Minister for Education, Peter Chandler, today announced the development of programs that will educate students about the problems of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and support affected children.

“While there are already significant resources in schools to assist with education about alcohol these programs will focus on the disorder.

“New educational programs will address the consumption of alcohol in pregnancy as a way to prevent further cases.

“The Department of Education and Children’s Services will work with non-government organisations to deliver programs to middle and senior school students on the consequences of drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

“An educational psychologist will be employed to work with schools on programs to support children affected by the disorder,” Mr Chandler said during a visit to Centralian Senior College in Alice Springs.

“The Government is taking a broad approach to addressing the effects of alcohol, which includes this week’s announcement of mandatory rehabilitation for problem drunks and education in schools.

“The Country Liberals understands we need to address the cause of alcoholism and support prevention efforts.”

Member for Stuart, Bess Price, who also visited Centralian Senior College, said Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, which has lifelong complications for children, is preventable by avoiding the consumption of alcohol during pregnancy.

“There are a range of effects on children whose mothers drink alcohol during pregnancy. “These include physical, mental, behavioural and learning disabilities.

“School programs are unable to reverse these problems but can do a lot to support children in their social and learning development.”

The Northern Territory Government and the Commonwealth Government funding for the programs would total $600,000, Mr Chandler said.

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