



# Supporting Children and Youth with FASD: Strategies for Home and School

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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

- **Tuesday, January 21, 2025, 7-8pm:** *Making Special Education Work for Students with FASD* with Dr. Kelly Henderson (Formed Families Forward)
- **Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 7-8pm:** *Understanding Therapy Options for FASD* with Jessica Wilson, LCSW





Registration will open Feb. 1, 2025  
Check the website for registration link  
[www.FormedFamiliesForward.org](http://www.FormedFamiliesForward.org)

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*Spring Forward*

Foster, Adoptive & Kinship Family Fun Day

# Mark your calendars!

Saturday, May 3, 2025

8:30 AM - 2 PM

GMU Science & Tech Campus,  
Manassas

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# *Stronger Together* Youth Peer Support Groups

- IN-PERSON for youth and young adults ages 14-22
- Weekly for 8 Wednesday nights, 6:00 – 7:30 PM, starting Jan. 22.
- Clinician-led. FREE of charge.
- In Fairfax city
- Register at:  
<https://bit.ly/FFFSTwinter25>





# *Formed Families Together* parent and caregiver support groups

- Formed Families Together peer-led support group for **adoptive and foster parents and kinship caregivers** meets twice a month
- Virtual - First SUNDAY each month, 7:30 – 9 PM
- In-person - Third WEDNESDAY of each month on site in Fairfax city, 7- 8:30 PM
- Led by trained FFF staff
- <https://bit.ly/FFTgroups>



# 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





# Who I Am...

Stacia Stribling - Mom; Part-Time Farmer; Former Elementary School Teacher; Former Assistant Professor, Education at GMU; Deputy Director  
[Stacia.Stribling@FormedFamiliesForward.org](mailto:Stacia.Stribling@FormedFamiliesForward.org)



# Who I Am...

Lindsay Zach - Mom; Avid Reader and Hiker. Most recently Family Resource Navigator at RHI with a background in social work.

# Goals

1

Understand the impact of FASD on the various brain domains.

2

Identify effective strategies that meet the unique needs of those with FASD to foster success at home.

3

Identify effective strategies that meet the unique needs of those with FASD to foster success at school.

