

Introduction to FASD

By Samantha Armstrong

Specialist Teacher for Communication and Interaction / Early
Years



Dover
District **STLS**

Specialist Teaching & Learning Service



Aims:

To challenge misconceptions about FASD.

To understand what FASD is and how it affects children and young people.

To know some strategies to support FASD Pupils in schools.



Agenda:


- Warm up Activity
- What is FASD?
- Characteristics / Diagnosis / Prevalence
- Video
- Supporting Students with FASD
 - *Learning*
 - *Sensory*
 - *Social / Emotional*
- 6. Final Thoughts / Any Questions?



True or False?

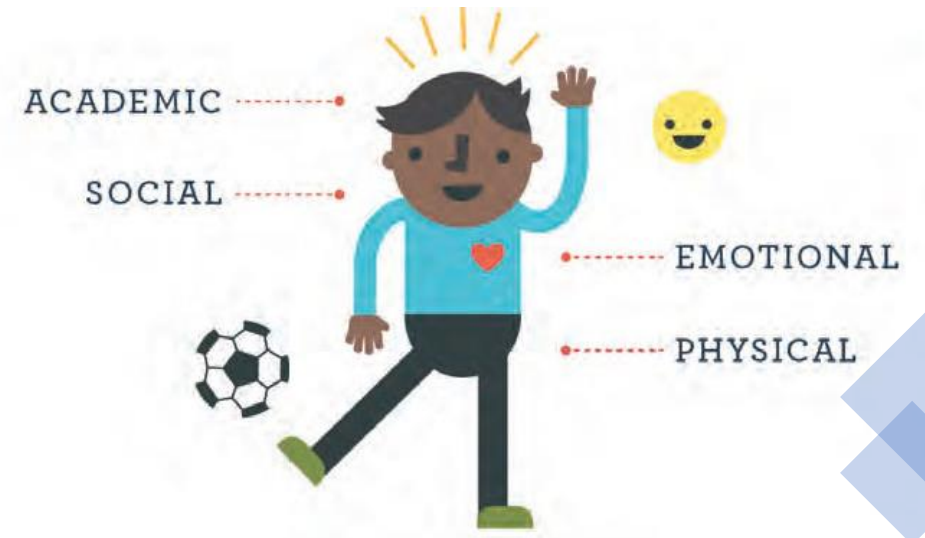
- FASD stands for Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder
- Only alcoholics have children with FASD
- You can tell a person has FASD by the way they look
- Poverty causes FASD
- FASD is a whole-body disability
- FASD is a mild disability
- Children can outgrow the affects of FASD
- 1/4 of adopted and fostered children have suspected FASD
- FASD is frequently misdiagnosed
- FASD is not very common
- People with FASD are disproportionately represented within the criminal justice system.

True or False?

- FASD stands for Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder ✓
- Only alcoholics have children with FASD ✗
- You can tell a person has FASD by the way they look 
- Poverty causes FASD ✗
- FASD is a whole-body disability ✓
- FASD is a mild disability ✗
- Children can outgrow the affects of FASD ✗
- 1/4 of adopted and fostered children have suspected FASD ✓
- FASD is frequently misdiagnosed ✓
- FASD is not very common ✗
- People with FASD are disproportionally represented within the criminal justice system. ✓

What is FASD?

- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is a neurodevelopmental condition with lifelong cognitive, emotional and behavioral challenges.
- In addition to effects on the brain, FASD is a full-body diagnosis that can include more than 400 known conditions.
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is the leading preventable cause of disability in the world.



