



Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)

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Formed Families Forward - who we are...

- A family-led resource center in Northern Virginia supporting foster, adoptive and kinship families who are raising children, youth & young adults with special needs, and professionals who work with our families.
- We offer free training, consultations to families, events, resources, and systems navigation. Also - peer support groups; webinars; virtual trainings; videos and other resources.
- Family partner to Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS; a VDOE project)

Certificates of
Attendance

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FASD Winter Webinar Series

- **Wednesday, January 24, 2024, 7-8pm:**
How to advocate for FASD accommodations in schools with Shannon Iacobacci (Embracing the Brain)
- **Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 7-8pm:**
Interventions for school-aged children with FASD with Dr. Molly Millians (Emory University)
- **Wednesday, February 7, 2024, 7-8pm:**
FASD and law enforcement: Moving from reactive to proactive with Lucy Beadnell (The Arc of Northern Virginia)



Winter/Spring Webinars

- **Wednesday, February 28, 2024, 7-8PM:** *Let's Talk about Talking: How Families Can Nurture and Support Communication Skills* webinar

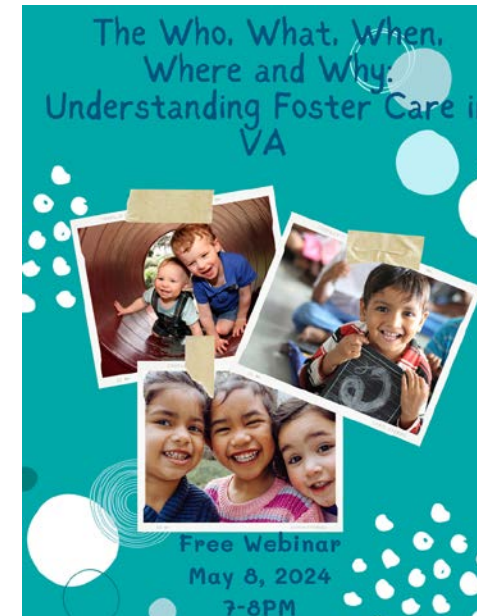
Register: <https://bit.ly/FFFletstalk>

- **Wednesday, March 6, 2024, 7-8PM:** *Transitioning to Adulthood: Options and Resources from Panel Experts* webinar

Register: <https://bit.ly/3U57KU3>

- **Wednesday, May 8, 2024, 7-8PM:** *The Who, What, When, Where and Why: Understanding Foster Care in Virginia* webinar

Register: <https://bit.ly/FFFfosteringVA>



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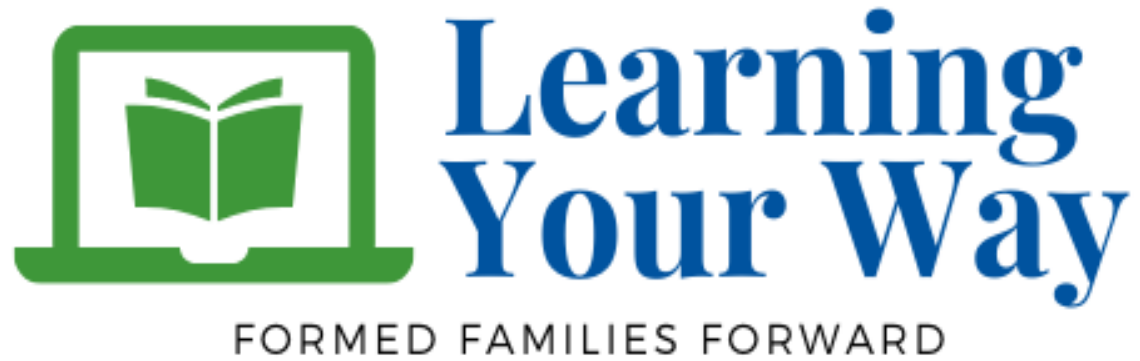


Mark your calendars!

