

Enhancing Employability for Persons with FASD

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Brian Mader, and
guest Daniel Cutknife

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The FASD Learning Series is part of the Alberta government's commitment to programs and services for people affected by FASD and those who support them.

Introduction

- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder can affect all races and cultures
- It is an international problem
- Hopefully all cultures and races of the world will become educated about FASD

What Is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder?

Birth defects caused by drinking while pregnant

Common Acronyms

FASD → Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

FAS → Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

FAE → Fetal Alcohol Effects

Common Acronyms

ARBD → Alcohol Related Birth Defects

ARND → Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder

PPAE → Possible Prenatal Alcohol Related Effects

How Is Alcohol Passed to the Baby?

Everything a pregnant mother

- Eats
- Drinks
- Smokes

can be passed on to the baby

How Is Alcohol Passed to the Baby?

Alcohol stunts the baby's growth. They are...

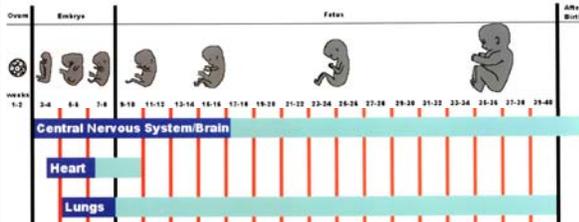
- Born much smaller
- Smaller for life

Growth Delay Before and After Birth



- Low birth weight
- Slow growth
- Small and skinny body
- Small head
- Short as adults

How the Baby Grows During Pregnancy

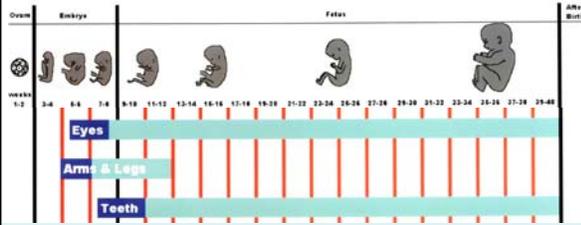


The dark portion shows when the baby is forming. Alcohol is most dangerous at this time.

The light portion shows when the baby is growing. Alcohol can still affect the baby's growth.

Adapted from: Moore, Keith L., *The Developing Human*, 4th Edition (Philadelphia: WB Saunders, 1988).

How the Baby Grows During Pregnancy

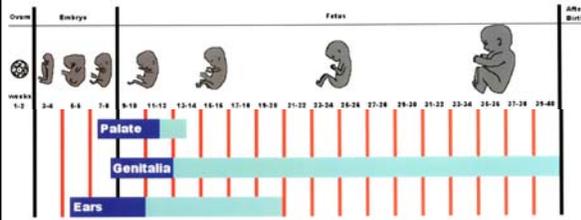


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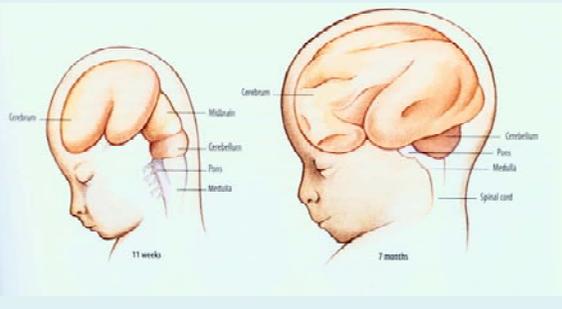
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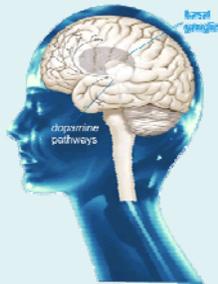
The Brain

- Cerebellum
- Basal Ganglia
- Hippocampus
- Differences in the Brain
- Differences in Effects

Cerebellum is involved in both motor and cognitive skills. Damage to the cerebellum can cause learning deficits and problems with motor skills.



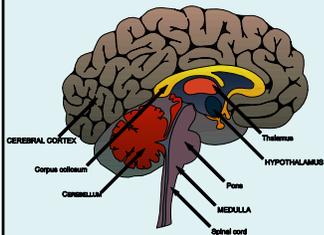
Basal Ganglia are nerve cell clusters involved in motor abilities and cognitive functions.



Affects spatial memory and behaviors like

- Perseveration
- The inability to switch modes
- Working toward goals
- Predicting behavioral outcomes
- Perception of time

Hippocampus is involved in memory.



Alcohol can change the fibers and cause cell reduction.