# 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).

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

Exposure to domestic violence

Experiences of trauma

Multiple care placements

Abuse

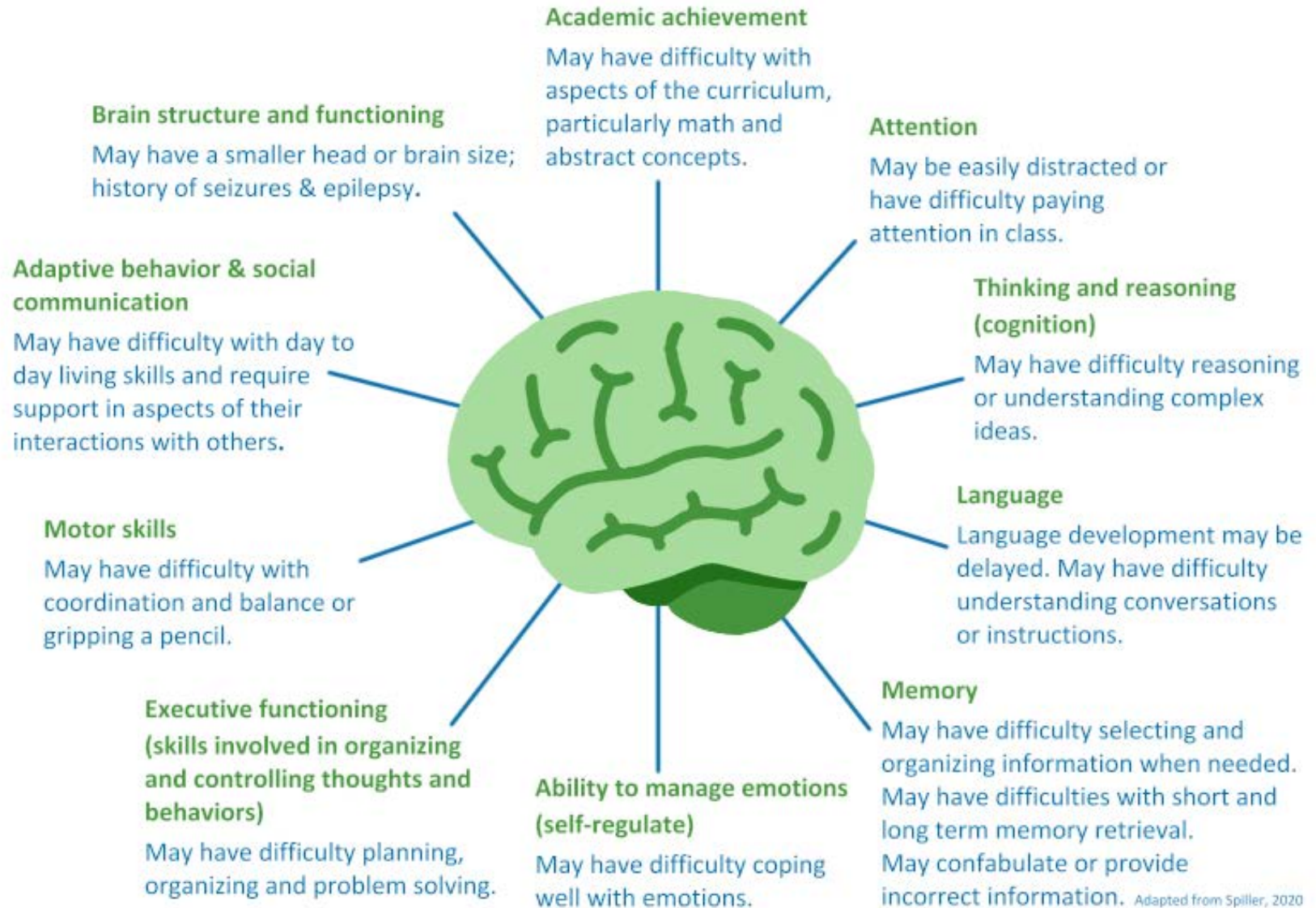
Neglect

Parental mental health issues

Exposure to other substances (e.g. cocaine, marijuana)

# Brain domains impacted by FASD

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





# MODIFICATIONS to 3 areas

(Spiller, 2020)