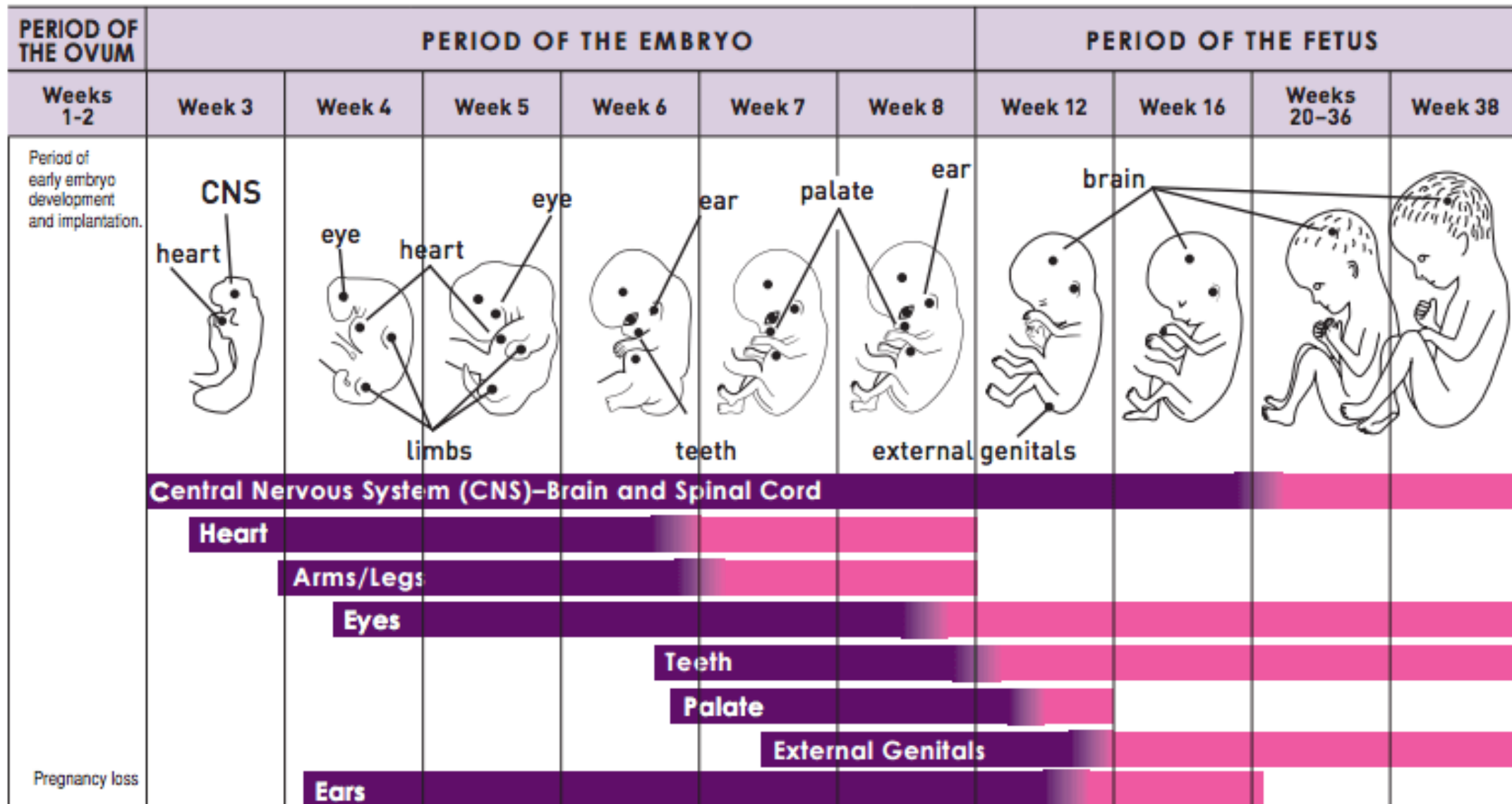
What is FASD?



FETAL DEVELOPMENT CHART

This chart shows vulnerability of the fetus to defects throughout 38 weeks of pregnancy.*