Saturday, April 23, 2024

8:30 AM - 2 PM

GMU Science & Tech Campus,
Manassas



Registration will open Feb. 1, 2024
Check the website for registration link
www.FormedFamiliesForward.org

Stronger Together Youth Peer Support Groups

- IN-PERSON for youth and young adults ages 14-22
- Weekly for 8 Tuesday nights, 6:30 – 8 PM, starting Jan. 23. Clinician-led. FREE of charge.
- In Fairfax city
- Register at <https://bit.ly/STgroupwinter24>



Formed Families Together parent and caregiver support groups

- TWO Formed Families Together peer-led support groups for **adoptive and foster parents and kinship caregivers** meet monthly
- Virtual group- First SUNDAY each month, 7:30 – 9 PM
- In-person group- Third WEDNESDAY of each month on site in Fairfax city, 7- 8:30 PM
- Led by trained FFF staff
- <https://fftogether.eventbrite.com>



POLL

What brings you to this webinar:

- I am parenting a child with an FASD diagnosis
- I am parenting a child I suspect has an FASD
- I am a professional working with clients/students who are diagnosed or who I suspect have an FASD
- I don't have personal experience with FASD - just curious



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Goals

1

Define FASD and its characteristics – consider overlapping symptoms with other diagnoses (e.g. ADHD and Trauma)

2

Understand FASD as a brain-based disability

3

Consider different approaches and ideas for how to best support person with FASD

*Change the environment

*Change expectations

Definition

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)...

is a lifelong disability that affects the brain and body of people who were exposed to alcohol in the womb. Each person with FASD has both strengths and challenges and will need special supports to help them succeed with many different parts of their daily lives (CanFASD – Canada FASD Research Network).

FASD

(Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder)

It is a spectrum disorder – looks different for each child even within each category.

FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome): Abnormal facial features, growth problems, and CNS problems impacting learning, memory, attention span, communication, vision and/or hearing

pFAS (Partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome): May lack growth deficiency or the complete facial dysmorphology, but CNS damage similar to FAS

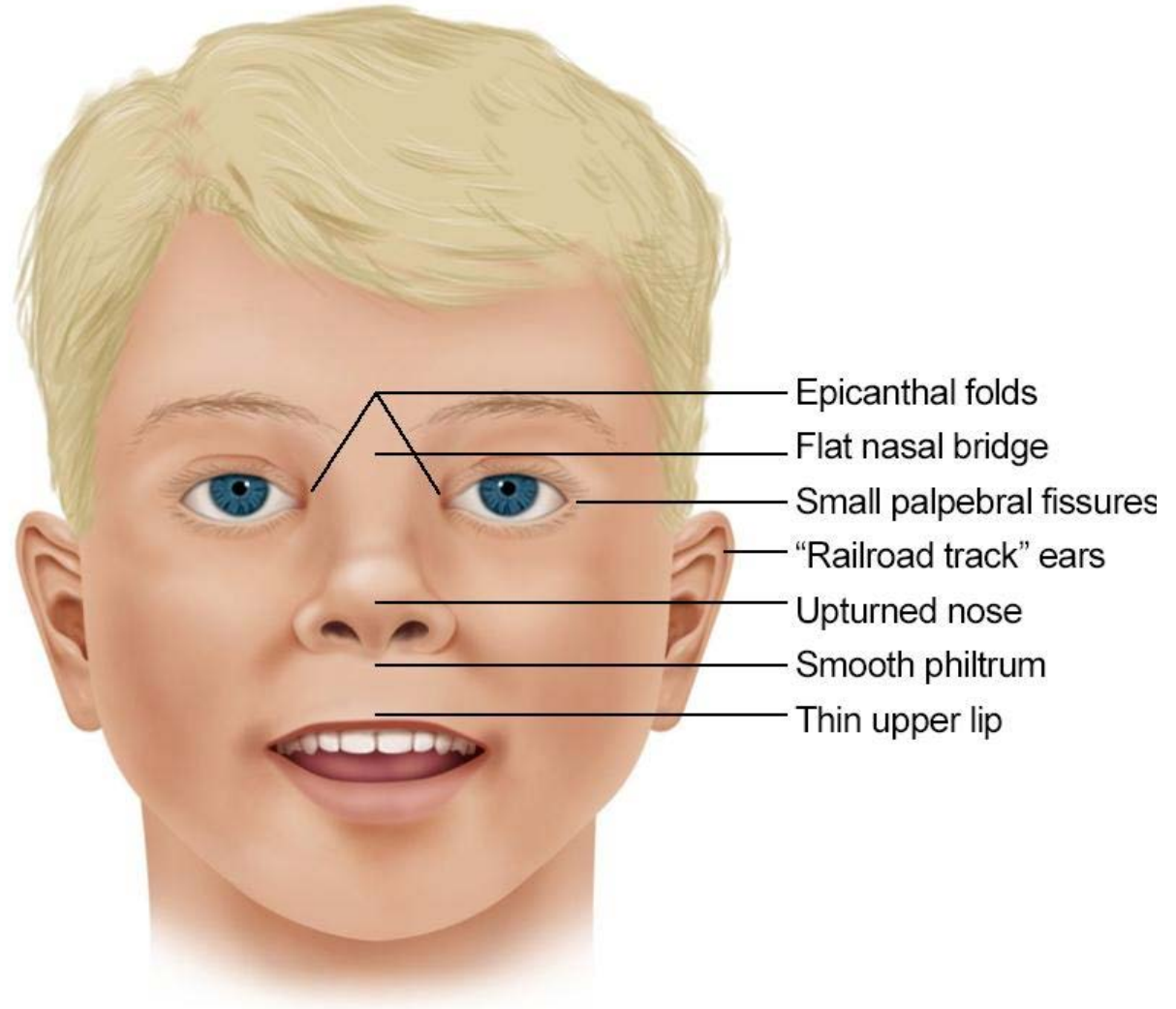
ARND (Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder): May have intellectual disabilities and problems with behavior and learning – poor school performance with difficulties in math, memory, attention, judgement, and impulse control

