

# THE LITTLE MASK



## **FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME** Your Special Child Between The Ages of 6-11 Years Old

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This story portrays two young raccoons with FAS/FAE who are left to fend for themselves after losing their parents in a tragic alcohol related accident.  
Focus is on ages six to eleven.

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## GREETINGS!!

We have gathered here with Grandfather, our Creator, the ones who fly, the ones who crawl, the ones who swim, the ones who walk on four legs, and those beautiful spirits...those who have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Related Conditions...who have come to Earth as volunteers to teach us what we need to heal in our communities.

This story was created to help you understand the health problems and behavior challenges of your special child

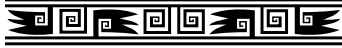




from the ages 6 to 11 years-old brought on by the effects of alcohol on their brain. The information in this story can help you become the best possible parent so that you can help your child be their best.

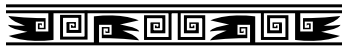
So welcome to the world of your special child and thank you for allowing us to walk with you on this journey.



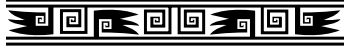


# SECTION 1

## A STORY ABOUT TWO YOUNG RACCOONS





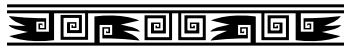


## LITTLE MASK AND BEST DAY EVER

Listen closely as I tell you the story of two young raccoons, a sister and a brother named Best Day Ever and Little Mask. Despite several sad events that happened early in their lives, they were happy, curious and playful.

Their parents were curious, too, as most raccoons are, but their curiosity led them into trouble when they found a garbage can that had several cans of open beer.

Licking the cans and liking what they tasted, Mother and









Father Raccoon tipped the garbage can over so they could drink the liquid inside. Several times a week Mother and Father Raccoon returned looking for more to drink.

On a few occasions, a big round silver container holding beer was left outside a nearby house next to the garbage can. Attached to it was a hose. The Raccoons found that licking the hose was an easier way to drink the beer.

What they did not know, however, was that Mother Raccoon was pregnant. All the time she was drinking the beer, so were her unborn babies.







When the three baby raccoons were born, only two survived. The boy they named, Best Day Ever and his sister they called Little Mask. Because their parents had never had babies before they did not recognize that Best Day Ever looked different from his sister and cousins.

His body was small and thin. His nose was short and eyes small and his tail was kinked at the end. The other thing the parents did not realize was that these two raccoons took longer to learn than others. The raccoon parents thought their babies were just fine and loved them as they were.







Despite the birth of their babies, Mother and Father Raccoon were spending more and more time away from their nest searching for beer and other alcohol, leaving Best Day Ever and Little Mask to forage for themselves. One morning the Raccoon parents left home to look for alcohol never to return.

At first, Best Day Ever and Little Mask did not worry. They had grown accustomed to their parents' absence. As time went on, however, they became hungry and decided to look for food on their own. They caught a few grasshoppers, ate the goldfish out of the Farmer's pond,







and rummaged through the garbage dump. Feeling tired, Little Mask suggested they go home, but neither one of them could remember which way to go.

Magpie, who had been watching the young raccoons for some time, flew down and to see if he could help.

“It looks like you are lost.” said Magpie.

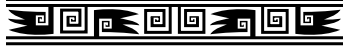
Little Mask replied, “We know how to get home. We just don’t remember which tree is ours.”

“Oh, I see,” said Magpie, “Well, tell me what your home looks like. I’ll fly around and see if I can find it. In the







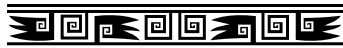


meantime, I'm going to call Coyote. He will stay with you until I return.”

Magpie screeched loudly several times and Coyote walked quietly out of the trees and greeted the two young raccoons. Magpie flew off.

A short time later Magpie returned with a sad expression. Magpie called Coyote to his side and told him quietly what he had found.

Coyote's ears drooped when he heard the news. Unaware of how their lives had just changed, the two little raccoons







started to wander off. Magpie noticed and called after them, “Stop, stay close. Coyote and I will take you to where it is safe.”

With Magpie leading the way and Coyote bringing up the rear, the odd quartet headed deep into the forest. The sun was setting, the hour was growing late. The two young raccoons were getting tired and hungry. Magpie brought them berries and bugs. But each time the bird did so, they all had to stop so that the raccoons could wash their food in the nearby creek. They had learned this routine from watching their parents and neither one would eat







until they had done so.

Every now and then the raccoons would call out for their mother and father. Coyote and Magpie would try to comfort them but with little lasting success. Finally, after what seemed a very long time they reached a clearing in the woods.

