

- **Every Tuesday in June for 5 weeks (starts June 2)**
- **Choice of morning or evening sessions**



If you have completed our 'Life with FASD 1: Understand and Connect with Aroha' course, our new 'Life with FASD 2: Connection and Safety with Aroha' is now available ONLINE.

It's a follow-on training for caregivers, parents and whānau to deepen understanding of the brain-based symptoms of FASD and learn more fantastic support strategies.

We have a choice of two five-session courses coming up online – mornings or evenings every Tuesday in June (2nd, 9th, 16th, 23th, and 30th).

[Click here](#) to register for the LWF2 online **morning** sessions – 10.30am-12pm

[Click here](#) to register for the LWF2 online **evening** sessions – 7.30pm-9pm

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## **🔥 LAST CALL!**

### **Caregiver Training: He Maonga Āwhā: Finding the Calm in the Storm**

**Two-day, free intensive workshop, 26/27 May 2026**  
**Royal Oak, Tāmaki Makaurau**



If you are dealing with violence and abuse from your tamaiti / child or rangatahi / young adult with FASD, He Maonga Āwhā will give you a toolkit with five main pillars of learning: brain-based understanding, trauma-informed care, connective parenting, non-violent resistance, and mātauranga Māori teaching for resilience.

**Please note – to do this course:**

- you must be **currently** experiencing [CPVA](#) in your home.
- you must have a basic understanding of FASD – it's not an introductory training.

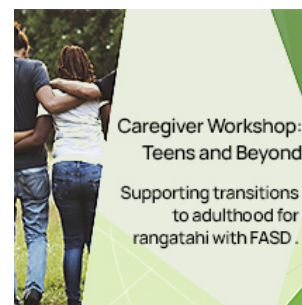
[Click here to find out more](#) and register.

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## **NEW Caregiver Workshop: Teens and Beyond – supporting transitions to adulthood for rangatahi with FASD**

**Saturday June 20, 11am-3pm, Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland**

Moving from being a teenager with FASD to an adult in the world is a big step – for both rangatahi and their whānau. There is much to think about: how they are seen in the eyes of the law; requiring identification and how to obtain it; money and banking; income support; housing arrangements and more.



This free workshop is based on our [Teens and Beyond](#) resource and is open to any caregiver and whānau who is supporting a young person transition to adulthood.

*Please note: we have some limited funding available to help with travel for out-of-towners – but don't delay!*

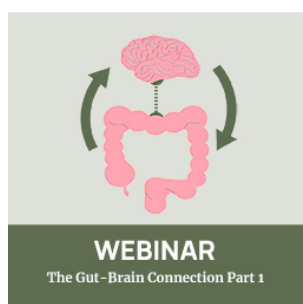
**Our facilitator, Denise Green**, is a Regional Coordinator with Caring Families Aotearoa (CFA). She is highly trained and has lived experience from being a foster parent for nearly three decades. Denise will be joined by our Kirikiriroa / Hamilton Navigator, [Teesh Dowie-Lewis](#), who also has a wealth of fostering lived experience.

[Click here to learn more and register.](#)

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## **June Webinar – The Gut / Brain Connection Part 1: Bowel Issues**

**Wednesday June 10, 7.30pm**



Next to the brain, the gut has the biggest effect on feelings, emotions and mental health – some professionals are even calling it 'the second brain'. If the bowel is not in good health, the brain is likely to be impacted and vice versa.

Join the wonderful Lisa Smith, continence specialist, for this webinar.

*\* Part 2 will focus on nutrition for neurodivergence.*

[Click here to find out more and register.](#)

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## **Te Whanganui-a-Tara / Wellington FASD Network**

This long-standing group has been brought back for bi-annual face-to-face meetups – now with a specialist discussion topic each time. Caregivers, parents, whānau and cross-sector professionals with an interest in FASD – please join FASD-CAN CEO Stephanie and Chairperson Dr Leigh Henderson to discuss: **'The importance of FASD diagnosis, and overlaps with other conditions'**.

**Where:** Caring Families Aotearoa – 45 Knights Road (Level 4), Lower Hutt

**When:** Friday June 5, 11.30am

**Please RSVP:** Dr Leigh Henderson at [leigh.henderson@fasd-can.org.nz](mailto:leigh.henderson@fasd-can.org.nz)

*PLEASE NOTE: Caregivers, parents and whānau are invited to stay afterwards for a relaxed catchup and chat.*



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## Online Caregiver Support Groups – upcoming dates

Open to everyone around the motu – whether you attend one of our [in-person support groups](#) near you or not. When you join a caregiver support group, you're not alone – you're with people who are travelling the same road.