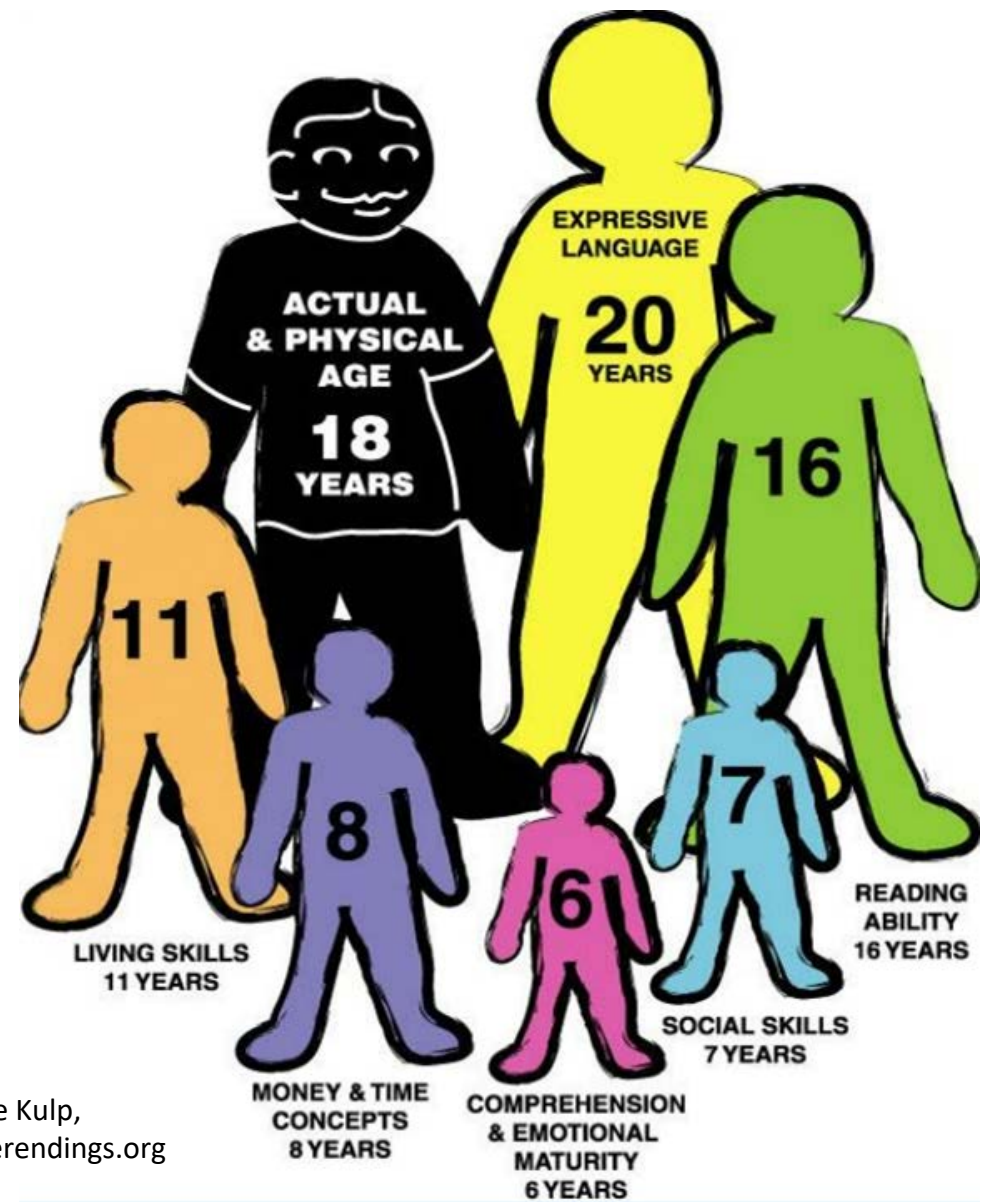
## 1. Environment

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



## 2. Expectations

- Can't vs. Won't
- Developmental age, not chronological age
- *Interdependence*, 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 and focus on positives

