

## **Secondary Target Audience Profile and Rationale for Selection\***

***Primary Target Audience:* Pregnant women who are at risk of having babies born with fetal alcohol syndrome or alcohol-related birth defects**

Although the primary target audience is not profiled in this document, characteristics include:

- Ages 18-25 (Pregnant teens are not targeted by this program, nor are women in older child-bearing age ranges because they tend to be at lower risk.)
- Approximately half of all pregnancies in the US are unintended (not necessarily unwanted, however) which means that target audience members fall into two categories: those who planned and may be more prepared for a pregnancy, and those who may be less prepared.
- Geographically, risk tends to be higher in Northern regions.

Women of lower socioeconomic status will be targeted because partnerships with clinics that provide reduced-fee or free services provide this program with ready contact with those women.

***Secondary Target Audience:* Personal acquaintances to whom expectant mothers in the at-risk group may turn for advice**

This group is defined as the women's peers and includes friends and relatives who have recently had babies themselves. This secondary audience was selected because the group has considerable contact with the primary target audience, has many potential opportunities to discuss pregnancy-related issues including drinking alcohol, is highly motivated, and can be effectively reached by the program.

Although mothers and husbands/partners of women who are expecting are also important and promising secondary audiences, they were not selected for

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**\*Information contained in this profile is completely fictional and intended for illustrative purposes only. This content should not be cited elsewhere or construed as fact.**

this program. This decision was made because contact can easily be made with women who have babies or small children when they bring the children to health care facilities for check ups or immunizations. Most program resources will be spent targeting the primary audience, with the secondary audience being asked to help whenever the opportunity arises in health care settings.

The secondary audience includes women who are nondrinkers or who were quick to modify their drinking behavior during pregnancy based on their knowledge of the dangers. In addition, this group may also include women who drank during pregnancy, experienced no ill effects, and are therefore not especially motivated to try to persuade others not to drink. Because this communication plan relies heavily on the motivation of the secondary audience to help, women who fall into the latter category will not be pursued as a secondary audience.

This secondary target audience enables this program to work toward two of its five program goals. These goals include:

- To encourage women of childbearing age to avoid alcohol and unnecessary drugs during pregnancy.
- To increase the awareness of the general public about the hazards associated with alcohol during pregnancy.

Selecting peers as a secondary audience can have benefits other than educating pregnant women themselves. Peers can support women in their decision not to drink or otherwise encourage them in social situations where alcohol is offered. The literature shows that this is an important role that must be filled in order to facilitate nondrinking by pregnant women.

### **Credibility**

Women in the secondary audience are likely credible to the primary audience on a number of issues related to pregnancy because of their experience. However, these women need some education in order to be able to speak very specifically about the types of risks that alcohol poses and why. In other words, they need to be equipped with some basic knowledge if women in the primary target audience press them to explain beyond the fact that “alcohol is bad for the baby.”

The portion of the secondary audience that has direct experience with the negative consequences of drinking while pregnant will likely be the most credible. This portion will not be singled out or treated any differently than other members of the secondary target audience. These women may be dealing with feelings of guilt and the complications of raising a child with developmental difficulties. Also, given these circumstances, it is difficult to ascertain this subgroup’s level of motivation. It may be particularly high or particularly low.

The secondary audience is likely to be approached for advice by the target audience and fall into the helper/educator role naturally. A careful approach is needed to help make the helper role more appealing for the secondary target audience who is likely to have concerns about being asked to judge or instruct others. In order to be effective and maintain their friendships and credibility, women in the secondary audience will need to be taught messages that do not put the primary audience on the defensive. Moreover, as one former Executive Director of the National Women’s Congress on Alcohol and Drug Problems, California Women’s Commission on Alcoholism put it, “We wanted to present the facts with concern for the dignity of women. Our philosophy is that women have the right to know and make their own choices. Guilt is not an appropriate part of the message.”

## **Motivation/Willingness to Help**

This secondary audience is believed to be a highly motivated group, in general. A few exceptions have been identified above, including women who did engage in unhealthy activities while pregnant.

## **Knowledge/Attitudes/Beliefs on FAS and Related Issues**

Information gathered from various secondary sources reveals that women who fall into the secondary audience category have the following knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs relevant to their intended role in this program.

Of women surveyed who had had a baby within the last year:

- 88% percent agreed that not drinking alcohol during pregnancy was “very important” for having a healthy baby
- 49.5% of women who were regular drinkers prior to pregnancy agreed that not drinking alcohol during pregnancy was “easy to do,” 32% disagreed, and 18.5% were neutral or not sure
- 52% indicated that they felt supported by others with whom they socialize in their decision not to drink during pregnancy
- 86% agreed that they would feel at least “some discomfort” in trying to influence another woman’s decisions about drugs and alcohol during her pregnancy, however 84% agreed strongly that they would feel comfortable discussing the issue if the other woman raised it

### **Settings in Which Secondary Target Audience has Contact with Primary Target Audience**

Communication and advice-seeking and –dispensing are very common among pregnant women and their peers. Contacts between the primary and secondary audience will tend to be social in nature (e.g., gatherings of friends, neighborly conversations, and family gatherings). Some of these occasions will include alcoholic beverages, offering good opportunities to reinforce pregnant women who do not drink and talk about the issue with those who do.

Secondary audience members report feeling flattered to be asked for advice by other women. They are eager to share their own experiences and could be encouraged to bring up the subject of alcohol consumption in the context of these conversations.

### **Settings in Which the Program has Contact with Secondary Target Audience**

Women who have recently had babies can be contacted by clinicians during their baby’s regular office visits. It is best to enlist their support during well-baby visits, when the stresses and concerns for their own child’s health are lower than when they bring a sick child to the doctor. Clinicians will need training and materials for taking advantage of these contact points with the secondary audience.

Other potential contact settings include settings such as grocery stores, fast food stores, churches, beauty salons, shopping malls, local swimming pools and parks, or franchised baby play groups like Gymboree®. The workplace is not considered a promising setting because the secondary audience's workplaces are likely widely varied and baby-health programs may seem confusingly out of context at work for the secondary target audience. Moreover, many of the women in the secondary audience will be away from work on maternity leave, will be planning not to work outside the home while they have young children, or will be working only part time.

## **Other Behaviors, Lifestyle Issues, Characteristics Related to Secondary Audience**

Television viewing patterns include some morning television news or cartoon programming and daytime talk shows and soap operas. Print media use includes targeted women's magazines such as *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal* and some tabloid magazines. In addition, the Sunday newspaper inserts have high readership among this group.

Leisure activities are generally family-oriented (e.g., cookouts at parents' homes) and do not involve much long-distance travel. Like others within the targeted socioeconomic status range, these women tend to have considerable domestic responsibilities including child care, meal preparation, and running family errands such as trips to pharmacies and grocery stores.