

WHAT IS FASD?

FASD stands for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. It 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.



Language Matters

The language we use and messages we share when discussing prenatal alcohol exposure matters. Ensuring the use of judgement free and non stigmatizing language ensures true understanding and inclusivity.

See the [Common Messages Guide](#) prepared by CanFASD



FASD in Your Practice

It is estimated that 4% of the population is affected by FASD (Popova, 2019).

Only .01% of individuals with FASD have been diagnosed. Remember, FASD is everywhere in your practice with higher rates in special education settings, the justice system, child welfare and specialized clinical settings (Popova, 2019).

How FASD Might Present Itself

What you may see:	What it actually is:
Defiance, frustration and not learning from consequences	Impairments in executive functioning, memory and language
Dysregulation, hyperactivity, impulsivity	Sensory issues, attentional deficits, poor working memory, a mismatch between the environment, expectations and ability
Being late, not following through	Difficulty with abstract concepts like time, despite best intentions not remembering what needs to be done
Storytelling	Filling in blanks in their memory, trying to please
Taking others belongings	Ownership is an abstract concept and impulsivity can take over.
Poor social skills	A disconnect between their chronological age and developmental age



Resources

Canada FASD Research Network - canfasd.ca

POP FASD - fasdoutreach.ca

FASD Ontario - fasdinfotsaf.ca



References

Popova, S., Lange, S., Shield, K., Burd, L., Rehm, J. (2019). Prevalence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Among Special Subpopulations: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Addiction*, 114(7), 1150-1172. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.14598>



←
Advanced Interventions to Support Individuals with FASD



←
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD); A Four-Part Learning Series