



FASD-CAN

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
Care Action Network

OCTOBER 2026 FASD NEWS

Kia ora

I don't know about you, but we seem to be racing towards the end of the year!

Please join us for our AGM on Wednesday 4 November at 7pm – we also have someone we'd like to honour on the night. Following this, we'll have a fascinating update on what's been happening around FASD internationally (and locally).

A couple of positive stories have brightened our month – and don't we all need these to keep us going! One is about Mei Macario, a personal trainer who found out as much as she could about FASD to support her client, and now wants to volunteer her time to help others.

The other is the positive feedback we received from a presentation Leigh Henderson and Kim Milne gave recently to over 70 psychologists at Ara Poutama / the Department of Corrections. It's so important to enable more understanding in justice professionals for those in the system who may have FASD.

These positive stories fuel all of us in our mahi – and there are many more out there. If you have one, do get in touch via admin@fasd-can.org.nz – Christmas is coming, and we'd love to share them!

Noho ora mai rā

Stephanie James-Sadler
FASD-CAN CEO

In this month's newsletter...

Note: you can register for any event or training below by heading straight to our [Events page](#).

General

- **NEW:** FASD-CAN AGM / Webinar: 'What in the World...?' Nov 4
- **Free** personal training offer for people with FASD – Tāmaki Makaurau
- **NEW:** Recent Research series: FASD and CBD / FASD and ADHD - the difference

For caregivers and whānau

- **Last chance to book!** Life with FASD 1: Ōtautahi, Oct 16/17

- **THIS WEEK:** Teens to Adults online: Relationships and Friendships, Oct 15
- Online Caregiver Support Groups this month

For people with FASD

- **Last chance to book!** Tītoki Weekend Camp – Nov 20-22
- **NEW:** Pizza Clubs: Ōtautahi **THIS FRIDAY** Oct 16
Tāmaki Makaurau, Nov 13

For Professionals

- **Last chance to book!** Education Masterclass 2:
Beyond behaviour: supporting ākonga through CPS, Oct 13
- **NEW:** Quarterly webinar for Social Workers and Support Workers, Nov 10
Tītoki: Connection for rangatahi with FASD
- **NEW:** Quarterly webinar for Educators, Nov 11
The Neurobiology of Overwhelm in FASD
- Education Masterclass 3: Nov 4
Supporting FASD Ākonga Through the WARMTH Framework



FASD-CAN AGM – plus: ‘What in the World?’

Wednesday November 4, from 7pm

Join us for our AGM, as well as what promises to be a great discussion about global and local FASD initiatives.

‘What in the World?’ will follow the AGM. We’ll be hearing from Anna Gundesen, Kim Milne and Professor Anita Gibbs about global research that’s important for us, as well as local research from here in Aotearoa. Great to hear how FASD-CAN Aotearoa is influencing others!

We need as many of our members as possible to be present for the AGM please – we promise to keep it brief!

[Find out more and register here.](#)

A heartwarming story of mutual inspiration + FREE strength-based training offer for people with FASD!

Mei Macario is a highly experienced personal trainer with a central Auckland fitness studio. She recently contacted FASD-CAN after working for six months with a young woman, Emma, who has FASD.

Coach Mei knew nothing about FASD when they began, but she was determined to find out as much as she could serve her client more effectively – and this dedication has been life-changing for Emma. As a result of their mutual progress, Mei is now determined to help others improve their lives with strength training if she can.

She is keen to volunteer her time in a free, monthly small-group session for a limited number of people with FASD.

Photo: Mei (left) and Emma at FASD-CAN's FASD Awareness Day event in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland.

[Find out more about Mei and Emma](#) and get in touch with Mei to register your interest.



Quarterly Webinar for Social Workers and Support Workers (LANSAS group)



Tītoki: a Programme of Connection with Rangatahi and Adults with FASD – Tuesday November 10, 4-5pm

Tītoki is a globally-connected Aotearoa group for rangatahi and young adults with FASD to connect, socialise, and develop self-advocacy and leadership skills. This innovative programme has co-designed a connected cohort who are finding mana motuhake / self determination, matakura / knowledge, making long-term friends – and of course having heaps of fun!

[Register for our LANSAS webinar now.](#)

Quarterly Webinar for Educators (Nga Tupu Rau)

The Neurobiology of Overwhelm in Ākonga with FASD – Wednesday November 11, 4-5pm

When challenging behaviours arise in the classroom, kaiako often find themselves wondering, "Why is this student doing this to me?" But in this one-hour interactive session, we shift that mindset entirely, to ask: "What is happening with this learner's nervous system?"

Designed specifically for educators, this practical webinar unpacks the science behind dysregulation in ākonga with FASD.

[Find out more and register here.](#)



Teens to Adults: Online Caregiver Connection Group



'Relationships and Friendships – Thursday October 15 at 7.30pm

This monthly online group is for parents and caregivers negotiating those tricky 'whitewater rafting' years.

It's hosted by Teesh Dowie-Lewis, our Navigator from Kirikiriroa / Hamilton, who has had many years of foster care experience with rangatahi.

