

Looking for the INDICATORS OF FASD Across the Lifespan

From Birth to Adulthood: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) • Hodgson, H. & Hamilton, O. • May 2020

OBSERVATIONS	
EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING	FOCUS & ATTENTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trouble with planning, sequencing, problem solving, organisation ● Impulsivity ● Challenges with transitions and change ● Repeats mistakes and difficulty understanding consequences ● Difficulty with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » controlling emotions » abstract ideas/concepts » managing time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Easily distracted, over-stimulated or impulsive ● Difficulty paying attention and over active ● Can't sit still
SENSORY & MOTOR	COGNITION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unable to make sense of what is going on around them ● Under or over react to sensory input e.g. light, noise, touch, smell, taste and movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficulty with attention, learning, memory, planning and organisation ● Difficulty with understanding complex ideas ● Wide range of IQ possible
ACADEMIC SKILLS	COMMUNICATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficulty with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » school e.g. maths, reading, time and money » comprehension, organisation and abstract concepts » age appropriate tasks ● May have normal IQ ● Learning is enhanced with visual or hands on approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May speak well but not understand the full meaning ● Delayed language milestones for age ● Difficulty with long conversations ● Difficulty following instructions ● May be able to repeat instructions but not able to follow through
LIVING & SOCIAL SKILLS	MEMORY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May not understand personal boundaries and reading social cues ● Socially vulnerable and easily taken advantage of ● Difficulty seeing things from another's point of view ● Socially and emotionally immature e.g. behaves younger than actual age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficulty with long and short term memory e.g. seems forgetful ● Difficulty recalling sequences or complex instructions ● Better visual memory ● Steps in normal daily routine are easily forgotten ● Appear to lie but are really 'filling in the blanks'
BRAIN STRUCTURE	AFFECT REGULATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brain and head circumference may be small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotional swings from sad to happy ● Anxiety, depression, panic attacks ● Separation anxiety or attachment disorders ● Inappropriate sexual behaviours




0-5 YEARS

OBSERVERS

- Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Friends, Foster Families
- Midwife, Paediatricians, General Practitioners
- Substance Use in Pregnancy and Parenting Program
- Maternal & Child Health (including multicultural services)
- Aboriginal Maternal & Child Health
- Out of Home Care Services, Case workers, Carers
- Department of Communities & Justice
- Long Day Care

STRATEGIES

- **Poor sleep:** soft music, sing, rocking, frequent holding, low lights, automatic swings, and wrap snugly
- **Poor weight gain:** consult a nutritionist
- **Chronic ear infections:** check hearing & infections
- **Developmental delays:** consult an occupational therapist
- **Speech delays:** consult a speech therapist
- **Dental problems:** consult a paediatric dentist
- **Small appetites or sensitivity to food texture:** serve small portions that are lukewarm or cool and have some texture. Allow plenty of time during meals and decrease distractions such as television, radio or multiple conversations




6-10 YEARS

OBSERVERS

- Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Friends, Foster Families
- Pre-school Teachers and Staff, Long Day Care
- Primary Schools Teachers, Counsellors and Staff
- Police Youth Liaison Officers
- Out of Home Care Services, Case workers, Carers
- Department of Communities & Justice
- Paediatricians, General Practitioners

STRATEGIES

- **Sleep problems:** shorten naps or cut them out
- **Making friends:** pair your child with another who is one or two years younger
- **Boundary issues:** create a stable, structured home with clear routines and plenty of repetition
- **Attention problems:** establish a routine and use structure. Simplify rooms in the home and reduce noises or other stimulation
- **Easily frustrated/tantrum:** remove child from the situation and use calming techniques such as sitting in a rocker, giving a warm bath or playing quiet music
- **Difficulty understanding cause and effect:** repetition, consistency and clear consequences for behaviour are important
- **Network of friends, family and professionals** who can adapt the environment as needed



11-17 YEARS

OBSERVERS

- Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Friends
- Carers, Foster Families
- High School Teachers, School Counsellors and Staff
- Police School Liaison Officers
- Out of Home Care Services, Case workers
- Department of Communities & Justice
- General Practitioners, Mental Health Services
- Police, Youth Conference Conveners
- Solicitors and Magistrate
- Justice Health
- Intellectual Disability Rights Service
- Youth Services

STRATEGIES

- **Anxiety and depression:** counselling or encouraging participation in sports, clubs or other structured activities
- **Victimisation:** monitor the activities and discuss dealing with strangers
- **Lying, stealing or antisocial behaviour:** family counselling, set simple and consistent rules with immediate consequences
- **Network of friends, family and professionals** who can adapt the environment as needed



18-30 YEARS, 30+ YEARS, 50-60 YEARS, 60-70 YEARS, 70+ YEARS

OBSERVERS

- Family, Friends
- General Practitioners, Hospitals
- Mental Health Services
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Police
- Solicitors and Magistrate
- Justice Health
- Intellectual Disability Rights Service

STRATEGIES

- **Anxiety and depression:** counselling or encouraging participation in sports, clubs or other structured activities
- **Victimisation:** monitor the activities and discuss dealing with strangers
- **Lying, stealing or antisocial behaviour:** family counselling, set simple and consistent rules with immediate consequences
- **Housing:** contact community housing services
- **Network of friends, family and professionals** who can adapt the environment as needed



Please refer to the Newcastle FASD Youth Justice Model of Care Handbook for referencing, information on services, supports and training.

THIS PROJECT WAS FUNDED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

