



Looking After Each Other: A Dignity Promotion Research Project for FASD

This information sheet has been prepared so that we can provide information about our study with a variety of stakeholders that we hope will be interested in becoming partners in our research

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Study Background: Although historic and current efforts to prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) have been well intentioned, such efforts have inadvertently stigmatized this lifelong disorder. Misunderstandings about FASD and alcohol use in pregnancy have led to negative impacts on children, adults, families, and communities. Mothers who drink during pregnancy are labeled as ‘*bad mothers*’ and ‘*beyond hope*’. Children diagnosed with FASD are seen as ‘*damaged at birth*’, ‘*troublemakers*’, ‘*dropouts*’, and a ‘*societal problem*’. Because of this stigma, those with FASD experience multiple, intersecting layers of discrimination. Stigma is intensified further by discrimination based on gender, race, disability, social class bias, poverty, and/or a legacy of historical traumas experienced by Indigenous peoples. The research team was formed as part of *Looking After Each Other: A dignity promotion project*. This project aligns with the goals of the Provincial FASD Strategy and is strongly supported by Healthy Child Manitoba.

Study Purpose: To identify and ameliorate stigma and discrimination, our partnership embraces a rights-based framework in accordance with international declarations/conventions on human rights, disability rights, children’s rights, and Indigenous peoples’ rights, all of which promote human dignity and require dignity work to achieve them (e.g., courtesy, recognition, acceptance, generosity, presence, love, advocacy, leveling and empowerment). The over-arching purpose of our partnership is to build cross-sector knowledge and understanding of dignity-promoting approaches for children, adults, families and communities impacted by FASD.



Study Objectives:

- 1) To map the systemic, discursive pathways needed to promote the dignity of those impacted by FASD;
- 2) To uncover the ways in which trauma-informed approaches can promote that dignity;
- 3) To reveal the ways in which different cultural beliefs can promote that dignity;
- 4) To explore how child-family-centred services can promote that dignity; and
- 5) To understand how community inclusive/mobilization approaches can overcome stigma and promote dignity.



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Participants and Methods: This is a Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) project in which we learn together with communities, families, individuals and organizations. Any of the following list could participate in this project: youth and adults with FASD, parents/ caregivers and family members of individuals with FASD, youth and adults connected to addiction and other services, Indigenous Elders, service providers, and community members. A variety of quantitative and qualitative methods could be utilized to meet the objectives of the study:



Ethical Considerations: An ethics application for the proposed research has been submitted to and approved by the University of Manitoba Health Research Ethics Board. In addition, we will review the OCAP principles in the case of First Nations communities.

Would You Like More Information? Please feel free to contact any of the research team members if your organization, community, nation or group is interested in more information about the project.



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