### Online Caregiver Support Group LUNCHTIME Thursday May 7, 12:30pm



Our new Navigator in Te Wai Pounamu, Jacquie Mikkelson, will be hosting our **lunchtime** group in 2026 – so grab a sandwich and a cuppa and hop online to join us – nau mai, haere mai, all welcome!

[Click here](#) for your Zoom link.

### Online Caregiver Support Group EVENING Tuesday May 19, 7:30pm



RuruHana Brownie, our Navigator from Te Tai Tokerau / Northland hosts this group – her wealth of experience means a warm welcome and understanding every time.

[Click here](#) for your Zoom link.

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## LANSAS – Quarterly FASD Webinars for Social Workers and Support Workers: ONLINE

### Choice Theory: Empowering Connections to Support Tamariki with FASD

**Tuesday May 12, 4pm-5pm**

Choice Theory, developed by Dr William Glasser, is a framework designed to shift our perspective about what drives human behaviour from external control to internal empowerment. It moves us away from traditional reward and punishment models that often fail due to the neurological complexities of FASD by utilising the basic tenet that 'all behaviour is an attempt to meet a need.'



**Facilitator Carol Ashton** has 40 years in teaching, advisory and strategic leadership roles across Aotearoa NZ and two International Baccalaureate schools.

[Click here to find out more and register now.](#)

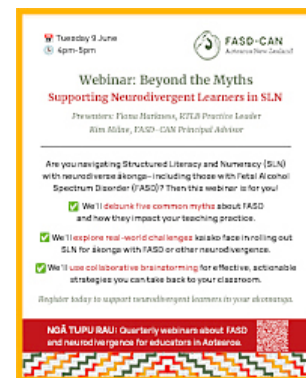
## Ngā Tupu Rau – Quarterly FASD Webinars for Educators: ONLINE

### Beyond the Myths: Supporting Neurodiverse Learners in SLN

Tuesday, 9 June – 4pm-5pm

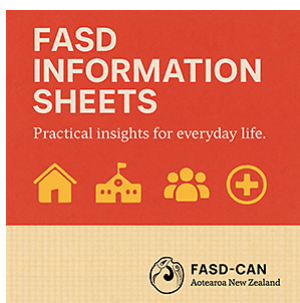
Are you wondering how to support learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and other neurodiversities through Structured Literacy and Numeracy (SLN)? We invite all kaiako to join us for an interactive and supportive kōrero focused on FASD and its intersection with modern classroom practice.

Expect myth-busting, a deep-dive into how the neurodivergent brain handles SLN, and collaborative brainstorming for effective, actionable strategies you can take back to your akomanga / classroom.



[Click here to find out more and register now.](#)

## NEW info sheets for May



We've loaded up a few more of these awesome resources to our Resources webpage! New additions this month:

- **FASD and Choline:** learn about this essential nutrient which can be supplemented to positive effect in alcohol-exposed pregnancies and early childhood.
- **FASD, Alcohol Consumption and Pregnancy:** debunking myths and giving incentives for staying alcohol-free when pregnant or trying to conceive.
- **FASD and Epigenetics – What Pāpā / Fathers and Partners Need To Know:** recent research shows conclusively the effects of alcohol on sperm and how it affects fetal DNA.

[Check them out here.](#)

## Kete into Practice for LSCs

Did you know? The Ministry of Education rates our 'Kete into Practice' FASD course so highly that they have contracted us to deliver it to as many LSCs as we can this year – for free.

*The course has 10 training modules, one Masterclass (with three options) and two Community of Practice discussions in each course – all 1.5 hours each.*



We have FOUR courses of Kete into Practice in 2026, with staggered start dates. There's still time to sign up for either of our first TWO groups – these have already begun, but if you sign up today, you can catch up with recordings of the first three sessions (these will be sent to you once you have registered) and begin live sessions next week (beginning May 11).

**Group 1:** began Monday 20 April

**Group 2:** began Wednesday 22 April

**Group 3:** Tuesday July 28

**Group 4:** Tuesday August 4

[Head to our Events page](#) to find the start date that works for you and register now!

**We want these trainings to reach as many LSCs as possible!**

🌟 Educators: please share with your colleagues (you'll be able to download the shareable pānui on all of the registration pages).

🌟 Caregivers / parents / whānau – please encourage your local schools to ensure their Learning Support Co-ordinator is signed up to one of our courses! Helping educators to become FASD-informed will change the school experience for many struggling ākonga.

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That's it for May – and quite enough too! Please consider following us on social media ([Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)) to stay updated throughout the month.

**Mauri ora**  
**Your FASD-CAN Team**

Stay in the know about FASD in Aotearoa. If you've been sent this email by someone else, please join us as a member to receive newsletters!

If you would like to donate to FASD-CAN, to help us in our mahi, [click here](#) to go to our donation page.

# JOIN FASD-CAN



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