Melissa Clark - Founder and CEO of Lissie's Luv Yums

I was born in Havre, MT on Nov. 5, 1976 and I am one of the first diagnosed children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) here in Montana. My Assiniboine given name is Eya Be Washday Weya (Good Words Woman). I am a Gros Ventre (pronounced Grow Vont) Assiniboine Native American from Ft. Belknap Reservation and now live in Great Falls, MT. I graduated from CMR High School in 1996 and Secondary Life Skills in 1998. I am now the proud owner of Lissie's Luv Yums, a gourmet dog biscuit business. I am a member of the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities and have been Vice-Chair for two terms. I am also an Associate member of the Sisters of Humility of Davenport, IA.

My support person and foster mom is Sister Johnelle Howanach who is a Sister of Humility of Davenport, IA. She is my job support specialist for my business and assists me in my daily living.

My mission is to educate others about FAS and give hope to others.

We have also created a website to help educate the world about FAS and to let people know that there is hope and a helping hand for others.

God Bless,

Melissa Clark

Dog Biscuits 12oz

We make our biscuits with wheat-berries and flour from Wheat Montana in Three Forks, MT. Our 12 oz packages are a combination of large and small biscuits, or all small biscuits.

$8.00

"Fun to Fix" Dog Biscuit Mix 16oz

These fun "Bake Your Own" packages are filled with healthy "puppylicious" ingredients. Each package includes a bone cookie cutter and baking directions. A great gift idea and fun for the whole family.

$7.50

Poochie Snack Pack

Our Poochie Snack Pack is great for when you take your best pal along on outings! It's a vacuum sealed pack of 9 small biscuits.

Only $4.00

Lissie's Luv Yums Order Blank

Item		Quantity	Cost
12 oz Biscuits	$8.00		
"Fun to Fix" Dog Biscuit Mix	$7.50		
Poochie Snack Pack	$4.00		
Shipping and Handling*			
Total			

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Make checks payable to: Lissie's Luv Yums
2917 8th Ave N
Great Falls, MT 59401

**Shipping costs determined by Zip Code and Weight of shipment*

Lissie's Luv Yumns

Lissie, Johnelle, And Tiger

2917 8th Ave. North
Great Falls, MT 59401
406-453-2531
www.lissiesluvyums.com
luvyums@juno.com

MADE IN MONTANA

Lissie's Luv Yums Fights FAS

Our Story..... Lissie was finishing her second year at Secondary Life Skills, a class that helps students develop skills to become as independent as possible. She had blossomed; learning and acquiring skills that hadn't seemed attainable for children with FAS when she started school 16 years earlier. Melissa was now at that magical level where she was interested in exploring new horizons and growing into a contributing member of society. Sister Johnelle began looking around the area to see what businesses might be of interest for Lissie. Only two possibilities seemed worth exploring; a daycare center for children with developmental disabilities or anything to do with pets, especially dogs.

One day Sister Johnelle phoned their dear friend, Marilyn Kind who advocates for people with alcohol related birth defects. Providentially, she was thinking of starting a dog walking business at the very same time! Marilyn, Melissa & Sister Johnelle decided to establish a business partnership. After three months of intense planning they began Wacheeista's Walk A Dog Service.

At Christmas they decided to give their canine customers homemade doggie treats specially wrapped and decorated. They made extra and easily sold them to their dog loving friends.

Their idea was met with an unexpected success! As a result, they talked seriously about getting into the gourmet dog biscuit business.

Through Ellen Condon and Roger Shelley at the Montana Rural Institute on Disabilities, they were told about monies available from the Montana Jobs Training Partnership Act. This project is a result of President Clinton's initiative to equalize the employment rates of people with disabilities as compared to people without disabilities.

They succeeded in getting a grant making Lissie the sole proprietor of her newest venture. She now had money to invest in Lissie's Luv Yums, her gourmet dog treats made from Montana's golden wheat.

In October of that year they hired KFBB to make the best commercial ever. Each year they air the commercial between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Not only is this a gift reminder for your favorite pooch, but an opportunity to spread Lissie's message that pregnant women must not drink.

This business is quite unique in that the monies earned support efforts to educate people about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effect and provide employment for people with disabilities. Lissie lives with the daily challenges of FAS and expertly shares her story with others by giving presentations to students and the community at large.

Lissie has been asked to speak at Self-Employment Development Conferences in seven states. She has made a web cast on Self-Employment Development at the Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA. She has addressed many FAS Conferences nationwide including; Lissie's Circle of Life at the Humility of Mary Center in Davenport, Iowa in 2003, the Medical Center at the University of Nebraska in Omaha in 2004, the Indian Health Services National Behavioral Health Conference in San Diego, CA in 2006.

On January 25, 2007 she received a Montana Advocacy Award in Helena, MT for her work in helping others gain self-employment.

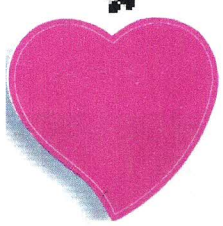
In December 2007 Lissie spoke at the Illinois Statewide Transition Conference in Effingham, IL about "How Lissie's Luv Yums Came To Be".

Lissie is included in the 2007/2008 Cambridge Who's Who Among Executive and Professional Women "Honors Edition" section of the Registry.

