



AAP Headquarters

345 Park Blvd
Itasca, IL 60143
Phone: 630/626-6000
Fax: 847/434-8000
www.aap.org

Reply to

AAP Washington Office

601 13th St NW, Suite 400N
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202/347-8600
E-mail: kids1st@aap.org

Executive Committee

President

Sandy L. Chung, MD, FAAP

President-Elect

Benjamin D. Hoffman, MD, FAAP

Immediate Past President

Moira A. Szilagyi, MD, FAAP

Secretary/Treasurer

Dennis M. Cooley, MD, FAAP

CEO/Executive Vice President

Mark Del Monte, JD

Board of Directors

District I

Patricia Flanagan, MD, FAAP

District II

Warren M. Seigel, MD, FAAP

District III

Margaret C. Fisher, MD, FAAP

District IV

Michelle D. Fiscus, MD, FAAP

District V

Jeannette "Lia" Gaggino, MD, FAAP

District VI

Dennis M. Cooley, MD, FAAP

District VII

Gary W. Floyd, MD, FAAP

District VIII

Martha C. Middlemist, MD, FAAP

District IX

Yasuko Fukuda, MD, FAAP

District X

Madeline M. Joseph, MD, FAAP

At Large

Charles G. Macias, MD, FAAP

At Large

Constance S. Houck, MD, FAAP

At Large

Joelle N. Simpson, MD, FAAP

October 31, 2023

The Honorable Angus King
U.S. Senate
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
U.S. Senate
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Don Bacon
U.S. House of Representatives
2104 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senate
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
U.S. Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Betty McCollum
U.S. House of Representatives
2426 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senators King, Klobuchar, Moran, Murkowski, and Representatives Bacon and McCollum:

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of 67,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical sub-specialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I am writing to thank you for your efforts to prevent children from being harmed from prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE), reduce the number of children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and support those who have experienced PAE or FASD and their families and caregivers.

As pediatricians, we too often see the harm caused by PAE in our patients. PAE is a significant public health problem, and it is particularly harmful to the developing brain and is the most common cause of developmental disabilities in the United States. Recent research shows that up to 1 in 20 first graders in the United States is affected by FASD.¹ Although each person has their own unique combination of signs and symptoms, people with FASD usually have a mix of physical, emotional, behavioral, and learning issues that range from mild to severe. Unfortunately, due to a severe shortage of mental and behavioral health providers, including developmental behavioral pediatricians, as well as many primary care clinicians having a limited knowledge of diagnostic criteria and clinical guidelines, many children with FASD are undiagnosed or misdiagnosed and are not receiving appropriate services and supports that can improve their lives.

As such, the AAP is grateful for your efforts to address the harm caused by PAE through the *Advancing FASD Research, Services and Prevention Act* (FASD Respect Act) (S.1800/H.R. 3946). In particular, we are supportive of the proposed policies that would reauthorize and enhance programs that support FASD prevention, FASD screening and identification, and FASD-informed services provided by federal, state, local, tribal, and private stakeholders. The AAP also supports provisions to establish new FASD Centers for Excellence, and to provide funding to the Department of Health and Human Services for FASD education awareness and training. All these provisions would move the needle in understanding, screening for, and preventing FASD.

The AAP again thanks you for leading congressional efforts to prevent prenatal alcohol exposure, reduce the number of people affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and ensure access to needed supports and services for those who have FASD. The AAP appreciates all you do for our nation's children, and we look forward to working with you on these issues as Congress continues to consider this proposal and other opportunities to improve the health and well-being of all infants, children, adolescents and young adults. If the AAP can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Zach Laris in our Washington, D.C. office at 202/347-8600 or zlaris@aap.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sandy L. Chung'.

Sandy L. Chung, MD, FAAP
President

SC/zml

¹ See <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/tin20.html>.