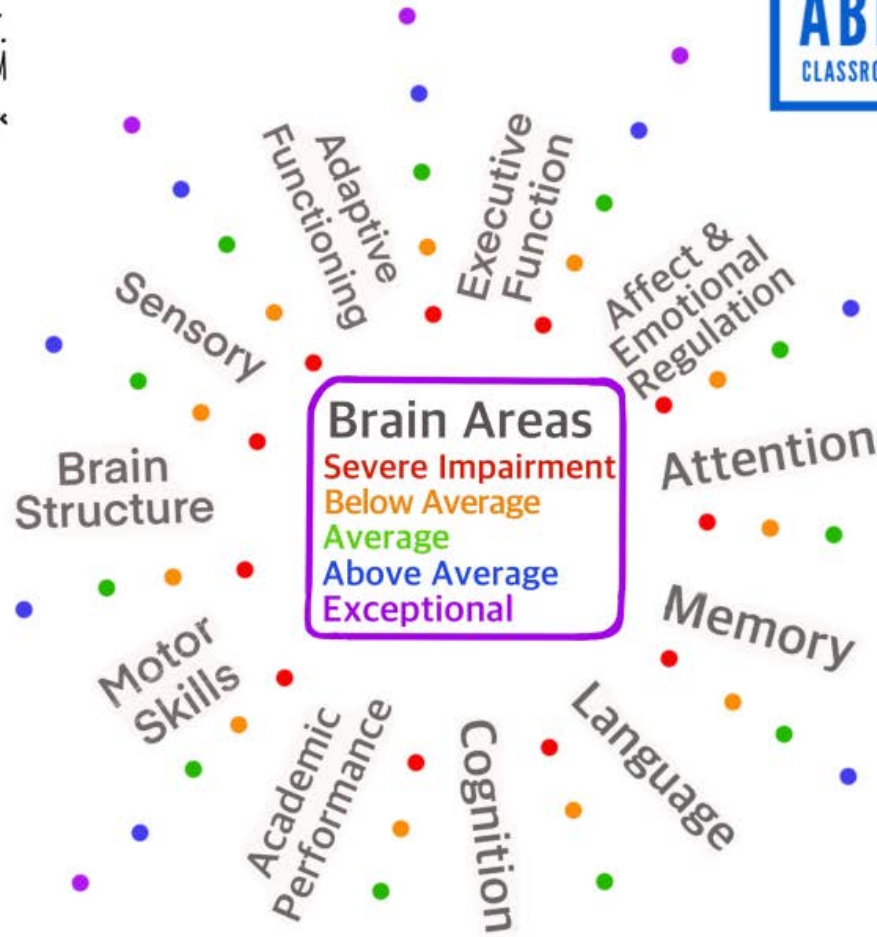




JUMPSTART PSYCHOLOGY  
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# ABILITY WHEEL!

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES AND ACCOMODATIONS



EXPLAINED BY BRAIN

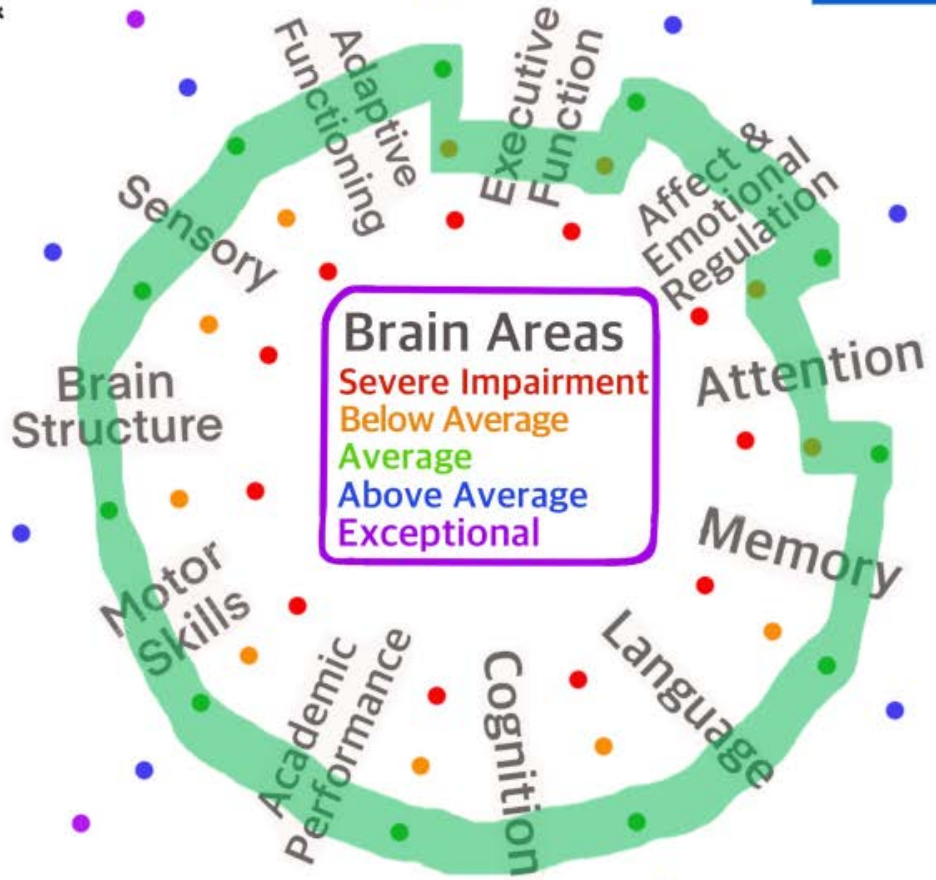
*Dr Vanessa Spiller*

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# ABILITY WHEEL!

