

I AM A CAREGIVER

FOR A PERSON WITH FASD

THE CHALLENGES

AGE 0-2:

- Sensory integration issues including aversion to touch, light and sound are common
- Failure to thrive due to feeding difficulties
- Significant difficulties in emotional regulation
- Sleeping patterns may be disrupted
- Major developmental milestones are missed

Age 2-5:

- Problems learning and understanding language
- Children are easily overstimulated
- Struggles with transitions and activity changes
- Hyperactivity
- Oppositional behaviours
- Difficulties in learning through consequences

Age 5-10:

- Struggles in school due to inattention, hyperactivity, language difficulties and oppositional behaviours
- Difficulties in planning and following routines
- Major sleep problems
- Sensory issues and environmental sensitivities

Age 10-15:

- Children with FASD are easily influenced by peers
- Behaviour issues can escalate and may include theft, lying and violence
- Struggles with abstract concepts like money and time
- Lack of empathy and significant social difficulties
- Underdeveloped emotion regulation skills

Age 15-20:

- Sexual health, drugs and alcohol use are risk areas
- Continued struggles with impulse control, planning and understanding abstract concepts (math etc)
- Oppositional behaviours and possible violence
- Depression and other disorders may appear
- Reach legal adulthood – developmentally immature

Adulthood and Beyond:

- Adults often appear more competent than they are
- Difficulty holding employment
- Involvement with the legal system
- Unintended pregnancy and parenthood
- Continued risky/impulsive behaviours
- Addictions

THE SUPPORT I NEED

RESPIRE

I need access to respite services so I can restore my own emotional reserves.

EARLY INTERVENTION

I need access to early intervention to help me maximize my child's skill development.

SPECIALISTS

I need access to specialists that can help with developmental delays.

DISABILITY FUNDING

I need access to additional funding to support my child's life-long needs.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

I need a school with funding to provide my child with individualized educational supports.

TRAINING

I need training on meeting challenges, caring for myself and helping my child succeed.

BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORT

I need access to specialists that can advise me on dealing with difficult behaviours.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

I need community programs that give my child a chance to be social and successful.

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

I need medical professionals that understand the challenges of FASD.

INFORMATION AND PLANNING

I need information on what options exist for my child in adulthood

LEGAL HELP

I need access to legal advice related to lifespan planning and any legal system problems.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

I need to know that the person I have cared for will have ongoing financial support.

MY CAREGIVING JOB

- Foster healthy attachment through responsive caregiving
- Learn my child's likes and dislikes
Provide a controlled and stable environment for my child
- Seek early intervention and occupational therapy programs

- Establish regular routines with extra attention to activity transitions
- Provide extra opportunities for language learning
- Learn the early signs of overstimulation and behaviour issues
- Exercise patience and consistency

- Develop a learning plan with my child's school and teacher
- Provide a consistent, predictable routine
- Modify my child's environment to reduce sensory stresses
- Address challenging behaviours immediately as they develop

- Monitor behaviour and friends closely
- Seek professional help for major behaviour issues
- Create a plan with my child to address emotional episodes
- Teach my child about social situations with many cues and reminders

- Proactively talk about major issues like sex, drugs and alcohol use
- Get help immediately for extreme behaviours or psychological symptoms
- Plan for my child's adulthood, trusteeship & guardianship
- Talk about my child's goals and dreams

- Continue to provide support with daily living activities
- Ensure a safe and supportive living environment
- Help others understand that while the person I care for may look mature, they have a life-long disability and face many challenges

MY JOB IS NOT EASY * MY CHILD WILL FACE CHALLENGES * BUT WITH SUPPORT ... WE CAN THRIVE

For more FASD support within
Aotearoa go to fasd-can.org.nz



FASD-CAN
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
Care Action Network

This document is intended to support caregivers with some of the challenges identified through a broad literature review on developmental issues and FASD. This description of challenges may not apply to all children. You and your child's care team are best informed about your child's strengths and support requirements. Please contact professional supports for the individual you are caring for if you have concerns. While challenges within this document are identified, supports for caregivers are framed within a strengths-based perspective.

This document is produced by the Education and Training Council of Alberta (2016). Contact Dorothy Badry | badry@ucalgary.ca