There was a fire burning and all the birds, animals, and insects of the woodlands were gathered. Despite the large crowd, it was very silent. Coyote, walked slowly between Little Mask and Best Day Ever as he went to stand at the North of the circle of animals.







All eyes were on Coyote as he began to speak.

“I have brought to our healing circle two young raccoons who, due to alcohol, are now orphans. Magpie found them lost and scared. He flew to look for their parents and found them lying by the side of the road at the place where the humans throw their trash. I am so sorry to say...Mother and Father Raccoon drank too much alcohol. It appears they were drunk and wandered into the road...and, well, we all know the rest.

Coyote bowed his head with sorrow and continued.









“Now we have two young ones that still need the guidance and care of parents and our forest community. Are there any of you who would be willing to take on this task?”

After a long pause, Grandfather and Grandmother Otter stepped forward.

“We are older now,” said Grandfather Otter.

Grandmother Otter chiming in said, “Yes, and I can bear no more children. But my old mate and I have raised many. We would like to take on the care of these young ones.”







Little Mask exclaimed “Yes, Yes! I have seen the young otters slide and play in the water. Let’s go home with them.”

With this, Little Mask pulled on her brother’s paw and they went over and stood next to Grandfather and Grandmother Otter.

Coyote slowly and thoughtfully said, “Well...”

Just then Mother Fox stepped up to Coyote and whispered in his ear. Coyote turned to where Father Fox sat with his special daughter. Coyote then looked closely at the two







orphaned raccoons. His eyes widened in recognition as he studied Best Day Ever's face. Turning back to Mother Fox he nodded.

Coyote welcomed all by saying, "Thank you all for coming to our circle tonight. I would ask you all to return to your homes except for the Otters, the Fox family, Bear, Deer and Dr. Raven."

The other creatures left the healing circle murmuring about the sad fate of Mother and Father Raccoon. As they left, Eagle flew silently overhead and landed on a





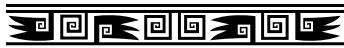


rock next to Coyote, spreading her wings as if to welcome and protect all present.

Eagle, peering at everyone, turned to Coyote and said, “Coyote, thank you for your help. I will thank Magpie tomorrow for his efforts. Now I have asked you to stay and offer your aide and support to the Otters.

Dr. Raven...I am asking you now. Is it true what Mother Fox believes...that Best Day Ever and Little Mask have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome?”

Dr. Raven folded his wings and moved closer to the small









raccoons. He carefully studied their faces and estimated their height and weight.

Dr. Raven murmured, “HmMMM...let’s see.

Tapping his chest with his wings, he gently replied, “Yes, dear Eagle. I believe it is true that Best Day Ever has Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. I also suspect that Little Mask has Fetal Alcohol Related Conditions based on her behavior. I would like Grandmother and Grandfather Otter, Bear and the Foxes to return to this healing circle at the time of the next full moon. Grandmother and Grandfather Otter, you know Deer, the head teacher at our forest?





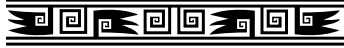


She works with our children who need special help. Please, take your children to her in the morning. She will be able to give you much of the information you will need. In the meantime I hope you, Mother and Father Fox, and you, Bear, will share what you know to help our young orphaned ones.”

Best Day Ever and Little Mask were very sleepy as Grandmother and Grandfather Otter lead them home. Once they reached the creek, Grandmother Otter slid into the stream and swam to the small island where she and her mate lived.





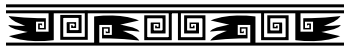


Grandmother Otter turned to the raccoons and said,  
“Come children, it is time to sleep.”

“We don’t swim well. We can’t get to the island.” cried  
the two little raccoons.

“Never mind.” Grandfather Otter called across the creek,  
“Go to sleep Mother. I know you are very tired. I will  
make new beds here on the shore and stay with our  
daughter and son tonight.”

Grandfather Otter pulled moss and pine needles together  
and bedded down with his new children.







## THE FIRST DAY WITH THE OTTERS

Early the next day, Grandmother and Grandfather Otter woke with their new children. It was time for them to get ready for school, but first they needed to eat and groom themselves. But the youngsters were unfamiliar with this routine.

“School? Baths? What are those?” questioned Little Mask.

“Wow, fish for breakfast, yum!” said Best Day Ever, “This is the best. But, where are our mom and dad? Why aren’t they here? Where is our nest?”









Grandmother Otter replied in a surprised voice, “Little ones, do you not remember what was said last night? Your parents have passed to the Spirit World. Grandfather, our Creator, has put you in our care. We will watch over you now.”