ARBD (Alcohol-Related Birth Defects): May have problems with the heart, kidneys, bones, hearing

ND-PAE (Neurodevelopmental Disorder as a Result of Prenatal Alcohol Exposure): A new term that will likely replace ARND – used in the DSM-V

Facial features of FASD

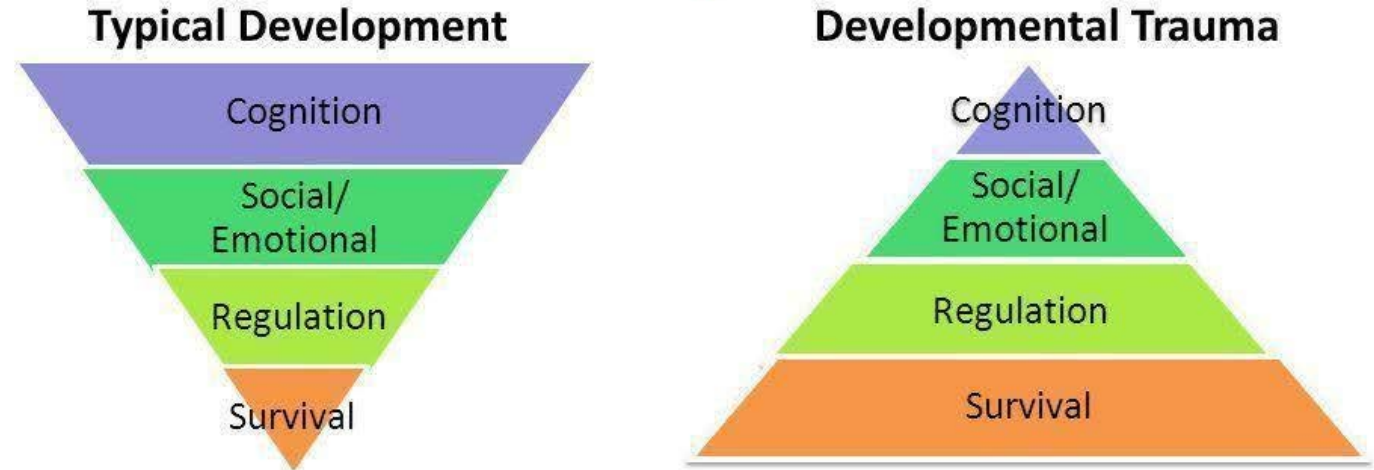
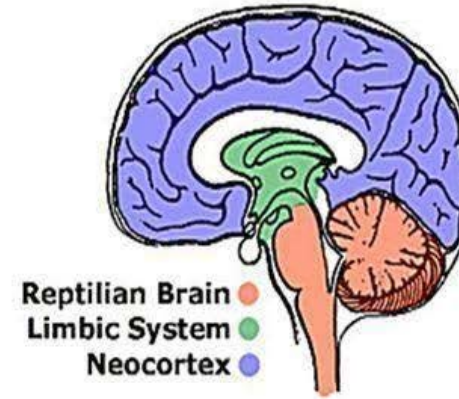
Less than 10% of children with an FASD will exhibit these facial features.



