

Ione recalls attending the Prairie Northern Conference on FASD in Whitehorse in 2002, not long after she was appointed to the Senate. At that meeting, she asked if they would like her to take on FASD as a national issue, and they happily accepted. Ione was no stranger to FASD, as she had served as both a Juvenile Court Judge and a Justice of the Peace in the early 1970s, where she often encountered people with FASD. Ione also served as the Executive Director of the Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre in the 1990s. Ione spent the last four years of her Senate appointment educating and raising awareness about FASD and lobbying for funding and policy supports. Ione quickly came to understand the lifelong impacts of prenatal drinking on the developing brain, the need for prevention supports, as well as the need for ongoing supports for people living with FASD. After Ione retired from the Senate in 2006, she continued this commitment by joining the Board of FASSY. Ione served on the Board for many years, as a director and as the Chair. She also stepped into the role of Acting Executive Director on two different occasions. Ione was a strong and effective Chair, and during this time she continued to be a strong advocate for FASD at both the territorial and national levels.

Ione firmly believes that FASSY makes a big difference in the lives of people with FASD through its outreach work and daily supports. She knows that each person with FASD is unique, with diverse strengths and needs, and is proud that FASSY continues to meet each person where they are in determining how best to provide supports. Ione sees the difference research has made at both the policy and practical levels and encourages further research into all aspects of FASD – prevention, supports, funding, and policies. Ione highlights the need for more evaluation to determine the effectiveness of all the programming delivered.

Ione states that FASSY could never be where it is today, with all the great work it has done, if it were not for the dedication and hard work of the staff who are there each day. You make the difference - THANK YOU.