Little Mask and Best Day Ever started to cry. They missed their parents and their home. The Otters held them and patted them, drying their tears. After a while, Little Mask looked around.

“We miss our mom and dad. We want them to come back.” he cried.







“I am sorry,” said Grandfather Otter softly, “remember...they are now in the spirit world...”

Have you never been to school? To the place where all young animals go to learn how to talk to each other, how to take care of themselves, all the lessons little ones must learn? Didn't your parents ever take you?”

Little Mask replied sadly, “Our parents were gone a lot. We played and ate on our own. That's what we did all day.”

Grandfather and Grandmother Otter could see the little





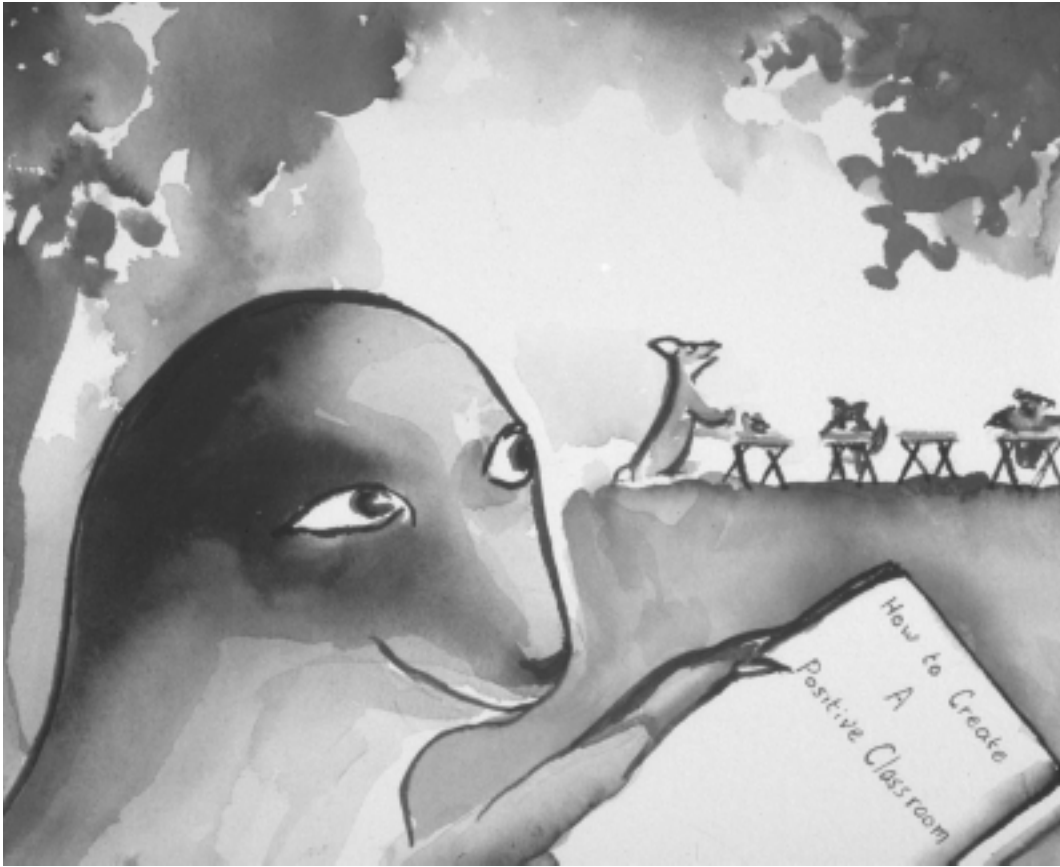


ones would need time and extra help. They were not newborns but many important lessons had not been learned. Still, from what they could see, Little Mask and Best Day Ever were eager to learn.

After eating their fish, Grandfather Otter called his children to his side, “Come with me children. I will show you how to swim on our way to school.”

Grandfather Otter jumped into the water, rolled over and beckoned to the young raccoons. Little Mask and Best Day Ever jumped into the stream and tried to roll and







swim the way the otter did but they both ended up coughing and very frightened.

Grandfather Otter swam to the shore pulling a small wet raccoon with each of his front paws. He waded back into a shallow part of the stream and showed the young ones how to work the front and rear paws in the water. He saw that, unlike himself, Little Mask and Best Day Ever swam with their heads out of the water. This made them slower, but, Grandfather Otter decided, it was better than drowning. So once more they set off for the forest school. After they had traveled down the stream for awhile they









came upon a clearing with tables made of stumps, and chairs made of stones. At the front of the clearing was Deer. Sitting on the rocks were young animals of all kinds. One of them, a little fox, came over and welcomed them. Her face was similar to that of Best Day Ever's. The area between her nose and mouth was long, her eyes were small and wide apart. She was very tiny.

