



FASD: What the Education System Should Know

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) are a group of diagnosable medical conditions that can occur in a person who was exposed to alcohol before birth. Effects are lifelong and can include mental health conditions, learning disabilities, sensory issues, and physical manifestations such as heart defects, hearing and visual impairments, and more.

Students with FASDs can have cognitive or neurodevelopmental disabilities that can affect their learning within traditional classroom settings.



How can educators have a seat at the table?

Educators play an important role in aiding students with FASD. In order to do this educators should:

- Use Direct Language
- Engage and Collaborate with the Individual's Support System(s)
- Accommodate Needs
 - Ex: many individuals with FASD have sensory sensitivities
- Remain Calm and Show Care

Common challenges that students with FASD face:

- Hyperactivity, impulsivity, attention and memory difficulties
- May find difficulty when completing tasks
- Potential challenges with social skills
- May struggle to follow and/or understand rules and authority

Successful strategies for educating children with FASD include:

- Using concrete, hands-on learning methods
- Establishing structured routines
- Keeping instructions short and simple
- Providing consistent and specific directions
- Reminding of tasks to ensure understanding

(Gavin, 2023)

The Rate of FASD in School Aged Children is

1 in 20

(CDC, 2023)



Many People with FASD also have a Learning Disability / Disorder:

Researchers estimate that 10% of people in the U.S. receive an LD diagnosis at some point in their lives.

- Dyslexia
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyspraxia
- Executive Function Disorder (EFD)

(Cleveland Clinic).

Talking about education? Give **FASD** a seat at the table!



What are Executive Skills?

Daily tasks involving problem solving, adaptability, memory, flexible thinking, and making plans.

What is Adaptive Function?

Demands related to engaging with unique environments and social settings in an effective way.

With a prevalence of 1 in 20, there is likely at least 1 student with FASD in every classroom.



Teachers can have a vital role in screening students for **executive skills** and **adaptive functioning**.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, October 5). Up to 1 in 20 U.S. school children may have fasds. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/1in20.html>

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