

[\(Sept. 7, 2011\) Gov. Kasich Declares September 2011 FASD Prevention and Awareness Month in Ohio](#)

**Gov. Kasich Declares September 2011 FASD Prevention and Awareness Month in Ohio**  
*First Lady of Ohio Leads FASD Awareness Month Event in Columbus*

**(Sept. 7, 2011 – Columbus, OH)** – Recognizing the irreversible, life-long effects caused by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and the high cost associated with these conditions, Gov. John R. Kasich today declared September 2011 as *FASD Prevention and Awareness Month* in Ohio. First Lady of Ohio Karen Kasich presented the Governor’s Resolution during a noon kick-off event at the Ohio Statehouse.

“Ohio’s children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. As mothers, it’s our responsibility to do our best to provide our children a healthy start to the rest of their lives—and this includes abstaining from alcohol during the precious nine months of pregnancy,” said Mrs. Kasich.

FASD is an umbrella term used to describe the physical, behavioral and mental effects that can result from prenatal exposure to alcohol. FASD, which is 100 percent preventable, causes irreversible damage and has lifelong implications. Spending related to the care of a person affected by FASD costs Ohio more than \$300 million every year.

“FASD is the leading cause of preventable birth defects. Increasing awareness about FASD is critical to the health and well-being of future generations,” said Orman Hall, director of the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, which serves as one of the lead agencies for Ohio’s FASD Initiative. “We need the public to understand that no amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy – not a single drop,” he added, referencing the slogan adopted by Ohio’s Statewide FASD Steering Committee.

The Ohio FASD Steering Committee was founded in 2004 to increase awareness about the dangers of consuming alcohol while pregnant, help reduce the number of alcohol-exposed pregnancies, and expand the availability of service for individuals already affected by FASD. Mrs. Kasich also accepted an award from the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) on behalf of Gov. Kasich. Tom Donaldson, NOFAS president, said his organization wanted to acknowledge the Governor’s service to children and families as a member of the NOFAS National Advisory Board.

Other highlights from today’s event included the presentation of *Advocate of the Year* awards to two Ohioans who have dedicated themselves to helping increase awareness and educating others about the detrimental effects caused by FASD. Kathleen M. Bevaque of Lorain County and Lynette Blasiman of Stark County were recognized as the FASD professional Advocate of the Year and FASD Family Advocate of the Year, respectively. Bevaque is an early intervention specialist with the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Blasiman, a mother of seven – including an adopted son who has FASD – has served on the Ohio FASD Steering Committee since its founding.

The Steering Committee is comprised of the following state agencies: ODADAS, DODD, ODE, ODH, the Ohio Departments of Aging, Job and Family Services, Mental Health, Rehabilitation and Correction and Youth Services; as well as OCALI, county Family and Children First Councils, local providers, and parents and caregivers of children affected by FASD.

For more information about Ohio’s FASD Initiative, visit [www.notasingledrop.org](http://www.notasingledrop.org).

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