• = Most common site of birth defects

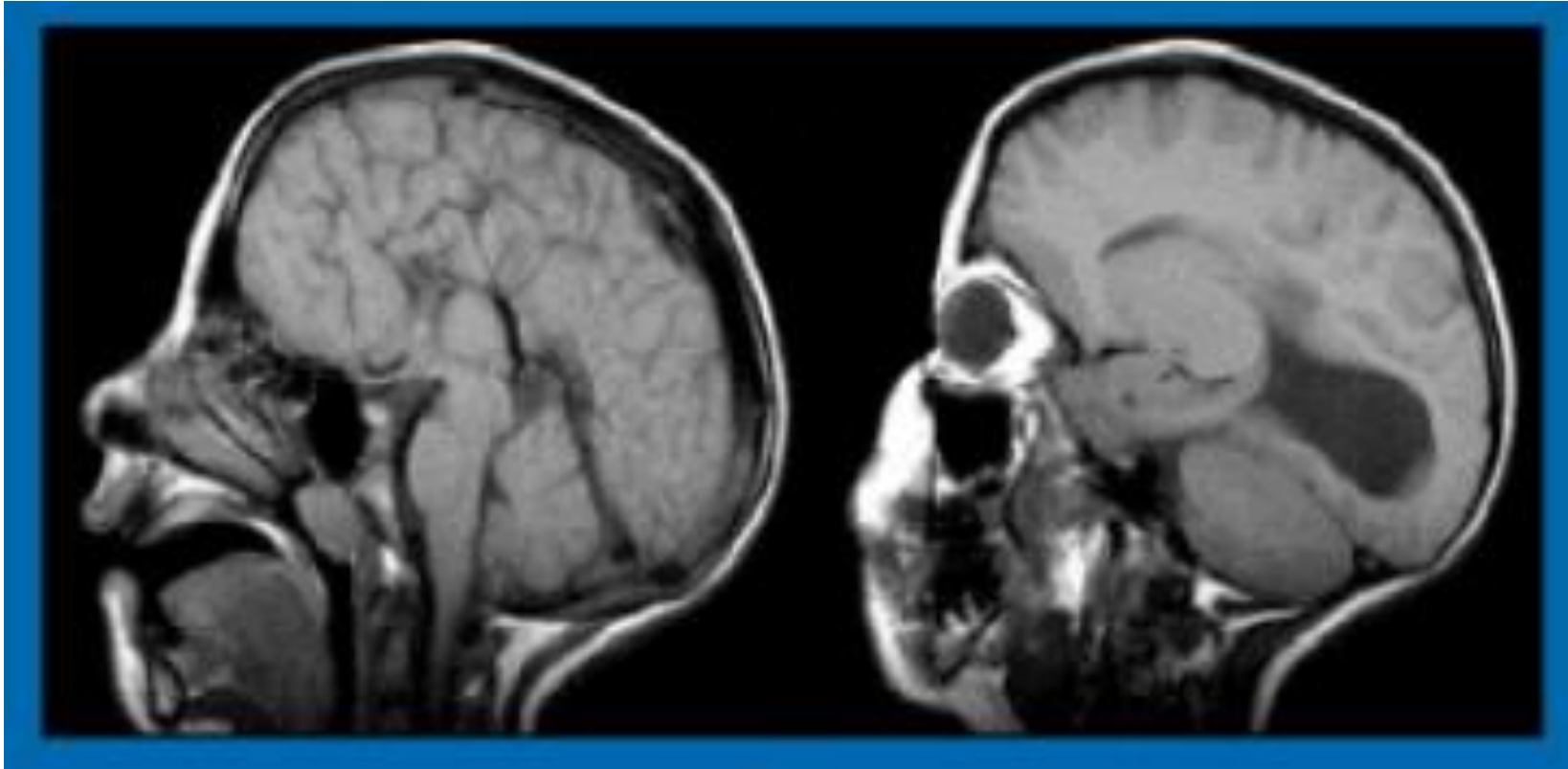


 Period of development when major defects in bodily structure can occur.

 Period of development when major functional defects and minor structural defects can occur.

Adapted from Moore, 1993 and the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) 2009

*This fetal chart shows the 38 weeks of pregnancy. Since it is difficult to know exactly when conception occurs, health care providers calculate a woman's due date 40 weeks from the start of her last menstrual cycle.