Damage to the hippocampus can affect mood control and the ability to respond appropriately to emotions

Difference in the Brain

Normal

FASD



Differences in Effects

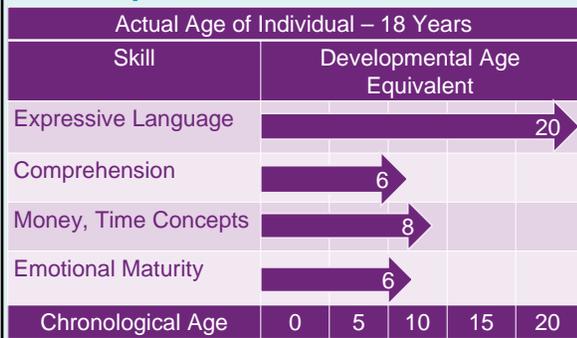
- Alcohol exposure affects some people more than others
- Some people with FASD are able to live productively on their own, while other people with FASD need constant supervision

The Adolescent / Adult Living with FASD

FASD in Teens and Adults

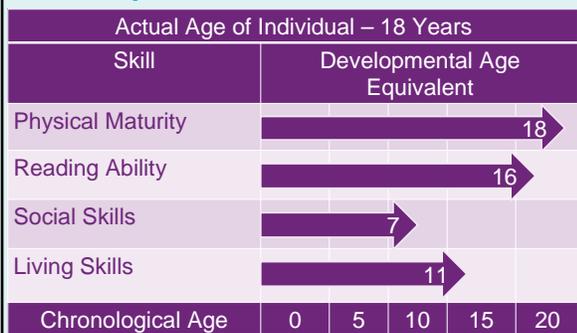
- Troubles with learning and understanding
- Impulsive
- Difficulties dealing with people
- Poor judgment
- Troubles with sexual decisions

Developmental Timelines in FASD



Diane Malbin

Developmental Timelines in FASD



Diane Malbin

Common Problem Areas for All People with FASD

- Learning
- Social skills
- Attention
- Behavior
- Memory
- Language
- Cause and effect thinking

Strategies for Helping FASD Affected People

- Keep instructions simple and brief
- Break tasks down into small steps
- Use routines
- Teach skills in the places where they will be needed
- Focus on person's strengths and interests
- Supervise carefully
- Give advanced warnings of change
- Focus on daily living skills

There is no cure for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

The effects of FASD last a lifetime

Secondary Conditions

Secondary conditions are problems that develop when the original FASD disabilities interact poorly with the person's life journey

Secondary Conditions

- Problems at school (suspensions, quitting)
- Mental health problems (anxiety, depression)
- Trouble with the law (jail)
- Alcohol and drug problems
- Homelessness
- Joblessness
- Having unplanned children
- Difficulties parenting without support
- Early death

Protective Factors for Reducing Secondary Disabilities

- Living in a stable and nurturing home for over 72% of life
- Being diagnosed before the age of six years
- Never having experienced violence against oneself
- Staying in a living situation for an average of more than 2.8 years
- Experiencing a good quality home from eight to twelve years

Protective Factors for Reducing Secondary Disabilities

- Having applied for and been found eligible for Supports from Persons with Developmental Disabilities
- Having a diagnosis of FASD (vs. FAE)
- Having basic needs met for at least 13% of life

Prevention of Secondary Disabilities: The Importance of Diagnosis

- Assessment and diagnosis requires a multi-disciplinary approach
- Confirmation of prenatal maternal alcohol use
- Diagnosis provides a blueprint for intervention
- Diagnosis before the age of six increases success

By getting help as soon as possible, secondary conditions can be reduced



What Employers Need to Know

- Common Traits
- From Common Traits to Jobs
- Employment Skills
- Employment Challenges and Strategies



**With proper supports and strategies
you will have an excellent
employee and co-worker**

Booklet: FASD in the workplace (Regina Community Clinic) The FASD Center

Common Traits

Common traits may include:

- Talkativeness or chattiness
- Curiosity
- Spontaneity
- Love of animals
- Generosity
- Helpfulness, nurturing ability
- Bright in some areas of cognitive development
- Loyalty, friendship, affection, trust and gentleness

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From Common Traits to Jobs

These common traits are particularly useful in such areas of employment as:

- Hospitality industry
- Working with plants and animals
- Working with children



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“Focus on their positive traits not their disability”

Booklet: FASD in the workplace (Regina Community Clinic) The FASD Center

Employment Skills



Based on common traits, look for skills and abilities in these areas:

