

FASD and Practice: Issues for Corrections Officers

Presenter: Bob Steeves and Grace Froese

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The FASD Learning Series is part of the Alberta government's commitment to programs and services for people affected by FASD and those who support them.

Bob's Bio

For 25 years I had been a front line worker in the Corrections field.

My experience included working with maximum security and high-risk offenders, Mentally Disordered Offenders as well as Medium and Community based Corrections.

Bob's Bio

For over ten years, I presented on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder to various audiences including Corrections workers, Parole Boards, Parent and Community groups, Pre-Adoptive Panels, Conferences and First Nations Communities.

Bob's Bio

My wife June and I have been married for 40 years and have raised two adopted children.

My son has FASD

Bob's Story

Bob's Story

- Mark Steeves, who as a youth, had a lengthy history with the law, including two conditional sentences
- For a few years has held down a nearly full-time job as a cook
- Although his adoptive father, Bob, had worked in correctional services for 25 years, he had no idea his son suffered from FASD until Mark was held in custody

Bob's Story

- An RCMP constable who had arrested Mark spotted the behavioural symptoms and brought his suspicions to his parents
- Suddenly Mr. Steeves understood his son's constellation of symptoms including hyperactivity, impulsivity, and inability to learn from consequences. At the same time, and for the first time, he understood many of the prisoners he had worked with over the years. That's when he was finally able to help his son

Bob's Story

- "Mark didn't change, we changed," Mr. Steeves states. "Initially when Mark had started getting into trouble we had applied tough love. When he wouldn't keep curfew we put a sleeping bag in the shed for him. That happened twice, then he disappeared. The crimes got worse and we got tougher."

Bob's Story

- Once Mark was diagnosed with FASD, the Steeves implemented structure: "Either my wife or I was always with him. We reminded him to take his medication and to eat. His eating habits can be erratic."

Bob's Story

- “We give him simple, clear instructions and we also reduce change. Usually if something goes wrong we often find we dropped the ball. It's taken a bit of the stress out of it and been a great relief.”

Bob's Story

- “We realized we were not bad parents. But we've also had to grieve as we comprehend that our hopes and aspirations for him won't materialize. His brain is damaged.”

Reference

- Contact Information

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www.fasd-cmc.alberta.ca**

Thank You!