Neurotypical Brain (9 Year old)

FASD Brain (9 Year old)



Example of developmental stages of 18 year old child with FASD

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)



MYTH

ARND and PFAS aren't as bad as "full FAS"

FACT

All of these conditions are FASD and FASD is the new diagnostic term. There is no "full FAS". The main feature across the spectrum is that prenatal alcohol exposure has affected the brain development/function.

Characteristics

- Low body weight / Short Stature
- Poor coordination
- Hyperactive behavior
- Difficulty with attention and listening
- Poor memory – especially short term
- Learning disabilities
- Speech and language delays
- Poor reasoning and judgment skills
- Sleep problems
- Vision or hearing problems
- Problems with the heart, kidneys, or bones
- Abnormal facial features, such as a smooth ridge between the nose and upper lip (this ridge is called the philtrum)

“

It is critical that FASD is recognised as a physical, behavioural and neurodevelopmental health condition.”

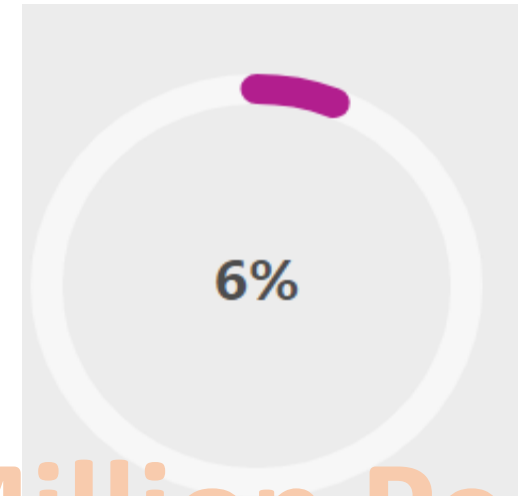
SIGN (2019)



Diagnosis and Prevalence

- Proven evidence of an alcohol exposed pregnancy
- Evidence of neurological difficulties

New NICE Guidelines on FASD mean more people are able to be diagnosed with FASD without needing to provide evidence of alcohol exposure during pregnancy.



Or 4 Million People

In other words, FASD affects more people than autism and is sadly most often undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. FASD is often called a 'hidden disability.'