- Art
- Music
- Gardening
- Mechanics
- Construction
- Athletics

Booklet: FASD in the workplace (Regina Community Clinic) The FASD Center

Employment Challenges and Strategies

Challenge	Strategy
Memory, Story telling (confabulation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide step by step, ongoing training ➤ Provide memory aids and lists
Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demonstrate, break down step by step ➤ Pictures are helpful
Connecting instructions (words) with actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use plain language ➤ Repetition ➤ Avoid figures of speech or sarcasm

Booklet: FASD in the workplace (Regina Community Clinic) The FASD Center

Employment Challenges and Strategies

Challenge	Strategy
Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use calendars and daily planners ➤ Keep schedule the same
Resistance to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Keep schedule the same, regular routine ➤ Keep environment quiet, free from distractions
Boundaries and behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use the buddy system ➤ Always have supervision ➤ Mentor if possible

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Considerations

- The Wisdom of a Father
- The Wisdom of a Mother/Caregiver

The Wisdom of a Father

Things to know and understand about my child:

- Be mad at what happened to cause FAS, not at the person who gave birth
- Acknowledge the child's feelings
- A child who sees an angry adult will stay defiant
- Remember the things he/she has done were impulsive
- Validate that the child has a role in the relationship – do it before the child forgets

The Wisdom of a Father

Things to know and understand about my child:
(continued)

- It is hard on the child to have many caregivers
- These children present many challenges while struggling every day to do their best
- Strengths need to be emphasized over weaknesses
- Validating strength builds a more positive relationship
- Believe in your child!

The Wisdom of a Mother/Caregiver

To those working with children who have FASD,
BE PREPARED to...

- Advocate
- Be interrupted if you are doing something
- Make never ending lists
- Check the bus stop daily (did they get on the bus?)
- Check the lost and found weekly

The Wisdom of a Mother/Caregiver

To those working with children who have FASD,
BE PREPARED to...(continued)

- Look in the school bag for notes
- Investigate silence
- Read between the lines
- Sound like a broken record
- Smile when others frown

The Wisdom of a Mother/Caregiver

To those working with children who have
FASD, please UNDERSTAND....

- Yes doesn't mean it will happen
- Your sense of humor will be tested
- "I don't know" is often the truth
- The bus leaves at 7:40 with or without them
- Compliance doesn't mean they will remember next time

The Wisdom of a Mother/Caregiver

To those working with children who have
FASD, please UNDERSTAND.... (continued)

- Every time the school calls it isn't bad news
- What you think should happen probably won't
- You have needs too
- Support and relief are real words
- You can't control their behavior, but you can control your response

The Wisdom of a Mother/Caregiver

To those working with children who have FASD,
BE THANKFUL that...

- Your children are delightful and very unique!
- Your life will never be dull!
- U-turns are allowed on dead end streets!
- You are not alone!
- They depend on you!
- They love you!

Oh the joy of never ending parenting

Daniel's Story







DANIEL CUTKNIFE

Cherish
Whenever you feel uncertain
Just look in the mirror
To find the real you
The strong wonderful person looking back at you
The others around you will see the person they love
And cherish always



Interview with Daniel

A slide with a light blue background and a purple silhouette of a pregnant woman on the left. A vertical purple bar is on the right. The title 'Reference' is in teal. A list of topics is in purple.

Reference

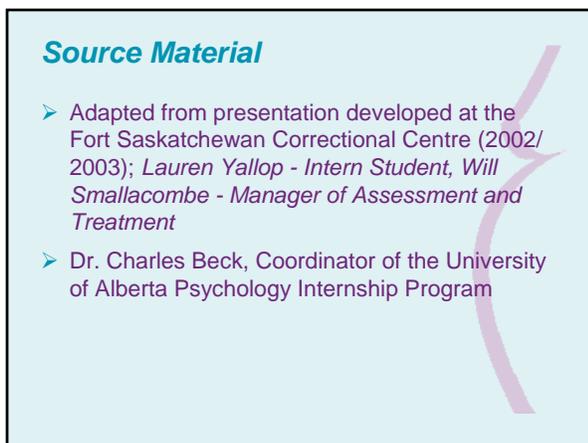
- Contact Information
- Source Material
- Acknowledgements
 - Resources
- Interviewing a Client with/or Suspected of Having FASD: Suggested Questions

A slide with a light blue background and a purple silhouette of a pregnant woman on the right. The title 'Contact Information' is in teal. Contact details for Annette R. Cutknife and Brian Mader are in purple.

Contact Information

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A slide with a light blue background and a purple silhouette of a pregnant woman on the right. The title 'Source Material' is in teal. Source information is in purple.