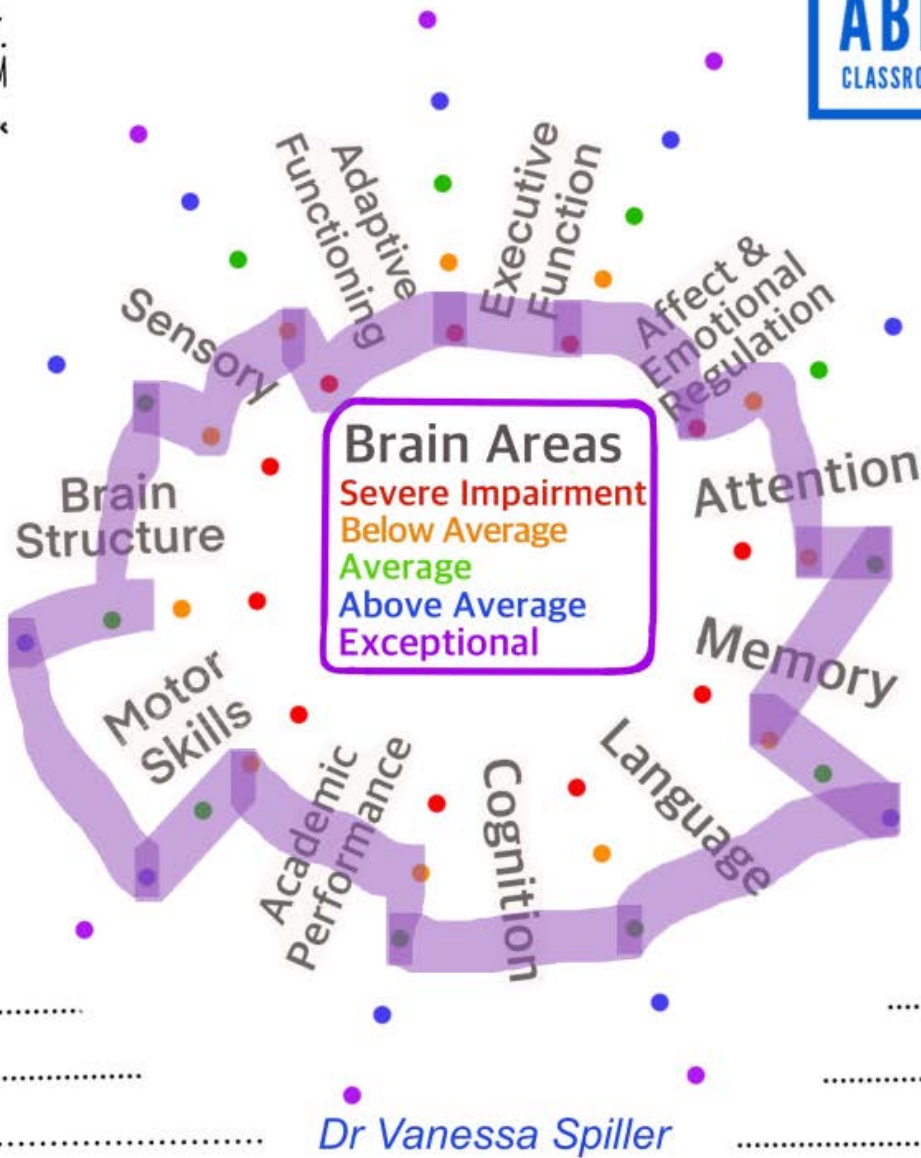
CLASSROOM STRATEGIES AND ACCOMODATIONS



- How easily will it roll?
- How much effort will be needed?

# ABILITY WHEEL!

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES AND ACCOMODATIONS



- How easily will it roll?
- How much effort will be needed?