“Hi, I’m Stays in the Moment. I’ll be your friend. Come and sit by me. How did you get your names? I heard your mom and dad are dead. Are you sad?”

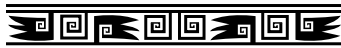
The little fox asked these and more nosy questions.





Deer stepped in, “Grandfather Otter, thank you for bringing me these special ones. This is a class for little ones who need extra support. You must be tired after last night and your travels this morning. I will meet with you in a few minutes. In the meantime, have a seat, and while you are waiting, take a look at this information about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Related Conditions in children. You might find it helpful.”

Grandfather Otter read the information that Deer had given him. It seemed there was so much he had to learn. Grandfather Otter watched his new daughter and son



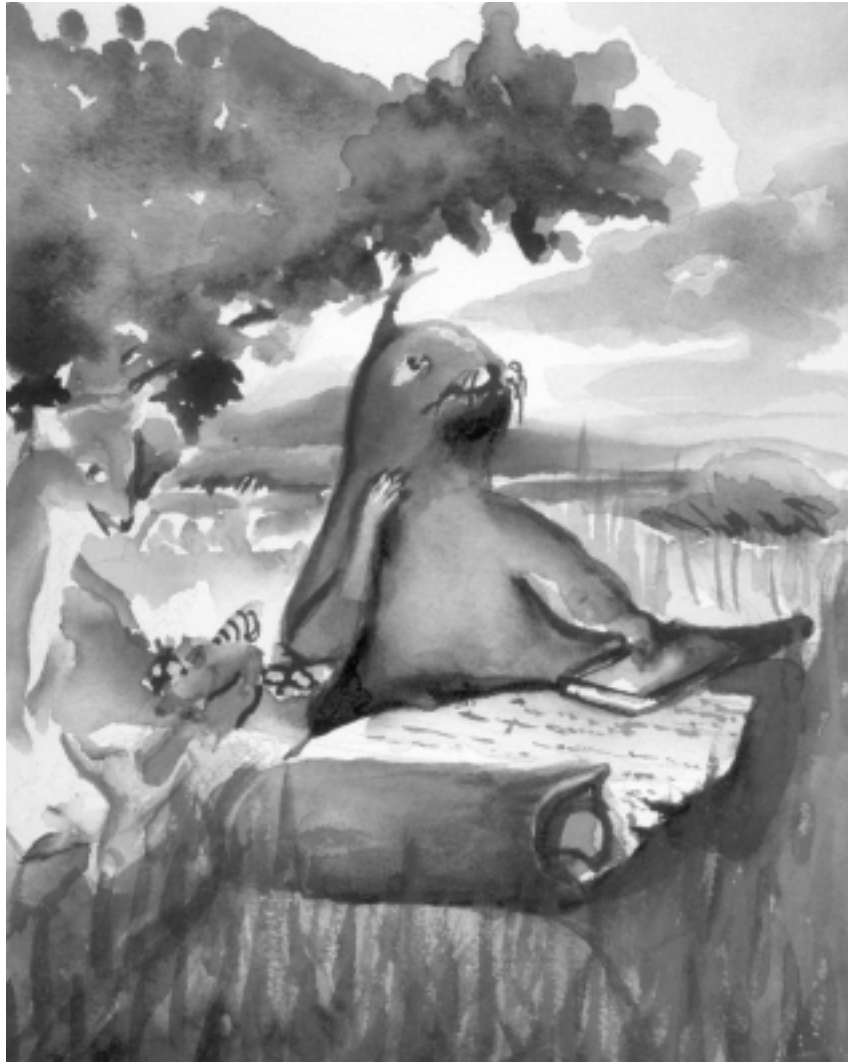


who were busy drawing. He noticed that Deer had several animals helping her in the classroom. Grandfather Otter became more concerned. If Deer needed so much help when she had the information, how would he and Grandmother Otter ever manage?

He looked up and Deer smiled, as if she sensed his concerns. She nodded slowly at him and then turned back to her students.

“Children, please get out of your chairs,” instructed Deer, “Now, get in line... and now follow Woodpecker out for your break. It is important that you exercise to strengthen







your muscles and bones.”

When she had finished, Deer walked over to Grandfather Otter whom looked overwhelmed and concerned.