Source Material

- Adapted from presentation developed at the Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre (2002/2003); Lauren Yallop - Intern Student, Will Smallacombe - Manager of Assessment and Treatment
- Dr. Charles Beck, Coordinator of the University of Alberta Psychology Internship Program

Acknowledgements

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- Region 10 FASD Prevention Subcommittee - Revision support

Resources

FAS/FAE Information Service
1-800-559-4514 (toll free)
<http://www.ccsa.ca/Eng/Pages/Home.aspx>

Interviewing a Client with/ or Suspected of Having FASD

- Suggested Questions

Interviewing a Client with/or Suspected of Having FASD

Conduct a thorough (structured) interview and ask questions that gets details over all life domains. These include:

- Life history from prior to birth
- Birth history
- Developmental Health History
- Education
- Work
- Legal History
- Substance Abuse
- General Health
- Mental Health
- Personal
- Income and Housing

Life History from Prior to Birth Questions

- Do you know much about your birth parents?
- Do you know much about your birth mother?
- Have you heard any stories about how your birth mother was prior to you being born?

Birth History Questions

- Where were you born?
- Which city, which hospital?
- How much did you weigh?
- Do you know if you were early (premature), late or on-time?
- Were there any complications during your birth or shortly after your birth?

Developmental Health History Questions

- Do you know anything about how you were as a young child?
- Did you have any health problems or behavioral problems?
- Were you hospitalized or did you have any surgeries?
- Did you have any early intervention support like speech language support or any other therapy?

Developmental Health History Questions

- Did you have early psychological or behavioral supports?
- Were you on any medications as a child?

Education Questions

- Where did you start school?
- Did you stay in one school or did you move schools a lot?
- Did you get extra help in school?
- How did you get along with teachers, principals, other students?
- Did you progress or pass grades along with the others or did you need to be held back?
- What grades did you repeat?

Education Questions

- Were you ever suspended or expelled from school?
- What did you do well in?
- What was hard for you?
- When did you leave school?
- How did you learn the best?
- What is your best memory from school?

Work Questions

- Have you ever worked?
- What kind of work have you done?
- How long did you hold this job?
- How did you get along with co-workers or your boss?
- Did you need help on the job?
- What was the easiest thing about working?

Work Questions

- What was the hardest thing about working?
- What work did (or do) you like the best?
- Is there any work you are really interested in trying?

Legal History Questions

- Have you ever been involved with the legal system?
- Do you have current charges?
- Have you ever been charged with an offence?
- What kind of offences have you been charged with?
- What was the outcome?
- Have you been in jail?
- How long have you been in jail?

Legal History Questions

- Where have you been in jail?
- Have you done provincial or federal time?
- Have you been on probation or parole?
- Are you on probation or parole now?
- Who is your probation officer/parole officer?
- Have you been assessed by a physician or psychologist through the legal system?

Substance Abuse Questions

- Do you use any drugs or alcohol now?
- Have you used drugs or alcohol in the past?
- What have you used?
- What methods have you used?
- How much do you/have you used?
- Have you ever been in treatment/detox?
- Where have you been? Which centres? Which programs?

General Health Questions

- Do you have any health issues we need to think about?
- What are they?
- Are you on any medications?
- Have you been beaten up or knocked out?
- Have you been in any motor vehicle accidents?
- Have you broken any bones, had any sprains etc.?
- Do you have a doctor or a health person that you see regularly?

Mental Health Questions

- Do you take any medications to help your mental health?
- Have you been diagnosed with any mental health conditions?
- Have you seen a psychiatrist or a psychologist in the past?
- Do you see a psychiatrist or psychologist now?
- How do you feel?

Mental Health Questions

- Are you sleeping OK? Eating OK?
- Do you have energy to get through the day?
- Are you thinking about suicide?
- Have you ever tried killing yourself?
- Have you ever been in the hospital for mental health problems or difficulties?

Personal Questions

- Do you know your birth parents?
- Are you adopted?
- Did you have any involvement with Children's Services/Child Welfare?
- Are you single, married, etc.?
- Do you have any children?
- Are you currently involved with Children's Services/Child Welfare?

Personal Questions

- Do you care for your children?
- Do you have a spouse/partner/wife/husband?
- Are you sexually active?
- Have you ever been sexually assaulted?
- What supports do you have to help you cope with your life?
- Who is important in your life?

Income and Housing Questions

- What is your source of income?
- How do you support yourself or your family?
- What do you think you need?
- Where do you live?
- Is this a good place for you/your family?
- Is it stable?
- Who lives with you?
- Can you pay the rent and utilities?

***For Information on Upcoming
Sessions in the Series:
www.fasd-cmc.alberta.ca***

***Please Take the Time to Fill Out
the On-Line Evaluation***

Thank You!
