

Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome



“The Big Comfy Couch”

Innovative Communication
Strategies for Supporting Families
and Creating Change



Overview

- Describe MOFAS and the Virtual Family Center (VFC)
- Designing the Program
- VFC Features and Benefits
- VFC Outcome – How is it going?
- Testimonials
- Now What – Things you can do



What is MOFAS?

- Mission/Vision
- Role as Communications Director
- Role Volunteer Parent Liaison



MOFAS Mission and Vision

Our mission is to eliminate disability caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy and to improve the quality of life for those living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders throughout Minnesota.

Our vision is a world in which women do not drink alcohol during pregnancy and people living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders are identified, supported, and valued.



Communications Director

- Been with MOFAS 2 years
- Advertising/Marketing
- March of Dimes
- I can help make a difference
- Back up singer for Bon Jovi



VFC Parent/Liaisons

- Married to Jeff
- 6 Children, ages 6 -26
- Two are adopted, with FASD
- Mental Health Behavioral Aide
- 4Keeps Adoption Support Group





Rationale

Rationale

Families are the cornerstone of our communities.

We want to help them not only survive, but thrive.



Barriers

- Varied Family structures and needs
- Geographic barriers
- Social Stigma
 - Feelings of isolation
 - Feelings of grief



So...a new normal



- Expensive
- Limited outreach
- Online Communities are hard work!





Designing the Program

Designing the VFC

- Vision
- Funding
- Development and Design
- Marketing Plan



Vision

- Meet the need of supporting families through more sustainable, far-reaching approach
- Offer the opportunity for engagement of parents and families without the stigma



Funding

- McKnight Grant - \$50,000, 2 year contract



Development and Design

- Risdall Marketing Group
- Developed Scope; Design, Development, Architecture
- Budget
- Revisions
- Test/Tweak
- Go live!



Marketing Plan

- Increase number of participants and level of participation
- Hire VFC Parent Liaisons
- Hire Parent Blogger





VFC Features

Features

- Features of the VFC
 - Registration Process
 - Public/Private Sides
 - Interactive tools:
 - Chats – 3X per week
 - Message Boards
 - Blogs
 - Webinars
 - Hand in Hand Online





Diagnosis | Training | Resource Directory

- About
- | What We Do
- | Who We Serve
- | Virtual Family Center
- | How You Can Help
- | News & Events
- | Store
- Resources

Celebrating Alcohol-Free Pregnancies

Imagine a world in which women do not drink alcohol during pregnancy, and people living with **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)** are identified, supported, and valued.

FASD is the leading cause of mental retardation. Although there is no cure, it is 100% preventable. The only cause of FASD is drinking alcohol during pregnancy. We know that there is no safe time, no safe kind and no safe amount of alcohol use during pregnancy.

Browse our site to learn about the Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS). Share in our vision of celebrating alcohol-free pregnancies.



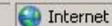
Welcome to your place!

Your own comfy spot to share and connect with other families; when and where it's convenient for you.

[▶ Click here to visit](#)

[Click to Donate](#)

What's happening at MOFAS





Registration



Diagnosis | Training | Resource Directory

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About | What We Do | Who We Serve | **Virtual Family Center** | How You Can Help | News & Events | Store | Resources

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Your MOFAS Virtual Family Center



If you live in Minnesota and are a foster, adoptive or biological parent of a child or children affected by a FASD such as **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome**, this is the place where you will find meaningful connections with other Minnesota families and helpful information and facts about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and other Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. Watch the welcome video from Sara Messelt, MOFAS Executive Director, by clicking on the "View Video" button below or clicking the "Welcome" area on list at the right. All are invited to view the FASD picture Scrapbooks, Stories and Blogs, but to share your own stories and interact with other families we do require a registration process. This helps protect our community and provides a safe environment for personal issues to be discussed. To register, please click on the registration button below. Welcome!

[View Video](#)

[Click to Register](#)

Latest Photos in the MOFAS Scrapbook

Instructions/intro to the MOFAS Scrapbook. [See All Photos](#)



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Registration

To protect our community and provide a safe environment for personal issues to be discussed, we ask that you register to have access to secured parts of this site and to submit stories, photos, blogs and participate in online discussions. Because our charter and funding guidelines are geographically restricted, you must also be a resident of the State of Minnesota to become a registered member.

* User Name:
This is used to log into the site.

* Password:
This is used to log into the site.
 Passwords must be at least 7 characters long.

* Confirm Password:

* Display Name:
This is how your name will be displayed on the site.

Profile Image:



[Upload New File](#)

This image will be displayed in forums/other areas of the site.

Personal information is for MOFAS internal use only and will not appear on the MOFAS web site. Please view our [Privacy Policy](#) for more details.

* First Name:

* Last Name:

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→ * First Name:
 → * Last Name:
 → * Email Address:
 → * Street Address 1:
 → Street Address 2:
 → * City:
 → * State:
 → * Zip Code:
 → * Primary Phone:
 → Secondary Phone:
 → * Birth Year:
 (format: YYYY)

→ Connection with FASD:
 I have a family member(s) with FASD
 I have FASD
 I am an expecting or future mother
 I work professionally with FASD

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Interactive Tools

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Welcome Jessica Hanratty!

Check It Out

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Virtual Family Center » Family Blogs

Family Blogs

All members of the Virtual Family Center are welcome and encouraged to enter their thoughts in this collective family journal (blog). The Family Blog is meant to be a place for you to share your experiences, connect with others, be a part of a community, to inform and be informed, but most of all be heard. Please feel free to post here often!

If you would like to read blog entries from specific members, just click on their names below.