“Grandfather Otter, sit and watch how we work here in the classroom,” invited Deer, “think about what you have read and how it matches what we are doing. It is not fair to expect that you will learn all of this in one day. You have raised many children. You know what to do in many situations. We just have to make adjustments for our specials ones. We don’t try harder; we just try differently. Share with your mate all that you learn. Many of the







ideas we use here you may find useful at home.

I will be joining you and many other parents in the healing circle at the next full moon.”

After recess each child had a turn in the sharing circle. At the end of the school day Grandfather Otter gathered his papers and went over and took the paw of each small raccoon and headed for home.

The small raccoons ran down the path, pulling Grandfather Otter with them.

“Slow down little ones...slow down. I am older and can









not run as fast,” puffed Grandfather Otter.

Grandmother Otter laughed, “All right you two rascals! Have some berries and fish then go play, let Grandfather rest! Stay in my sight...on this side of the stream.”

That night after the children had fallen asleep, Grandfather Otter expressed some of his concerns.

Grandfather Otter moaned, “Grandmother, I have been so confused today. Sometimes I think that having those beautiful children is the most wonderful gift. But, I am so tired tonight. I am just not sure I can give them all





they will need.”

Grandmother Otter smiled kindly, “My dear old mate...Today I received a flyer telling of our raccoons’ appointment with Dr. Raven. After they are finished at the healing circle, there is a meeting for parents, such as ourselves, who are raising special children. I spoke to Mother Fox today. They too attend these meetings. They will be coming for dinner in a few days, as will Dr. Raven, and they will also go to the healing circle with us.”

Grandmother Otter sang a song of joy and nuzzled her mate’s cheek and went to check on her children, as he fell





asleep.

Every day Grandfather Otter took his children to school. He stayed with them, watching how Deer and her aides provided structure, consistency, and humor along with reading, spelling, math, and social skills training. Each night, after his children were in bed, he shared what he had learned with his mate.

While they were away at school, Grandmother Otter made changes in the house. One day, she had put labels and pictures on all of the drawers and cabinets, telling what was inside. She had taped off areas in different colors,







red for Little Mask and yellow for Best Day Ever. This way each child had a special place that was just for them.

The day before the visit to the healing circle, the Fox family and Dr. Raven came for dinner. Both families sat down to a table laden with fruit, fish, and tasty insects. Each little raccoon had a water bowl by their plate to wash their food, as was their custom.

After the children had eaten their fill, they ran down to the stream to play. Grandfather Otter walked down to the creek with them, marking a territory of safety as he went.





Grandfather Otter instructed, “Now children, you must stay within the area I marked and be careful. I will be close by if you need me.”

Grandfather went back to the house and helped the other men clean up while the women sat on the porch so they could watch their children. When all the chores were done, Mother and Father Fox spoke of the troubles they had and ways they had made changes to help their special daughter Stays in the Moment. They found that many of the tools used for her also helped their other two kits.

The stories were soon interrupted when a loud yelp of





laughter came from the stream. All four adults jumped up and ran to see what was going on. At the swimming hole where all of the children were playing, Little Mask was on a tire, swinging out over the bank and on the verge of letting go. The other children were laughing and rolling on the ground.

Grandfather Otter yelled, “Stop! Stop! Do not let go. Little Mask you need to stop and get down now.”

Little Mask slowly came to a stop dropped into the stream with a small splash, then crawled up the bank.







Little Mask asked with tears flowing, “What was I doing wrong? You said we could swim.”

Grandfather Otter scolded, “Little Mask, I told you, stay within the area I marked for you. Don’t you remember? You have could have been seriously hurt if you had let go over the grass instead of the water. You scared us!”

“But Grandfather, I could not see any marks. I was showing how good I could swim. Aren’t you proud of me?” asked Little Mask.

Grandfather Otter replied, “Oh my....of course you don’t know what my Otter’s marks are. You are a raccoon. I





need to think better and show you things more clearly. Don't worry son. Let's go in. Say good night to the Foxes. We will see them again tomorrow."

After saying good byes, the Foxes and Dr. Raven slipped off into the forest. The otters picked up their precious foster children and carried them into the house, tucking them in and telling them bedtime stories.

As they drifted off to sleep, Grandmother Otter snuggled up to her mate and whispered, "Don't worry, my dear, taking care of these children is the right thing to do. Our Creator will provide, you will see."



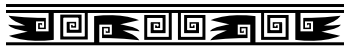




The next morning dawned bright and beautiful. Little Mask and Best Day Ever were up before the sun and exploring. They ran into wake the Otters.

