

**Employability Strategies
for Persons with FASD**

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**Government
of Alberta**

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.

Session Goals

- Identify employment issues and strategies
- Understand the challenge of change or transition for persons with FASD

**Understanding and Helping
Adults with FASD**

Who Is the Target Group?

- **Adult**
 - Over age 16
 - Out of the regular school system
- **Resides in Alberta**
- **Has a need for supports**
 - Employment
 - Training
 - Financial



Areas of Concern for Adults with FASD

- **Transitions**
 - School to work / training
 - Confinement to competitive employment/ training
- **Career and occupational planning**
- **Educational planning**
- **Income supports**
- **Employment**



General Characteristics of Adults with FASD

- **Primary disabilities**
- **Secondary disabilities**
- **Secondary disabilities: presenting issues**



Secondary Disabilities

- Problems with Mental Health (PMH)
- Disrupted Educational experiences (DE)
- Trouble With the Law (TWL)
- In-Patient Treatment or Confinement (IPT/IPC)
- Problems with Substance Abuse (SA)

Secondary Disabilities

- Inappropriate Sexual Behaviours (ISB)
- Problems With Employment (PWE)
- Dependent Living (DL)
- Having children they cannot care for
- Early death

Presentation Issues for Adults with FASD

- Developmental
- Adaptive functioning
- Self direction and advocacy skills
- Insight
- Boredom
- Frustration
- Immediate gratification

Presentation Issues for Adults with FASD

- Negative peer influences
- High risk behavior
- Victimization
- Housing and transience

Presentation Issues for Adults with FASD

- Compliance
- Relationships
- Increased care away from biological family
- Undiagnosed, or partially diagnosed

**Adults with FASD:
Secondary Disability Issues 1998-2002**

FADU – University of Washington, Seattle 1996	91 individuals were 21 yrs of age or older
CASC (#1) West Survey 1998-2002	71 individuals aged 16-45
CASC (#2) West Roll up 2000-2001	40 Individuals 16-35

Secondary Disability Comparison Profiles

Secondary Disability	FADU	CASC #1	CASC #2
PMH	90%	90%	98%
DE	60%	88%	98%
TWL	60%	44%	55%
IPC	50%	44%	38%
SA	30%	39%	43%
DL	80%	63%	63%
PWE	80%	88%	85%
CS Involvement		52%	65%

CASC 1 and CASC 2 Outcome Observations

- Most common: Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND)
- IQ within normal range
- IQ is not accurate indicator of potential



CASC 1 and CASC 2 Outcome Observations

- Salient deficits in areas of
 - Memory
 - Executive functioning
 - Mental/psychological
 and/or
 - Psychiatric functioning
 - Neurobehavioural concerns



**Employability Interventions:
Working with Adults with FASD**

Memory Issues



- Impaired working memory
- Teflon memory
- Flow through memory
- Storage and retrieval
- Impaired forgetting

Executive Functioning Skills / Deficits

- Inhibition
- Shifting mental set
- Emotional regulation
- Initiation and activation
- Planning skills
- Organizational skills
- Monitoring skills
- Working memory

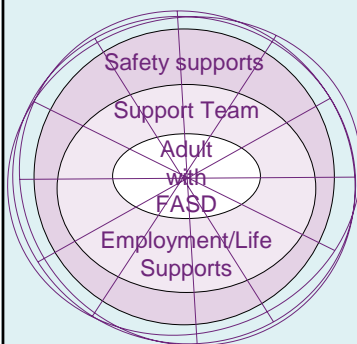
Things to Remember

- **Most adults** with FASD
 - are undiagnosed
 - cannot explain their condition to you (nor their behavior)
 - overestimate modest skills, and deny deficits or impairments
 - talk the talk but **CAN'T** walk the talk

Things to Remember

- **Keep language simple, concrete and plain**
- **Interview the supports of the adult with FASD**
- **Build employment interventions into a 24/7 management plan, build a team around a client**
- **Employment and educational histories likely sporadic and often end badly – learn from this**
- **Do a comprehensive employability interview**
- **Advocate when required**

Things to Remember



- **Employability needs to be integrated into a full life plan (24/7)**
- **Address safety concerns for the**
 - **Adult**
 - **Employer**
 - **Community**

Difficult Transitions

- School to work (K-12 to work)
- Confinement to work
- Work to work or job to job
- Training to work (Adult training)
- Work to training (Adult training)



Transition Planning

Transitions should be

- Planned in advance, started early
- Planned to address full needs

Plans should address the shift from **preventing** secondary disabilities to **managing** secondary disabilities.