Lissie's Luv Yums Business is at a very exciting place in development. One of our goals is to provide employment for people with disabilities. To that end we entered into an informal agreement with Wendy Olind, daughter of George and Barbara Olind of Baker, MT to produce "Lissie's Luv Yums by Wendy." She has been producing Lissie's Luv Yums since November of 2004. The Olind's have developed markets in Maryland; Albuquerque, NM; Boise, ID; Billings; Miles City as well as Baker, MT.

Lissie's Luv Yums Center in the basement is nearer completion. This will consolidate supplies, baking, packaging and shipping all in one location. The Convection Oven, in the newly developed Commercial Kitchen, will greatly decrease baking time.

With your help and support they hope to continue to expand and attract new customers to build a strong foundation for the business. They hope to achieve the dream of being able to hire others with disabilities to work along with them baking and packaging their wonderful gourmet dog biscuits.



Stop Fetal Alcohol Syndrome!
Please don't drink
while you are pregnant!

TIMELINES AND FAS/FAE

People with FAS/FAE may present a complex portrait of competencies and delays. It is not uncommon to encounter a mix of abilities and lags in any one person. The profile of maturation and strengths varies significantly between people with FAS/FAE. This chart is intended to provide a visual cue for gaps which may be masked by abilities (i.e., emotional immaturity may be hidden by strong expressive language skills.)

It is when the expectation that a person is "on time" when they are actually developmentally much younger that conflict develops. "Why don't you act your age!" and "Grow up" are common comments which reflect frustration where immaturity has not been recognized as part of a normal variability in development. One parent said her feeling about her child changed after she was reminded to "Think younger."

Actual age of individual: 18

Skill	Developmental age equivalent
Expressive Language	20
Comprehension	6
Money, time concepts	8
Emotional maturity	6
Physical maturity	18
Reading ability	16
Social skills	7
Living skills	11

0 5 10 15 20 25

Chronological age ==========>

A gradual catch up is noted in young adults with FAS/FAE. Rather than being able to leave home at 18, a more realistic timeline may be 25 to 30. Ask yourself what responsibilities would be reasonablet o expect from a 10 year old when confronted by a tall, verbal 16 year old with FAS/FAE. Adjust expectations accordingly.

Adapted from: Research findings of Streissguth, Clarren et al.
Diane Malbin 1994

Return to FAS Home Page

Melissa Clark Founder and CEO of LISSIE'S LUV YUMS

I was born in Havre, MT November 5, 1976 and am one of the first diagnosed children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in the state of Montana. My Assiniboine given name is Eya Be Washday Weya (Good Words Woman). I am a Gros Ventre /Assiniboine Native American from Fort Belknap Reservation and now live in Great Falls. I graduated from CMR High School in 1996 and Secondary Life Skills in 1998, and am now the proud owner of Lissie's Luv Yums, a gourmet dog biscuit business. I am a board member, re-elected Vice Chairman, on the Montana Council on Disabilities in Helena and an Associate member of the Sisters of Humility Davenport, Iowa. I am a nationally recognized speaker on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effect and Self Employment for people with disabilities. I spoke at the Medical Center at the University of Nebraska and the Native American Mental Health Conference here in Great Falls. I spoke at the Indian Health Services/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Behavioral Health Conference in San Diego, CA (June 2006). In April 2007 my mother and I made a webcast at Virginia Commonwealth University on development of self-employment with parental support. In May 20007 I spoke at the TATRA National Conference in Arlington, VA.

My mission is to educate people about Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, give hope to them and show other people with disabilities that they too can develop their own business. Together, with my support person, I share methods and techniques that help me live in my environment and succeed as a person and business owner.

On January 25, 2007 I received a Montana Advocacy Award in Helena for my work in helping others with disabilities gain self employment.

"In understanding how to meet the needs of individuals with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, it is first necessary to describe the behavioral characteristics.." Institute of Medicine, Report to Congress 1996

What are FASDs?

Prenatal exposure to alcohol can cause a range of disorders, known as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs). One of the most severe effects of drinking during pregnancy is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), a permanent condition characterized by abnormal facial features, growth deficiencies, and central nervous system problems. People with FAS might have problems with learning, memory, attention span, communication, vision and/or hearing. These problems often lead to difficulties in school and problems getting along with others.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur as a result of prenatal exposure to alcohol. These include physical, mental, behavioral and/or learning disabilities. FASDs include FAS as well as other conditions in which individuals have some, but not all, of the clinical signs of FAS. Three terms often used are: Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAE), Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND) and Alcohol-Related Birth Defects (ARBD).

Children with FASDs might be small in relation to peers; have facial abnormalities such as small eye openings; poor coordination; hyperactivity; learning disabilities; developmental disabilities (e.g., speech and language delays); low IQ; problems with daily living; poor reasoning and judgment; and sleep and sucking disturbances in infancy.

Children with FASDs are at risk for psychiatric problems, criminal behavior, unemployment and incomplete education. These secondary conditions can be serious, but certain protective factors that have been found that can mitigate the effects. For example, a child diagnosed early can be placed in appropriate educational classes and given access to child- and family-centered social services. Those who receive special education are more likely to achieve their developmental and educational potential. Loving, nurturing and stable homes can reduce the chances of disruption, transient lifestyles and harmful relationships. Children living in abusive or unstable homes or who become involved in youth violence are much more likely to develop secondary conditions.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fas/fasask.htm