Grandfather Otter followed the excited youngsters down to the stream. He stopped in surprise. Standing on the shore where Little Mask had nearly fallen the night before were Mouse, Beaver, and Elk, all smiling broadly in the sunlight.

Mouse, her whiskers twitching furiously, stood up on his back legs and squeaked, “We heard what happened last







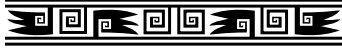
night and we wanted to help!”

With that, Elk stepped aside and revealed, in all its glory, the gift that had been given. Where the dangerous tire had hung the night before, was a small beaver dam, making a lovely little pool. From the top of the dam to the bottom was a slide, just right for two small raccoons. At the edge of the water stood four bramble bushes, fencing the area.

“You see, we heard that your little ones did not know how to keep themselves safe. So, I chewed through the rope...Elk took the tire away, and Beaver made the dam







and slide. The bramble bushes are so that the little ones will always know where their boundaries are. This should help keep the precious ones safe,” said Mouse wiggling and twitching. “This is our gift of greeting to you, Little Mask and Best Day Ever. Welcome to your new home.”

Grandfather Otter sighed in gratitude, “We thank you so much. Say thank you children, these are marvelous gifts. We are so blessed. Please, all of you, let us know if there is some way we can return this incredible gift of caring. Please, excuse us. We have a journey to make today.”





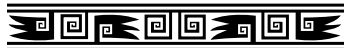




## A VISIT TO THE HEALING CIRCLE

The Otter and Fox families began their journey. After many hours, they reached the healing circle. Standing at the edge of the circle were Coyote and Dr. Raven. Dr. Raven smiled broadly and motioned to the otters and raccoons to enter the healing circle.

“Welcome! Gathered here today are all the ones who have come to help you and your children. Some of the ones here you know and I will introduce you to the rest. Let me tell you why they are important in this circle of healing







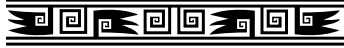
and in your childrens' lives," said Raven.

The first to enter was Owl, the psychologist. Owl's job was to help the Otters understand how their children's brains might have been hurt by the alcohol. Owl asked many questions about the Otter's family life, problems and successes they had with their little ones, and the things they felt, as parents, they did well.

Owl's helper, Rabbit, came next. Rabbit's job was to test Little Mask and Best Day Ever to find their strengths and skills. She also measured what the young raccoons had learned so far in their lives.



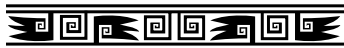




The third helper was Kingfisher. Kingfisher listened to the way the little raccoons spoke. From their speech patterns he could understand how they learned, how their brains worked, and what types of help the children would need to understand their everyday world.

Deer, the head teacher from the forest school entered, accompanied by her aides Woodpecker and Marmot.

Next Bear joined the circle. Bear, herself, had a teenage daughter who had Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Bear's job at the circle was to help parents feel at ease and to help them gain services for their children. She also helped lead a







parent's support group.

Squirrel came next. Her job was very important. It was to tell all the animals in the forest about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and how to prevent it from happening.

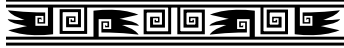
Dr. Raven and his team worked closely with the Otter/Raccoon family. After several hours of examining the two little Raccoons, Dr. Raven and his team sat down with Grandmother and Grandfather Otter to share what they had learned.

“Well...,” said Dr. Raven, “you may have noticed that

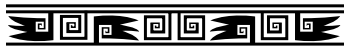




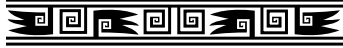




your children have different skills and strengths. One is bigger than the other; one is quicker to learn. That is because, although they are from the same litter, one of your precious children is more affected by the alcohol than the other. We do not know how this happens. However, both of your children are indeed affected by the alcohol their mother drank. Little Mask shows less of the facial features and growth deficiency but she has many of the challenging behaviors seen in children who were exposed to alcohol while in the womb. We would say that she has Fetal Alcohol Related Conditions. This simply







means she has brain damage.

Best Day Ever is smaller and has all of the physical attributes seen in children with FAS.

Raven encouraged the Otters to read the information given to them by the team and asked Bear to take them to the Parents' Support Group.

Raven thanked the Otters for bringing their lovely children. "Come again if you need anything."







# SECTION 2

## A HELPFUL GUIDE TO QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Not every child affected by alcohol looks the same or will have every problem listed in this book.

