



## Greene County Public Health

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# Press Release

For Immediate Release  
September 10, 2025

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### September is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Awareness Month

*Pregnancy and Alcohol Don't Mix.*

**XENIA, OH** – Greene County Public Health is reminding everyone that drinking alcohol during pregnancy can be very harmful to a baby. The U.S. Surgeon General says women who are pregnant or who may become pregnant should not drink alcohol at all.

Every year, about 40,000 babies in the U.S. are born with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs). Some studies show that as many as 1 in 20 children may have some form of FASD. A more serious type, called Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), affects between 800 and 8,000 babies each year.

#### Exposure

When a pregnant woman drinks, her baby is exposed to the same amount of alcohol. No type or amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy—not even beer or wine. FASDs are 100% preventable if a baby is never exposed to alcohol before birth.

#### Impact

FASDs can cause problems with a child's growth, learning, behavior, and overall health. Babies with FAS may have slow growth, brain and nervous system problems, and unique facial features. Drinking during pregnancy can also raise the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). These conditions can lead to lifelong challenges.

#### Prevention

The best way to prevent FASDs is simple: don't drink alcohol if you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant. Many women don't know they are pregnant for 4 to 6 weeks, and nearly half of pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned. If you find out you are pregnant, stop drinking right away. Every day without alcohol makes a difference.

If you need help stopping, talk to your doctor, reach out to an addiction specialist, or contact Alcoholics Anonymous.

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Greene County Public Health encourages families, teachers, healthcare providers, and community members to spread the word: women who are pregnant or might be pregnant should avoid alcohol to protect their baby's health.

For more information on FASDs, visit [www.cdc.gov/fasd](http://www.cdc.gov/fasd). To learn more about Greene County Public Health and its services, visit [www.greenecophoh.gov](http://www.greenecophoh.gov) or call 937-374-5600.

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