Trauma & Brain Development

Brain Development

- NEOCORTEX
 - Problem solving
 - Behavior management
- LIMBIC SYSTEM
 - Fight or flight
 - Sexual drive
- BRAIN STEM
 - Heartbeat
 - Breathing



Adapted from Holt & Jordan, Ohio Dept. of Education

2 important facts about brain cells

BRAIN + ALCOHOL

- GPS is lost or damaged, so the cells don't know where to go.
- The brain cells no longer have a job description – so they don't know what to do.
- Worst case scenario: alcohol kills the brain cell altogether which is known as necrosis and apoptosis in the developing embryo and fetus.

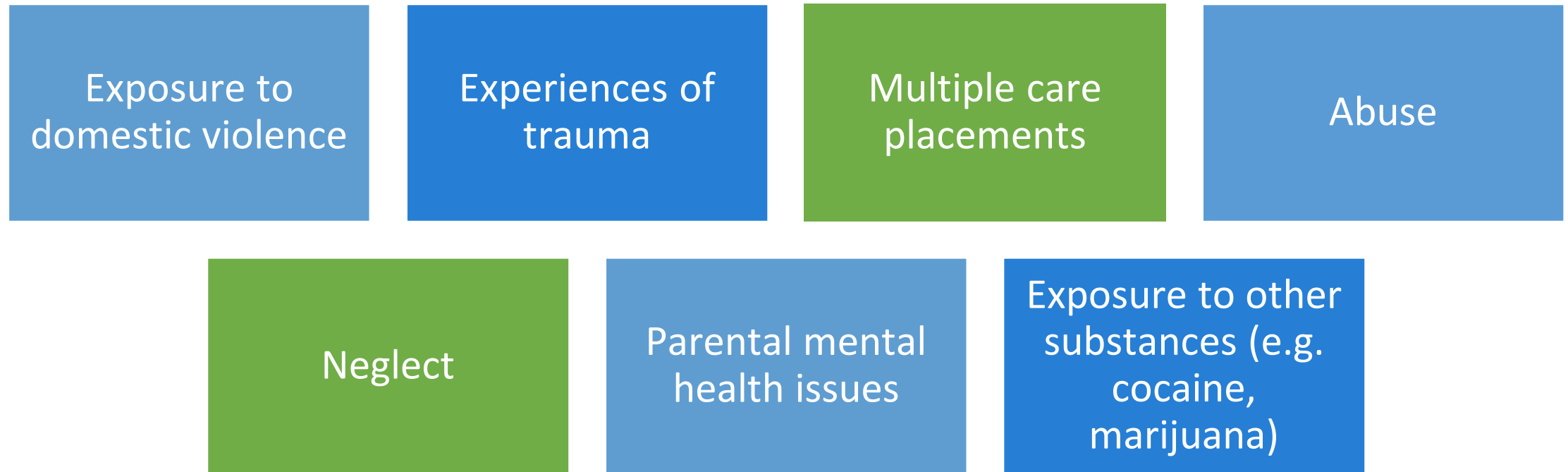
1. They come with a GPS



1. They have their own job description

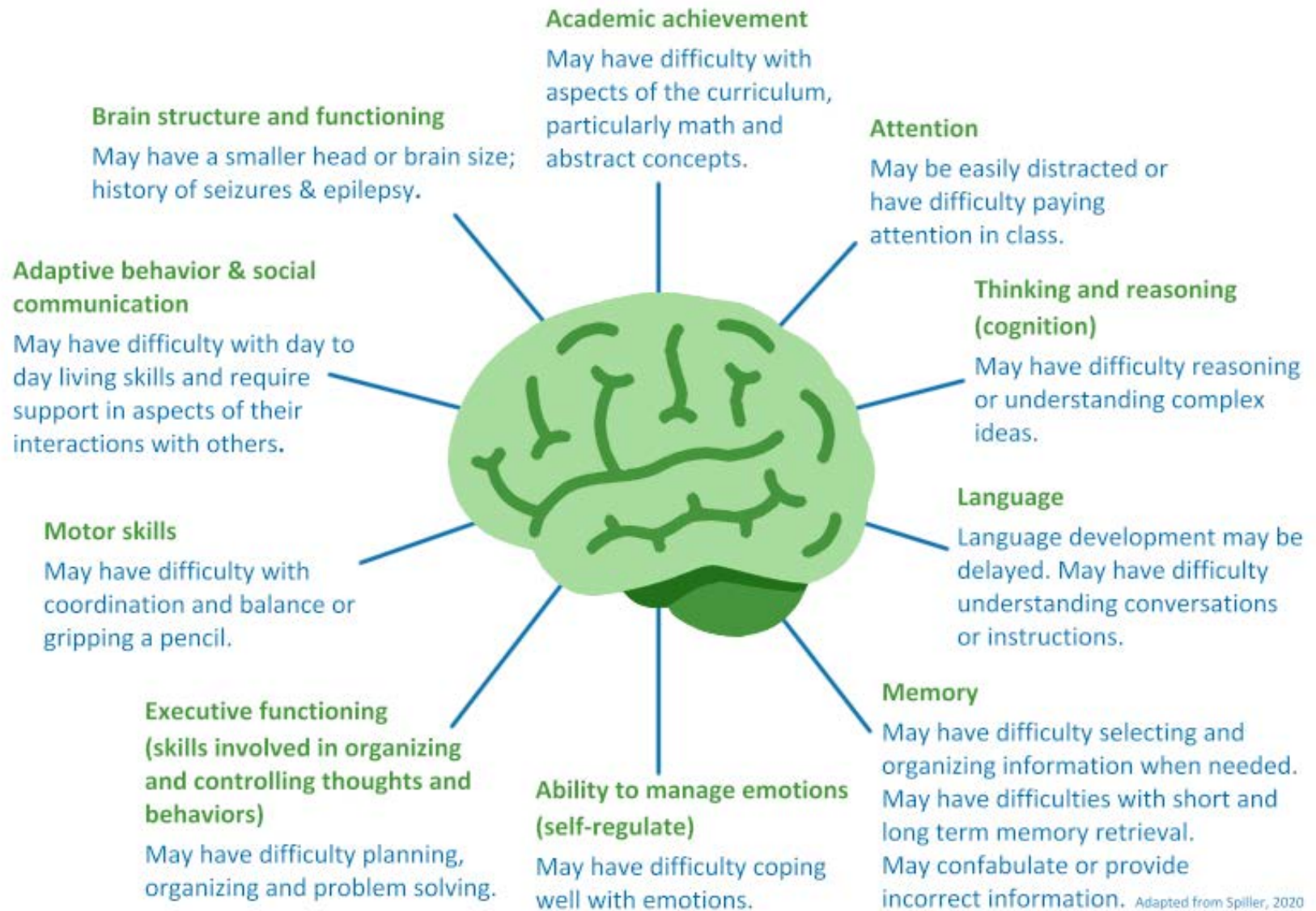


Other issues that can impact a child's developing brain – particularly the stress system.



