

McGee, Lucy

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**From:** Neroli Endacott [neroli@bigpond.net.au]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 6 February 2008 1:00 AM  
**To:** standards management  
**Subject:** "Application A576 - Labelling of Alcoholic Beverages with a Pregnancy Health Advisory Label"  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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## To Whom It May Concern

### **"Application A576 - Labelling of Alcoholic Beverages with a Pregnancy Health Advisory Label"**

I wish to endorse the submission made by ALAC to place warning labels regarding the dangers of drinking when pregnant on alcohol containers.

It is reprehensible that a widely available and highly promoted toxic substance currently does not carry health warnings. There is a strong moral and ethical obligation to inform the public about the health risks of alcohol that transcends and outweighs any commercial imperatives or perceived value about the effectiveness of doing so.

I am the carer for two teenagers, both diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Effects. (I also support and assist their mother who is FASD effected and the Father who is alcohol dependent.)

The young people had been seen by Doctors, Paediatricians, psychologists, psychiatrists, speech therapists and counsellors since birth.

***At pre-school age the parents were told to medicate the children ... nothing helped!***

Both were diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), ADD, , Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), ODD, Autism, Tourettes, Difficulties with Impulse Control (disinhibition), various Learning Disabilities and other ailments.

***At aged 12 and 14 both young people were admitted to the local hospital's psychiatric ward as they were out of control.***

**No professionals ever asked the question did mother drink alcohol while pregnant.**

In fact their mother was alcohol dependent and continued to drink heavily through both pregnancies.

Mother was not aware of any risk factor.

At the time of writing, Mother is now 12 months alcohol free after 22 years of dependency and she herself is FASD effected.

It has been confirmed the maternal grandmother was alcohol dependent and other siblings are also FASD effected.

***After 20 years caring for over 100 disabled, disadvantaged and in need children, coping with and raising teenagers FASD effected has been and is my biggest challenge. FASD is a debilitating disorder which is unspoken about because of the stigma of mums drinking alcohol.***

Raising awareness is imperative to eradicate FASD - no blame no shame for mothers - we need diagnostic clinics, support and services for families to survive.

***Carers and parents of FASD effected children need to have understanding from professionals and educators.***

Dealing with FASD children is NOT A WALK IN THE PARK it is hard yakka and I challenge anyone who doubts my words to care for two teenagers for a week and then tell me they are just 'normal' teenagers!

***Children with FASD have irreversible brain damage.  
There is NO CURE!***

They do NOT understand consequences or cause and effect.

As carers our energy goes towards keeping our children safe and preventing behaviours rather than cure or consequences.

We deal daily with impulsive and un-inhibited behaviours.  
Passive one minute volatile temper tantrums the next.

FASD children usually want to please but often do not understand what is expected of them and need clear simple directives.

***My frustrations are trying to educate others on how to cope with our damaged children.***

***The children's frustrations are not being able to live up to the unrealistic expectations of others.***

Australian health authorities need to recognise, effectively treat, supply specialised services, support and also identify what FASD sufferers are costing the government.

I am optimistic that placing warning labels regarding the dangers of drinking when pregnant on alcohol containers will be a great foundation to address and correct the past totally unsatisfactory position regarding the harms associated with prenatal exposure to alcohol.

**Drinking when pregnant is like playing Russian Roulette with an unborn babies life.**

My proposal is: say NO to alcohol when considering becoming pregnant or think you are.

**I am happy to supply further information re living with and dealing with FASD effected children and adults, if required.**

Thank you for allowing me to present a few of the difficulties I experience on a daily basis keeping teenagers and mother from placing themselves in an at risk situation.

Yours faithfully

Kind Regards

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**Carer**

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