Each of these sessions is semi-structured: some general discussion to start with, then a half-hour on a special topic, with some Q&A to finish.

[Find out more and join our Teens to Adults online group.](#)

NEW: Recent Research series

We're always keeping tabs on FASD research around the world – and here in Aotearoa, of course. We're now launching a new series which will unpack studies we feel will be interesting to both our whānau and professionals. Here are two to start us off:

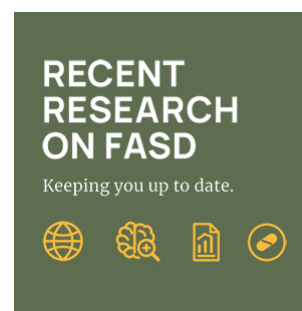
• FASD and ADHD: the differences

Many people living with FASD receive an ADHD diagnosis because the two disorders share some behavioural symptoms. We also know that up to 85% of people with FASD have co-occurring ADHD. However, the broader impact of prenatal alcohol exposure causes specific challenges which should be understood.

• FASD and CBD

Cannabidiol or CBD is derived from the Cannabis sativa plant – but it does not cause a 'high' and is non-addictive. This study found that it has potential for a raft of positive interactions for people with FASD, including helping with memory, adaptive function, mood, sleep, pain and gut issues.

[Check out Recent Research here.](#)



PIZZA CLUBS for people with FASD

• Ōtautahi – THIS FRIDAY 16 October 6pm-9pm

We'd love to see our rangatahi with FASD in the Canterbury region coming together this Friday.

[RSVP and download pānui here.](#)

• Tāmaki Makaurau – Friday 13 November, 6pm-9pm

Time to get the team back together for pizza and bowling at The FASD Centre, 3



William Laurie Place, Albany, Auckland.

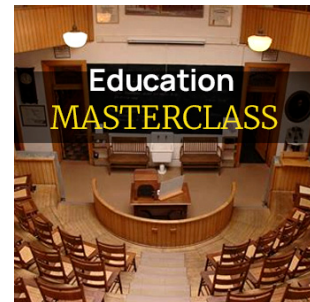
Please RSVP directly to Hannah via
coordinator@fasd.co.nz

Masterclasses for Educators

TOMORROW!

- **Masterclass 2: Beyond behaviour – supporting Ākonga using CPS**
Tuesday, 13 October, 3:30pm – 5pm

Join RTLB and CPS practitioner Fiona Harkness for a practical 90-minute workshop on supporting students with FASD and other neurodivergence. Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS), developed by Dr Ross Greene, helps us look beyond behaviour, identify the unsolved issues behind it, and respond before difficulties escalate.



[Register for Masterclass 2.](#)

- **Masterclass 3: Supporting Ākonga with FASD with the WARMTH Framework**
Wednesday, 4 November, 3:30pm – 5pm

The WARMTH Framework helps educators create calmer, more inclusive learning environments for learners with FASD — with benefits for every learner. Designed for kaiako, kaiāwhina, SENCos, LSCs, RTLBs and school leaders, the session will offer strategies and tools that can be put into practice straight away.

[Register for Masterclass 3.](#)

ONLINE Caregiver Support Groups

It's time we reviewed our **online** caregiver support groups. They happen monthly – both at lunchtime and in the evening. Numbers fluctuate, and we know how busy life can get, so we thought we'd ask:

- Are they working for you?
- Can we make them more accessible somehow?

Please drop us a line at: admin@fasd-can.org.nz if you have some input – we always love to know how we can better support you.

Online Caregiver Support Group LUNCHTIME

 **Thursday 5 November, 12:30pm (first Thursday of each month)**



Our Navigator in Te Wai Pounamu, Jacqui Mikkelsen, hosts our **lunchtime** group in 2026 – so grab a sandwich or a cuppa and hop online to join her.

[Get your lunchtime Zoom link.](#)

Online Caregiver Support Group EVENING

 **Tuesday 20 October, 7:30pm (third Tuesday of each month)**



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

[Get your evening Zoom link.](#)

LAST CHANCE: ONLY A FEW PLACES LEFT!

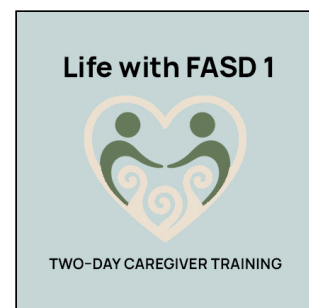
Life with FASD 1: Understand and Connect with Aroha

Central Ōtautahi / Christchurch

Friday / Saturday October 16/17, 9.30am-2.30pm

FASD-101 training for parents, caregivers, grandparents or whānau caring for someone with FASD (or probable FASD). It's free, with kai provided.

[Learn more and register now.](#)



LAST FEW SPOTS LEFT!

Titoki 7: Weekend Camp for young people and adults with FASD

Friday November 20 to Sunday November 22,
Waikanae

Don't miss our seventh weekend camp on the Waikanae coast for people with FASD (16+) – it's all about whanaungatanga / connection, āwhi / support, and increasing mana.

[Find out more and register your interest here.](#)

That's all for this 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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