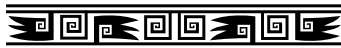






## WHAT YOU CAN DO... BEFORE YOUR CHILD IS BORN...

The most important thing you can do is to look after your own health, eating the right food, getting lots of sleep, fresh air and exercise, not smoking, not using drugs, not drinking any alcohol, and seeing your doctor or midwife often when you are expecting. A father can help, too, by not drinking and helping his baby's mother take good care of herself. A baby needs two parents and the whole community to help grow in a healthy way. Planning







a sober pregnancy is the first responsibility both parents can take together.

If a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, so does her unborn baby. Alcohol goes to the baby's brain and can harm it in ways that affect the child from birth throughout their life. Alcohol can change the way your child looks and how their body works. How alcohol affects your child's body and brain is described next along with some of the problems children with FAS and FARC may have. Examples of things parents have done to aid their child are included. They may be of help to you, too.



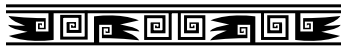


## **WHEN YOUR CHILD IS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 6 AND 11**

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**The most important things you can give your special child during these years are:**

- Structure
- Flexibility in expectations
- Clear boundaries
- Reasonable goals
- Ways of succeeding
- A sense of thier own value
- Chances for your child to learn skills







# **ALCOHOL AND YOUR CHILD'S BODY...**





## **AN ADOLESCENT WITH FAS HAS A UNIQUE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:**

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### **Facial features often include:**

- Smaller eyes that are wide apart
- Longer, smoother area between the nose and upper lip (philtrum)
- Thin upper lip

### **How the body is affected:**

- Shorter
- Thinner
- Smaller at Birth





The appearance of these physical features often change over time. Some children get taller and heavier. Sometimes the face changes so much, the child does not look like they have FAS anymore. Because of this, it is very important that someone who knows about FAS looks at your child and gives you the right diagnosis.





## **CHILDREN WITH FAS MAY HAVE PROBLEMS WITH:**

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- Eyesight
- Hearing
- Their teeth

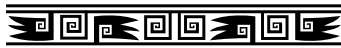




## **INSIDE YOUR CHILD'S BODY**

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- Heart problems
- Kidney problems
- Liver problems
- Lung problems
- Seizure disorders
- Scoliosis








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**ALCOHOL  
AND YOUR  
CHILD'S  
BRAIN...**



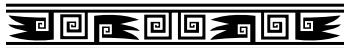
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**CONCERNS THAT RESULT  
FROM YOUR ADOLESCENT CHILD'S  
BRAIN BEING DAMAGED BY ALCOHOL  
CAN INCLUDE:**

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- Problems speaking
- Limited listening skills
- Sleeping problems
- Eating difficulties
- Delays in crawling
- Delays in toilet training
- Delays in walking
- Learning delays and difficulties





## **CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS AND PROBLEMS YOUR ADOLESCENT MAY HAVE:**

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- Being easily irritated
- Temper tantrums
- Being easily distracted
- Making repeated mistakes
- Being confused
- Not being able to always remember what they are told





- Not being able to follow directions all the time
- Not being able to follow more than one direction at a time
- Mixing up things they are told
- Not recognizing danger and doing unsafe things
- Being easily lead by their peers
- Not being able to tell fact from fantasy





**THINGS YOU  
CAN DO  
TO HELP  
YOUR CHILD...**





## **THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD WITH FAS/FARC**

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There are many steps you can take to help your child. The most important thing you can do is to remember that your child wants to please you and to do well. So, set your goals and expectations at a reasonable level and keep a sense of humor!





## WHEN YOUR CHILD IS YOUNG

- Keep the environment uncluttered and simple;
- Keep the home as calm as possible;
- Have a fixed routine, e.g., eating and going to bed at the same time every day; and
- Having few and consistent rules. These should be reviewed with your child every day. Visual and spoken reminders should both be used.



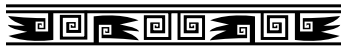




## **FEEDING YOUR CHILD**

Eating problems can be due to brain damage, resulting in:

- Your child not liking the feel of certain food in his/her mouth;
- When your child is eating, limit other distractions as much as possible;
- The way the food looks or smells;
- Your child not recognizing hunger pains even when they are really hungry; and

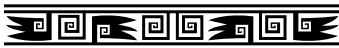




- Eat at the same time and in the same place every day, if at all possible.

**Things that help can include:**

- Trying different foods and being patient often lead to a happier mealtime.
- Sometimes it is not the taste or smell of the food that is the problem but the texture. Paying attention to what your child says about their food can help determine if this is the case; and





- Having a special plate and cup for your child can also be helpful as it can be part of their routine.