Brain domains impacted by FASD

Any FASD is a **brain-based disability**



Primary Characteristics

- Learning Disabilities
- Poor Short-Term Memory
- Inferior Auditory Memory
- Delayed Auditory Processing
- Impulsivity
- Struggles with Abstract Concepts
- Developmental Dysmaturity
- Problems with attention
- Problems with judgement
- Struggles with natural or logical consequences
- Non-compliant, uncooperative, resistant, manipulative, unmotivated (WHEN BEHAVIOR IS NOT VIEWED AS A RESULT OF THE BRAIN DAMAGE)

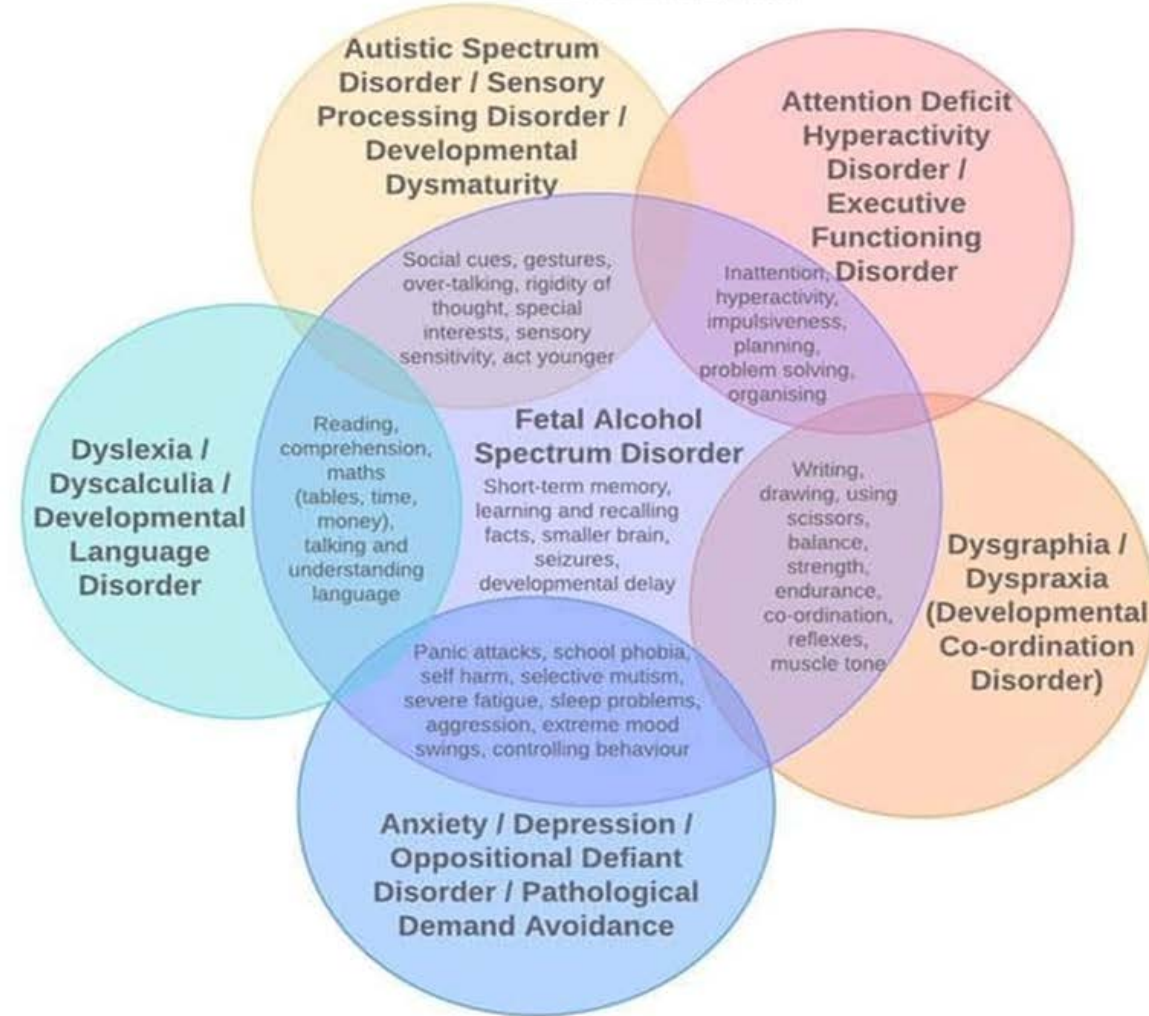
Secondary Characteristic S

- Mental Health Diagnosis
- Easily Frustrated
- Aggressive
- Anxious
- Quick to Fatigue
- Poor Scholastic Performance
- Over/Under Active