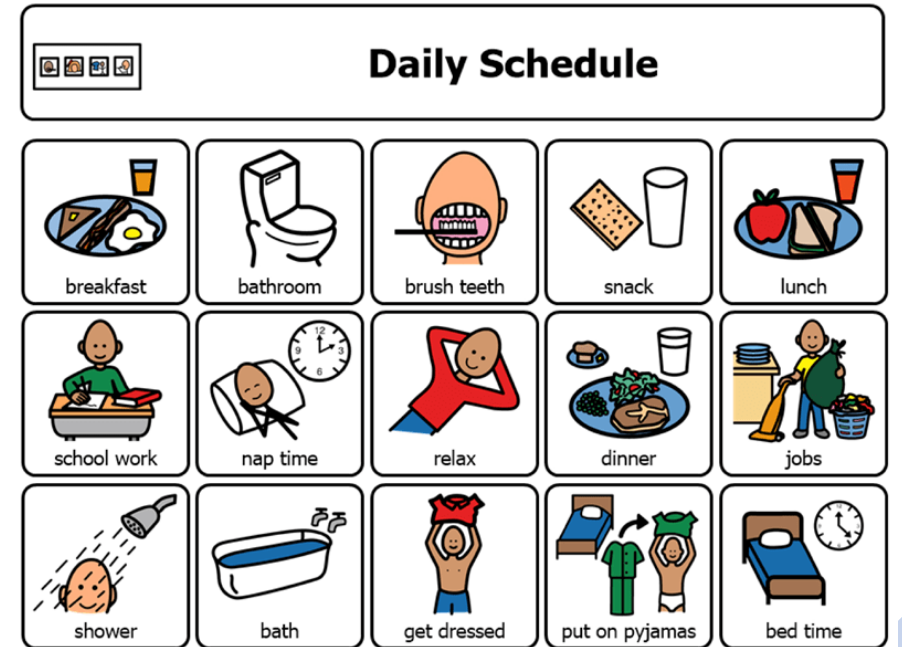
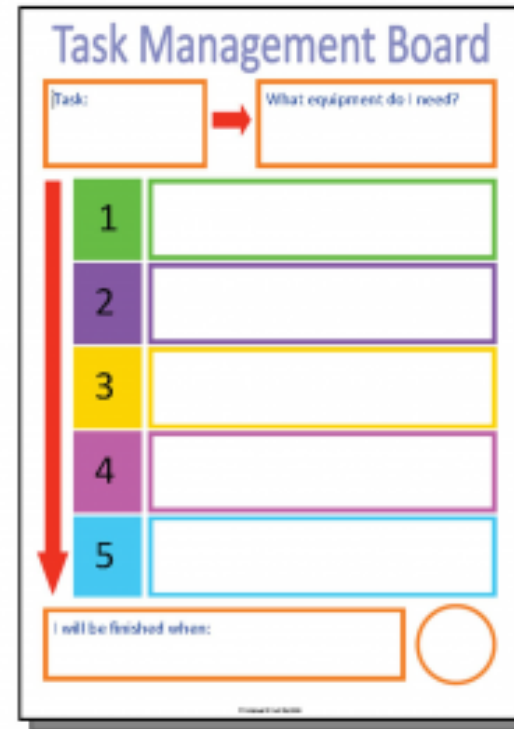
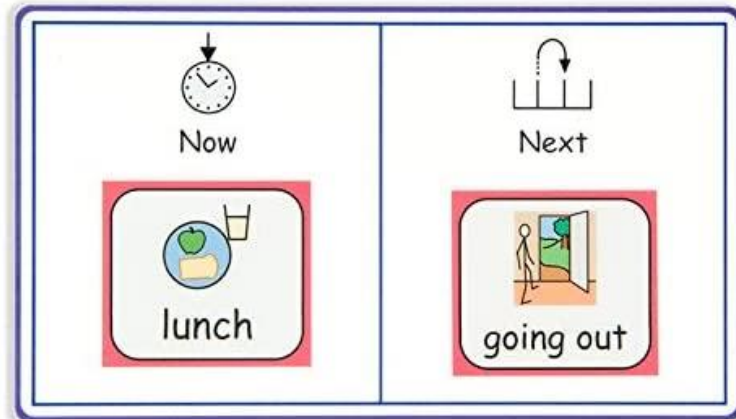


Cognition and Learning:



Children with FASD often struggle with executive functioning (Planning) and following instructions.

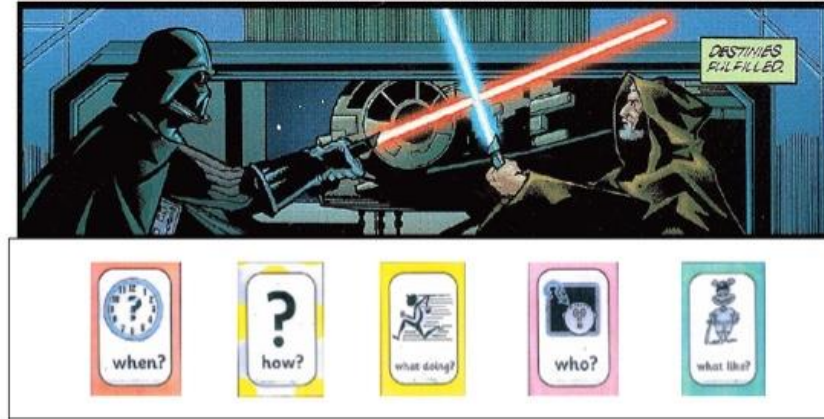
- Break tasks into easier chunks
- Provide clear schedules
- Use visuals to support with learning sequences (E.g. getting dressed)
- Remove the language barrier



