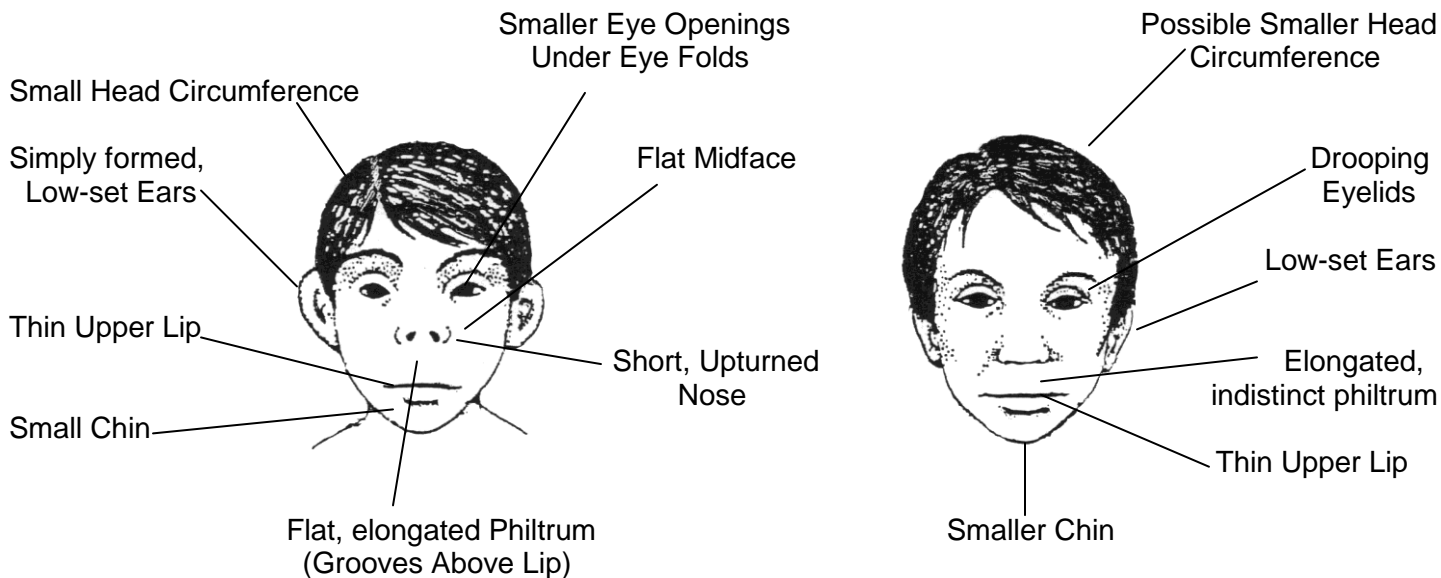


FASD – FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome / Alcohol-related Birth Defects**



FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

ALCOHOL-RELATED BIRTH DEFECTS (ARBD)

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol-Related Birth Defects (ARBD) now comes under the umbrella of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum. They are characterized by a cluster of congenital birth defects that includes:

- Prenatal and postnatal growth deficiency, meaning low weight at birth and a failure to catch up throughout the entire developmental period
- A particular pattern of facial malformations, including a small head circumference, misshapen eyes, flattened midface, sunken nasal bridge, and a flattened and elongated philtrum (the groove between the nose and upper lip)
- Central nervous system dysfunction, which can include mental retardation, alcohol withdrawal symptoms at birth, a poor sucking response and sleep disturbances during early infancy, restlessness and irritability, developmental delays, a short attention span, and hyperactivity
- Varying degrees of malformations in the body's major organs, including muscle problems, joint and skeletal defects, genial defects, and kidney abnormalities

For every child identified with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum, as many as 10 children may be affected by alcohol during pregnancy but lack the full set of characteristics. These less-than full birth defect characteristics are called alcohol-related birth defects (ARBD). There is another term, Alcohol-related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND). Almost all alcohol-related birth defects, including most of the defects associated with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum, are irreversible. They can all be prevented if women refrain from drinking during pregnancy.

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