# Strategies for Adaptive Functioning/Executive Functioning

- Visual charts
- Peer buddy
- Repetition
- Scaffolding tasks
- Support for organization
- Break tasks into small chunks
- One instruction at a time



# Strategies for Affect & Emotional Regulation and Attention

- Supervision
- Set up a “calm corner”
- Provide fidgets and other tools for regulation
- Use emotion charts
- Use “time-ins” rather than “time-outs”
- Distraction (remember developmental age rather than chronological age)
- Frequent breaks
- Incorporate movement

Supplementary Reproducible E for Elementary Ages

THE ZONES OF REGULATION


## The ZONES of Regulation

			
<b>Blue Zone</b> Sad Bored Tired Sick	<b>Green Zone</b> Happy Focused Calm Proud	<b>Yellow Zone</b> Worried Frustrated Silly Excited	<b>Red Zone</b> Overjoyed/Elated Panicked Angry Terrified

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Adapted from *The Zones of Regulation 2-Storybook Set* | Available at [www.socialthinking.com](http://www.socialthinking.com)

# Strategies for Memory

- Color coding
- Visual aids/lists
- Label items
- Predictable routines
- Chain learning - link multi-step skills
- Provide information in multiple formats
- Use mnemonic and chunking techniques
- Use songs and movement
- Create an information channel from school to family (do not use the student and the conduit)



**DAILY ROUTINE**

8:00	Breakfast	
8:30	Get ready	
9:00	Chores	
10:00	School Work	
11:00	Free Time	
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Reading	
1:30	School Work	
2:00	Snack	
3:00	Free Time	

# Strategies for Language

- Play word and language games
- Use visual aids
- Assistive technology
- Buddy editor
- Provide short, concise instructions
- Don't use slang or colloquialisms (literal thinkers!)
- Provide a reader or a scribe
- Offer alternative ways to show understanding





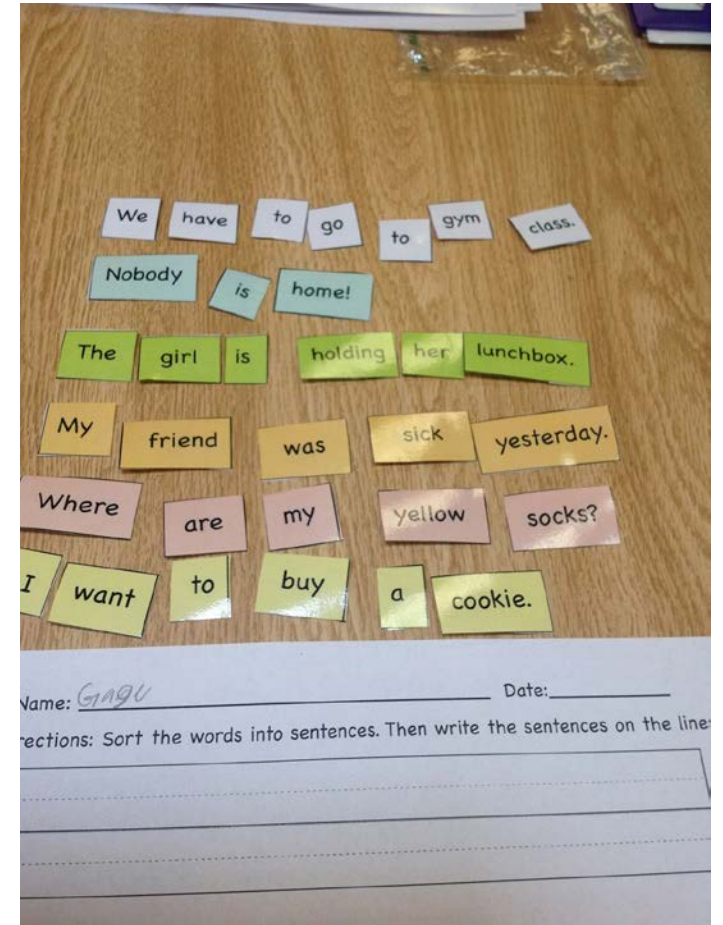
# Strategies for Cognition

- Additional staff support in school
- Small class size
- Learning material that matches development age, not chronological age
- Use manipulatives
- Teach complex skills earlier in the day
- Use visual aids in addition to verbal instructions
- Allow “do-overs”
- Reduce (eliminate?) homework
- Make the abstract concrete - show, don't just tell