Tertiary Characteristics

- Constantly in trouble
- Running away from home
- Potential for human trafficking
- Homelessness
- Substance Abuse
- Abuse
- Gangs

FASD is often
mis-diagnosed
or un-
diagnosed





IN ORDER TO CHANGE OUR MINDS,
AND THE MINDS OF OTHERS ABOUT FASD,
WE HAVE TO CHANGE SOME OF OUR TERMINOLOGY

*So instead of
saying behaviours,
try saying symptoms.*

JUST BY CHANGING OUR WORDS,
WE'LL CHANGE OUR MINDSET, AND
MOVE FROM PUNISHMENT TO SUPPORT.

WWW.FASDSUCCESS.COM

Remember...

The behavior is the
SYMPTOM of the disability –
NOT the etiology.

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What hinders...

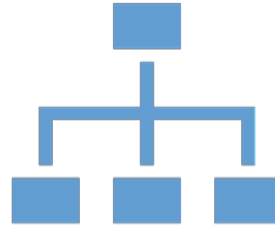


Threatening
to lose
privileges

Guilt
Shame



Being
dysregulated
yourself



Rigid behavioral
modification
systems that assume
child is choosing
their behavioral
reactions



Natural or logical
consequences –
these require a
strong
understanding of
cause and effect



Lectures – too
many words are
overwhelming



Would you keep pouring water into a cup that is already full?

- The more information you give an individual with FASD when they're upset, the higher the chance they will escalate.

What Helps...

Connection before
Correction: Responding,
not reacting or “fixing”

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw> – Brene Brown on Empathy

Co-Regulating: Through
behaviors, they are
seeking external
regulation

- Robot/Ragdoll
- Pointing/Thumb Up
- 5 Things You See...
- “Time-In”

External Brain

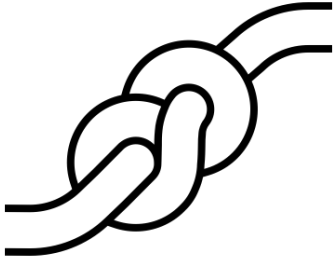
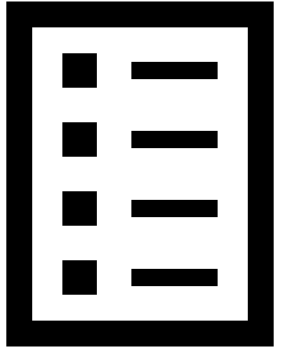
- Checking in
- Scheduled breaks
- Model articulation of feelings; prompt for feelings
- Re-dos (providing language if needed)

Consistent
structure/schedule
with choices built in

- Giving them a sense of control
- Hands-on learning

Calm environment

- They often mirror the vibe of the room
- Reduce visual stimulation



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MODIFICATIONS to 3 areas

(Spiller, 2020)