## **GETTING YOUR CHILD TO SLEEP**

Sleeping problems are common in children affected by prenatal alcohol exposure. You can help your child sleep by:

- Making sure their room is quiet;
- Putting your child to bed at the same time every day;





- Allow your child to have a special toy the child can take to bed. This is particularly helpful if the child is traveling and sleeping in a strange bed; and
- Put other toys out of sight when it is time for bed.

Other family members need their rest, too. Not forcing the child to go to sleep but keeping them in their own room to ensure the rest of the family has enough rest;





## TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training can often be delayed due to the brain damage caused by alcohol. Despite their age, some children with FAS/FARC still have difficulty with toilet training. Steps that can help include:

- Watching your child until you recognize when they need to use the toilet;
- Build a routine around their pattern by taking them into the bathroom at the time of day that you have seen them need to go;





- Be patient and expect that it may take longer for your child to learn how to use the bathroom than other children;
- In school, have the teacher provide a set routine for bathroom breaks. Children should be closely supervised, with provisions made for privacy, while using the restroom;
- Many children with FAS/FARC have episodes of wetting and/or soiling. As your child gets older, using pull-ups, special nose sprays, and





rubber padding on the bed can all be useful. These episodes should be handled in a matter of fact manner with the child not being ridiculed; and

- Keeping a routine at home, monitoring food intake, making sure your child drinks an adequate amount of water, and close consultation with the child's physician can all help with the child's overall physical condition and with their basic body functions. A calm





approach to these functions is the most useful.

## **MUSCLE DEVELOPMENT AND EXERCISE**

Children with FAS/FARC often show deficits in their muscular development. This can be due to a delay in the way the nervous system develops along with vision problems. The following are ways that have been found to help develop the motor skills and muscles of children with FAS/FARC.

- The use of touch and massage can stimulate muscle development and growth as well as help







the child become more comfortable with their body;

- Taking walks with your child can be part of their routine, help them get the exercise their body needs, and help you be closer to your child;
- Participation in sports can help your child develop their muscles, eye-hand coordinations, increase self-esteem, and provide a means of social development;
- “Cross-body” exercises such as “windmills,”



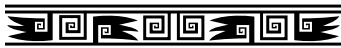


swimming, and walking can help stimulate the brain, help the child learn better, and increase coordination.

Ask your doctor for assistance or talk with a physical therapist to make sure you are providing this help in the best possible manner.

## **LEARNING NEW THINGS**

Our world is a complex and confusing place at times. Each child has their own way and pace of learning.





- Watch your child to see what makes it easier for them to understand their world;
- Some children learn better if you show them examples of what is wanted rather than just telling them.
- Directions should be given one at a time;
- In the simplest language possible; and
- Using the same words everytime.

One mother and father took pictures of their child





getting dressed, brushing their teeth, making their bed, and picking up their room. These pictures were put up on a reminder board in the order each task was to be done. Photos of the contents of dressers and cabinets were placed on the outside of each drawer and shelf. With these prompts, the child learned many skills and gained a sense of success and independence.

## **DISCIPLINE AND CONSEQUENCES**

Children with FAS and FARC must have





immediate consequences for their actions, whether it be appropriate or inappropriate behavior. It is important to reinforce the positive behaviors your child is showing. Simply disciplining for unwanted behaviors does not teach the child what behaviors they should be doing.

- Consequences should have value for the child and need to be appropriate for the behavior;
- You should watch for the start of the inappropriate behavior and work to redirect your





child's actions;

- Time out is not generally useful with children with FAS or FARC. This time is supposed to give the child time to “think about their actions and come up with a different behavior.” This is not usually the case with children with FAS/FARC. They will often spend this time getting into more trouble or feeling worse. Giving the child a special place, e.g., a power chair, where they can go on their own to “get their body





- under control or regain their power” is more helpful;
- Your child should be told ahead of time, in writing and pictures, if necessary, of what the rules are, what is expected of them, and what the consequences of their actions will be;
  - Do not negotiate with your child. Limit choices. This will help assist them in making the right choice; and





- Stay open to a wide variety of options and interventions. Parents have tried aromatherapy, movement therapy, nutritional interventions, and other “alternative” healing interventions that have been useful.

Try different, not harder!





For further information on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome  
and other alcohol related conditions please contact:

**Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Diagnostic  
and Prevention Network, Seattle, WA.**

**(206) 685-9888**

**or e-mail at:**

**<http://depts.washington.edu/fasdpn/>**



As time went on, however, Best Day Ever and Little Mask became hungry and decided to look for food on their own. They caught a few grasshoppers, ate the goldfish out of the Farmer's pond, and rummaged through the garbage dump. Feeling tired, Little Mask suggested they go home, but neither one of them could remember which way to go.