# Strategies for Academic Performance

- Audio books
- Fewer visual distractions
- Modify tasks to provide opportunities for success
- Fewer items/questions on a page





# Strategies for Motor Skills

- Playdough
- Large body movement activities
- Modify writing tools and surfaces
- Velcro/slip-on shoes
- Assistive technology
- Alternative seating

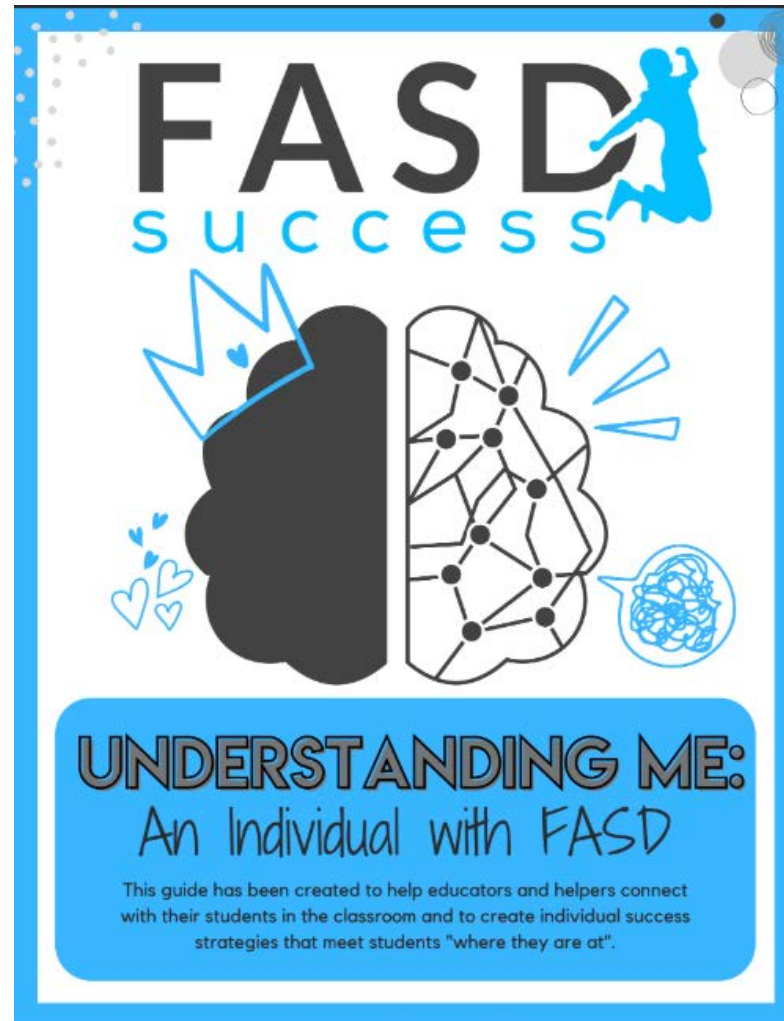


# Strategies for Sensory

- Weighted vests/blankets
- Chew necklaces
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Sunglasses
- Natural light
- Alternative options for high stimulation areas
- Items to help with sensory regulation
- Remove clothing tags
- Prepare them for new environments
- Use quiet and calm voice
- Modify timing - use the bathroom before the rest of the class



# Understanding Me



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# Additional Web Resources

- Formed Families Forward FASD Resources:  
[https://formedfamiliesforward.org/resource\\_category/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders/](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: [Natalie.Johnson-Abbott@FormedFamiliesForward.org](mailto:Natalie.Johnson-Abbott@FormedFamiliesForward.org)\*\***

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