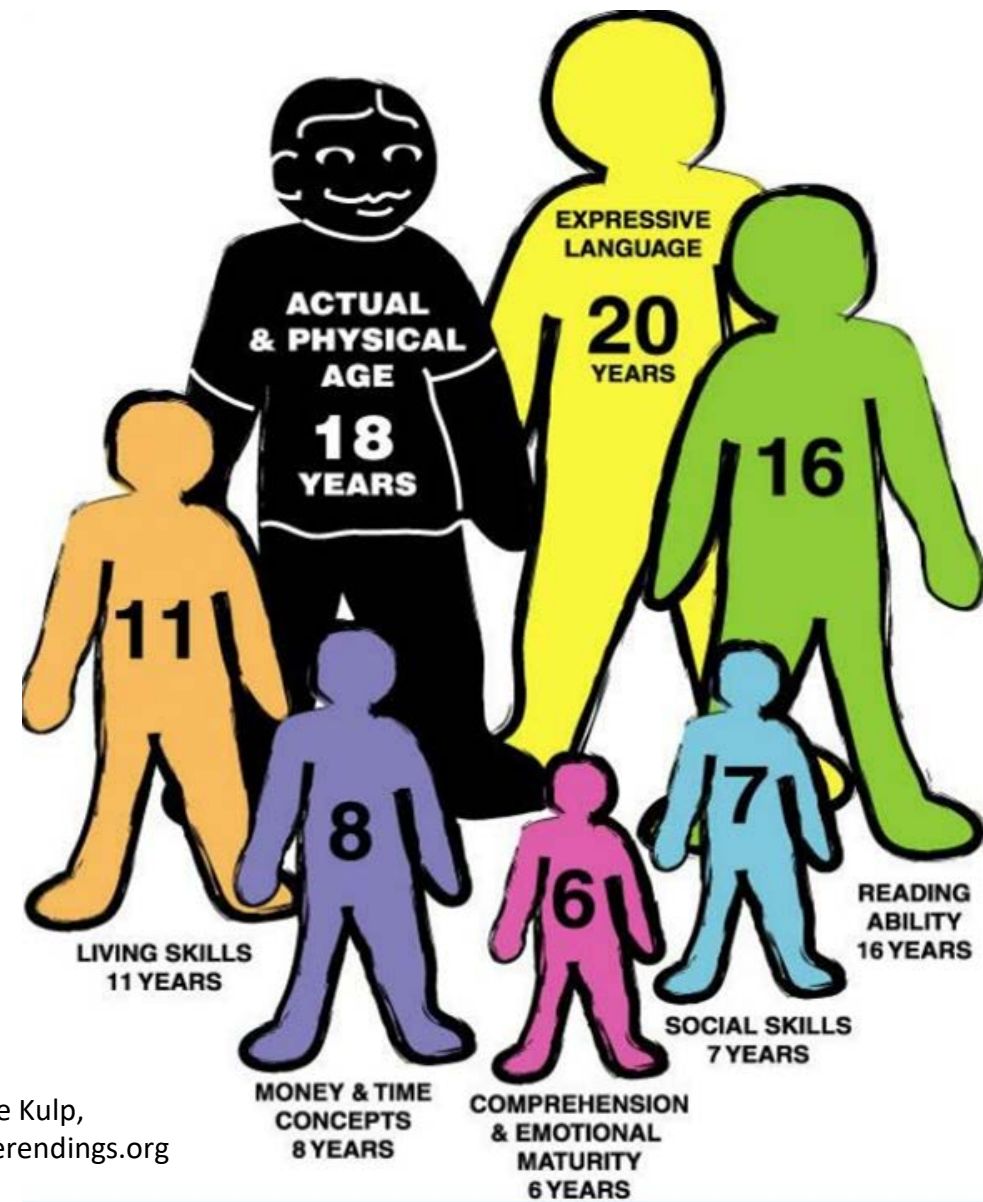
1. Environment

- Supervision, supervision, supervision
- Low stimulation environments
- Structure, consistency, predictability



2. Expectations

- Can't vs. Won't
- Developmental age, not chronological age
- ***Inter***dependence, not necessarily independence



Jodee Kulp,
betterendings.org

3. How you use strategies

- Be proactive
- High repetition
- Keep it slow, simple, and consistent
- Build on strengths, focus on positives, and avoid consequences



Additional Web Resources

- Formed Families Forward FASD Resources:
https://formedfamiliesforward.org/resource_category/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders/
- FASD United: <https://fasdunited.org/>
- FASD Collaborative: <https://www.fasdcollaborative.com/>
- CDC page on FASD: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/index.html>
- NIAAA research on FASD: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/research/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders>
- FASD Success Show podcast (Jeff Noble):
<https://www.fasdsuccess.com/podcast>

Additional Text Resources

- Spiller, V. (2020). *Explained by brain: The FASD workbook for parents, carers, & educators.*
- Sheets, N. (2023). *Essential FASD supports: Understanding and supporting people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.* Outskirts Press.
- Catterick, M., & Curran, L. (2014). *Understanding fetal alcohol spectrum disorder: A guide to FASD for parents, carers and professionals.* London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Malbin, D. (2017). *Trying differently rather than harder.* Portland, OR: FASCETS.

Formed Families Forward – Stay in Touch!

PLEASE COMPLETE EVALUATION right after we end.

****Certificates (only available for those who attended the live session) Email: Stacia.Stribling@FormedFamiliesForward.org****

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