Guest Bloggers

Christina (3)	Claudia Fletcher (1)	FAS Dad (1)	Jeff/Nancy (37)
Jodee (1)	jsauter (1)	Julie C. (1)	Kari Fletcher (3)
Kay (2)	Linda B (1)	Lisa F. (21)	Nancy/Jeff (2)
o2b3oagain (1)	There'sHope (1)		

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Parent resources from National Alliance on Mental Illness



[Nancy/Jeff](#) posted on April 19, 2010

...
[\[Read the rest of this blog...\]](#)

Actions: [E-mail](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) |

Psychology Visits



[Lisa F.](#) posted on April 18, 2010

[My child sees a psychologist & to be honest with you. I think it benefits me](#)

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Lisa F. posted on April 18, 2010

My child sees a psychologist & to be honest with you, I think it benefits me almost more than it benefits him. Why? Because I can tell someone how...
[\[Read the rest of this blog...\]](#)

Actions: [E-mail](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#) |

Positive qualities of FASD



Lisa F. posted on April 16, 2010

I was thinking of how difficult it is to be the social director for a family of 8, packing, planning, organizing, etc. It wears me out. Often what I d...
[\[Read the rest of this blog...\]](#)

Actions: [E-mail](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) |

Hey MOFAS is offering 3 family retreats this year!!!!!!



Nancy/Jeff posted on April 15, 2010

Summer Retreat at Camp Confidence: Two nights at Confidence Learning Center near Brainerd. Activities include boating, fishing, swimming, campfi...
[\[Read the rest of this blog...\]](#)

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Virtual Family Center » Moderated Chats

Moderated Chats

Chats are a great way to connect in real time to other families. The chat room will be open when a chat is scheduled or a moderator is available.

It's Chat Time!

[Go to Chat](#)

Chat Rules

Please observe these simple rules in the chat room. Violators can be temporarily or permanently banned.

- No offensive language
- No advertising or soliciting
- No flooding (filling the screen with repetitive text) or scrolling (posting many times but with few characters)- this slows down the chat for all users
- Be respectful of others
- ALL CAPS is considered shouting, please limit
- You must be at least 18 years old to enter chat

Upcoming Chats

Monday Evening Chats - 8:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Wednesday Evening Chats 8:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Jump start your week!

Starting in April, moderated chats are moving from Tuesdays to MONDAYS to help parents get their week off to a good start.

Now you can hop online every Monday and Wednesday nights between 8:30 PM and 9:30 PM and chat with other parents about school issues, or in general what is working for you or what you may

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Virtual Family Center » Moderated Chats » Chat Room

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MOFAS Chat

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 jhanratty (Available) 

 **Monday Night Chat** **admin** **0/200**

MOFAS Monday night chat. Every Monday, from 8:30 - 9:30pm.

 **Wednesday Night Chat** **admin** **0/200**

MOFAS Wednesday night chat. Every Wednesday from 8:30 - 9:30pm.

"Talking to Your Family" **host** **0/200**

Evaluation

Friday Afternoon Chat **Nancy Beyer** **0/200**

Friday afternoon chat. Join us on Fridays for a time to connect with others to share stories, experiences, frustrations and joys about raising children with FASD.



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Virtual Family Center » Family Connect Forum

Family Connect Message Boards

Welcome to the MOFAS Family Connect Message Boards, the gathering place for families in Minnesota who live with FASD.

If you find objectionable material in any area of the message boards please contact the administrators at: messageboards@mofas.org

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MOFAS			
Forums	Topics	Replies	Last Post
Announcements and Intros			RE: We're going to get to...
Announcements about MOFAS, special events and upcoming webinars.	25	23	by Nancy/Jeff 04-20-2010 02:21 PM
Family & Individual Support			
Forums	Topics	Replies	Last Post
Adoptive Moms	14	12	RE: What is your favorite...
Birth Moms	0	0	by sue 04-14-2010 10:35 PM
Dads	3	3	Any Dad's out there by Jeff/Nancy 03-31-2010 02:47 AM
Foster Parenting	0	0	
Kinship / Grandparent Parenting	1	1	RE: Some days I just want... by Jeff/Nancy 03-31-2010 03:22 AM
Issues			
Forums	Topics	Replies	Last Post
School Issues	8	7	RE: No Schoold for Aggres... by Nancy/Jeff

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School Issues

Click to subscribe to this forum.

Search this forum:

[Add New Topic](#)

Topics	Replies	Views	Last Post
? No School for Aggressive son. rogkim	5	74	by Nancy/Jeff 04-08-2010 01:31 PM
? Suggestions for new IEP Teresa	2	29	by Teresa 03-14-2010 05:04 AM
? Child Protection Called from school social worker shellybelly	3	51	by Lisa F. 03-02-2010 07:39 PM
? Trying to keep an IEP when a kid looks too functional but really isnt Jeff/Nancy	5	66	by Jeff/Nancy 02-27-2010 02:51 PM
? EBD Classification vs. OHD - thoughts Gracie	3	52	by sue 02-03-2010 09:58 PM
? School - A poll Kari Fletcher	6	139	by Jeff/Nancy 01-21-2010 01:41 AM
? Ive been broken in... o2b3oagain	3	42	by Jeff/Nancy 01-10-2010 05:00 PM

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Outcomes

Outcomes

- Number of Users
- Participation Statistics
- Evaluation – How is it going?





Testimonials

Mother of 8

- Two biological children, six adopted
- Three of the adopted diagnosed with FASD, testing the other three



Mother from St. Peter, MN

- One biological son, one adopted son affected by FASD



The Long Road of FASD

- One mother reminds us the journey can last until adulthood and the support is always needed and welcome





Now What?

What can you do?

- Run a chat
- Blog
- Host a webinar



Contact Information:

MOFAS

www.mofas.org

Email:

emily@mofas.org

Phone: 651-917-2370