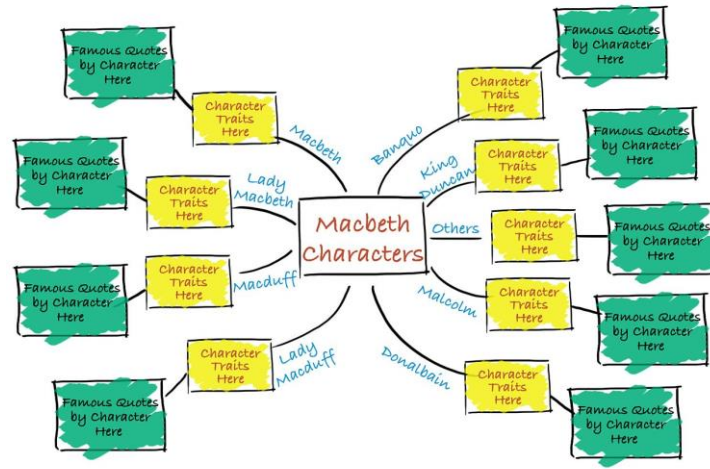
Cognition and Learning:



Children with FASD often have specific learning difficulties – commonly children with FASD struggle with the abstract. However, they are very often creative, visual learners with an aptitude for problem solving.



Use scaffolds for written tasks – e.g. Language through colour.



Allow alternative methods of recording ideas on paper (mind maps, drawings, diagrams)



Teach typing skills to remove the physical barrier of writing.

e.g

Clicker 8



Allow hands on exploration for abstract concepts - e.g. Maths



Use the latest technology to allow children to capture their learning in unique ways – e.g. Photos / videos / QR Codes



Extra Time and space to think...

Sensory Integration:

Children with FASD often have problems with sensory integration.



https://files.schudio.com/stnicholas/files/STLS/SENSORY_CHEC_KLIST.pdf

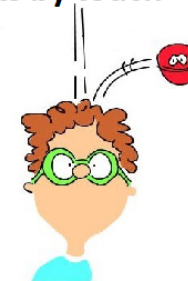
Hyper-sensitive

- Having an extreme sensitivity to stimulation of the senses (i.e. touch, sight, taste, hearing, and smell)
- Overly sensitive to being touched
- Hard time with close proximity
- May be choosy about fabric, texture, and foods



Hypo-sensitive

- Needing MORE input to feel what the "typical" individual feels
- May get hurt and not realize it
- May drop things and not realize
- Hard time discriminating objects by touch



Sensory Support:

Physical / Sensory interventions like Sensory Circuits



Adapted seating options which allow sensory feedback

Access to sensory toys / chews to support the child during listening

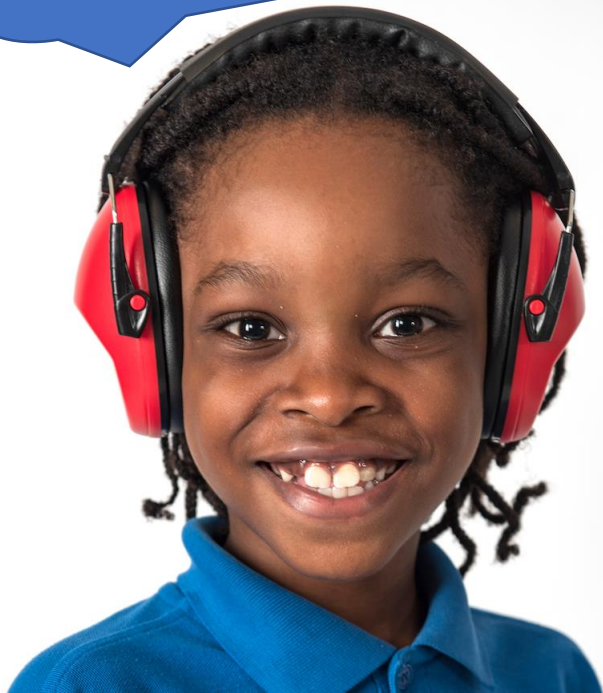


Sensory Brain breaks incorporating Proprioceptive / Vestibular activities.



Sensory Support:

Reduce the impact of sensory needs – e.g. Using Ear defenders



Work screens can support children who are easily distracted by the environment.



Adaptive clothing options or allowing for differences in school uniform.



