

**From:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**To:** [Cecelia Hartley](#)  
**Subject:** FW: TOPDD  
**Date:** Monday, October 20, 2014 1:58:24 PM

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**From:** Jon Meyer  
**Sent:** Monday, October 20, 2014 12:23 PM  
**To:** Sunset Advisory Commission  
**Subject:** TOPDD

Dear Members of the Sunset Commission,

Please consider the statements below regarding the continued existence of the Texas Office for the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities (TOPDD).

Thank you,

Jon Meyer  
Co-Chair  
Surveillance and Epidemiology Work Group  
FASD Collaborative

I am a practicing Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrician. I have been in practice since 1998. Since I have started this practice the number of children referred for evaluation for developmental, behavioral or psychiatric problems has increased dramatically. I originally saw 11 patients per day. I now see 60 patients per day with a waiting list of 6-8 weeks. I only see children from Texas mostly West Texas. The common thread I have found in the dramatic increase in number is the exposure during pregnancy to drugs and alcohol. The number of children in foster care, adoption and living with relatives has increased dramatically. In a typical day over 50% of the children I see do not live with their biological parents. This is a very sad situation as this is completely preventable. I am trained to manage these children but the real treatment is prevention of prenatal drug and alcohol exposure. These children are extremely difficult to educate and the reality is 90% enter the legal system by the age of 18-20 years of age. At that point the State of Texas is now bearing the burden financially for this epidemic of substance use prenatally. It is crucial that the STATE of TEXAS take a firm stance on alcohol and drug use during pregnancy. This will improve Texas finances in the long run. I have no idea how to calculate the amount of money spent in the medical care, educational care and then the legal care for these children. But it is a very large figure. These children grow up into adults who cannot care for themselves and they are at high risk of perpetuating this cycle. They are impulsive and so when they are offered drugs or alcohol they do not say no and they fully believe they can operate a motor vehicle safely endangering other Texans. I hope that you will understand the importance of the TOPDD and developing educational programs to help prevent substance use during pregnancy. Thank you for your time.  
Dr. Karen Rogers

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I am a licensed Master Social Worker and have been practicing since 1981. I currently conduct research along the Texas/Mexico border, in particular I have been working with pregnant women and their young children in Webb County, Texas *colonias* since 2003. Our experience of alcohol consumption by this population is that the frequency is higher than that of the majority population. This is confirmed by the literature, though there is a great gap in research regarding alcohol consumption by populations along the US/Mexico border. For example, Tenkku, Morris, Salas, and Xaverius (2009) found that Hispanic women, among other ethnic groups as well, were significantly less likely than White women to reduce their heavy drinking after becoming pregnant. Last year, approximately 10% of pregnant women we served were screened and found to be consuming alcohol. These indicators show an important need exists regarding women of childbearing age who live along the US/Mexico border. This, coupled with the medically underserved label for this area, shows a great need for the Texas Office for the Prevention of Developmentally Disabilities and in particular the work from this office as it addresses Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). I am a member of the FASD Collaborative and have witnessed the important and needed work accomplished by this group. Please consider the great need for this office and keep funding available for the important it is doing.

Please feel free to contact me for additional information I may provide you as you make life changing decisions regarding the TOPDD.

Thank you,

Jon Meyer, PhD. LMSW