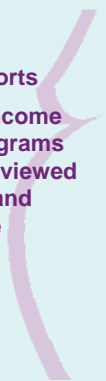


Supports



Financial Supports

- Access to income support programs needs to be viewed as positive and preventative



Supports

Coordinated Community Supports

- Are essential to employability / training success



Supports



Transitional and Ongoing Supports

- Need to be flexible
- Need to include a variety of people with direct interest in the adult with FASD

Observations and Learnings

Labour Market Issues

Problems faced in the competitive labour market

- Problems getting hired
- Problems holding a job
- Getting fired
- Losing a job without understanding why
- Problems gaining skills for a job

Learnings from Employment Experiences

- Easily frustrated (75%)
- Poor task comprehension (57%)
- Poor judgment (55%)
- Social problems (54%)
- Unreliable (44%)
- Anger management (44%)
- Problems with supervisor (40%)
- Lying (33%)

Strategies Not Solutions

Strategies Not Solutions

- Move to non-competitive, supported work model
- Use positive life and employment support
- Expect issues to surface and have a contingency plan in mind
- Inform and train employers
- Direct job placement / solid job development
- Focused skill development and training where it is required

Strategies Not Solutions



- Job carving
- Long-term and flexible client centered support
- Honourable entrances and exits

Strategies Not Solutions

- Focused training
 - Remember practical
 - Remember short term
- Training accommodations
- Job specific skills
- Modest or temporary success is a good outcome

Strategies Not Solutions

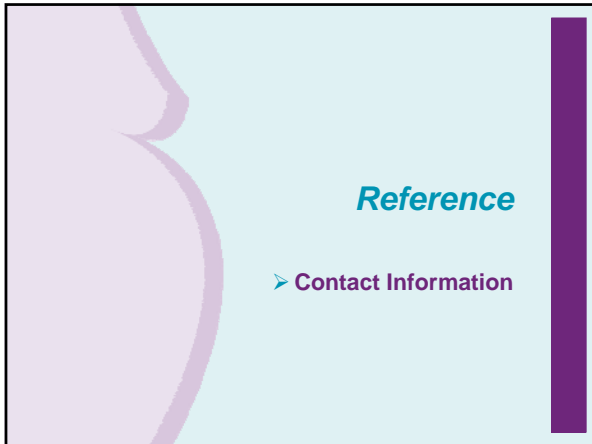


- Remember it's "our" job to make adults with FASD look good and do their best

Strategies Not Solutions

- CAMS (Compensations, Modifications and Accommodations)
- Use strategies that work....discard those that don't
- Anticipate outcomes
- Review disability literature and websites

Best Resource:
Job Accommodations Network
(JAN) www.jan.wvu.edu

A slide with a light blue background and a purple silhouette of a pregnant woman on the left. The word "Reference" is written in blue, and "➤ Contact Information" is written in purple below it. A vertical purple bar is on the right side.

Reference

➤ **Contact Information**

A slide with a light blue background and a purple silhouette of a pregnant woman on the right. The title "Contact Information" is in blue. Below it are two contact entries in purple, each with a name, title, organization, phone number, and email address. A vertical purple bar is on the right side.

Contact Information

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A slide with a light blue background and a purple silhouette of a pregnant woman on the left. The text is in blue. The top part says "For Information on Upcoming Sessions in the Series:" followed by the website "www.fasd-cmc.alberta.ca". The middle part says "Please Take the Time to Fill Out the On-Line Evaluation". The bottom part says "Thank You!". A vertical purple bar is on the right side.

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!