Look at how individual's personal sensory needs can be met – eg. Sunglasses



Sensory Support:

Weighted blankets and body socks can support children who are feeling dysregulated by offering comforting feedback.



Heavy Work can support children who crave proprioceptive input

Safe spaces and sensory pods



Social and emotional understanding:

Children with FASD often have trouble understanding and regulating their emotions and may be emotionally immature compared with peers



Explicit teaching of emotions – Giving children the language of emotions

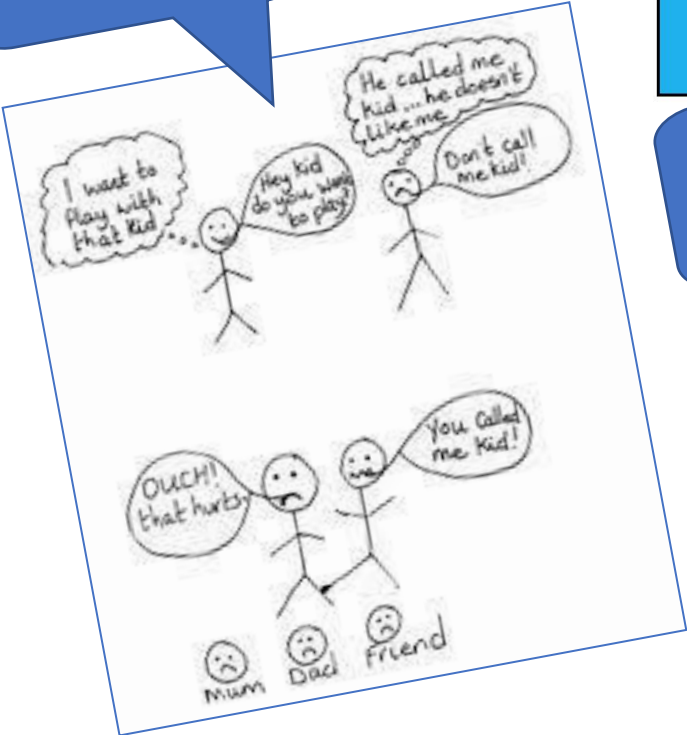
Emotional check ins to help identify and communicate emotions



Stories, book and role play to support understanding of emotions and recognizing the feelings of others.



Comic strip conversations and social stories.



ZONES OF REGULATION!

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Good to Go Focused to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Anxious Excited	Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Out of Control I Need Time and Space

Zones of regulation

5 point scale to support learning of specific strategies to support emotional regulation

Feelings Chart		
	How I feel	What I can do
5	 I need some help!	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask to go visit Mrs. Holland <input type="checkbox"/> Ask to take a break/use theraputty <input type="checkbox"/> Hold on to Luke Skywalker [if he is here] <input type="checkbox"/> Take 4 or 5 deep breaths
4	 I'm really upset.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask to go visit Mrs. Holland <input type="checkbox"/> Ask to take a break/use theraputty <input type="checkbox"/> Hold on to Luke Skywalker [if he is here] <input type="checkbox"/> Take 4 or 5 deep breaths
3	 I've got a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> Let a teacher know that you have a problem and need some help <input type="checkbox"/> Play with your squishy thing <input type="checkbox"/> Hold on to Luke Skywalker [if he is here] <input type="checkbox"/> Take 4 or 5 deep breaths
2	 Things are pretty good.	<input type="checkbox"/> Play with my squishy thing <input type="checkbox"/> Think of my favorite things <input type="checkbox"/> Say "I'm going to be O.K." to yourself <input type="checkbox"/> Take 3 or 4 deep breaths
1	 Feeling Great!	<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy the feeling! <input type="checkbox"/> Have fun



<https://fasd.me/>



References and useful Information:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wunVDGUa8XY> (What is FASD? VIDEO)
- <https://nationalfasd.org.uk/> NATIONAL WEBSITE
- <https://fasd.me/> Resources for affected children
- <http://fasdawareness.org.uk/> Kent Based group – Also on Facebook
- https://www.nhsaaa.net/media/8391/fasd_whateducatorsneedtoknow.pdf

Any Questions?

