

# Managing Young People with FASD in Australia

## Strategies for Classroom Settings

**Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a complex and life-long condition caused by prenatal alcohol exposure.** It is characterised by a range of physical, cognitive, and behavioural impairments that can present significant challenges for individuals with FASD, as well as their families and educators.

In Australia, it is estimated that 2-5% of the population may have FASD, with many of these individuals attending school and requiring support in the classroom.

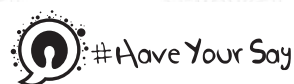
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## Understanding FASD

**Before discussing strategies for managing young people with FASD in a classroom setting, it is important to understand the condition and its impact on individuals.** FASD is a brain-based disability that can affect a person's ability to learn, communicate, and regulate their behaviour. It can also impact their social skills, memory, and attention. Individuals with FASD may present with a range of behavioural challenges, such as impulsivity, hyperactivity, and difficulty with social cues. They may also struggle with academic tasks, particularly in the areas of reading, writing, and math.



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## Strategies For Classroom Management

### 1 Establish a structured routine

Individuals with FASD often struggle with transitions and changes in routine. Establishing a structured routine can help to reduce anxiety and increase predictability. This can include visual schedules, daily checklists, and consistent routines for classroom activities.

### 2 Use visual aids

Visual aids, such as pictures, diagrams, and videos, can be helpful for individuals with FASD who may struggle with verbal instructions or abstract concepts. These aids can be used to support learning, communication, and behaviour management.

### 3 Reduce distractions

Individuals with FASD may be easily distracted by sensory input, such as noise, movement, or bright lights. Reducing distractions in the classroom can help to improve focus and attention. This can include providing a quiet workspace, reducing visual clutter, and using noise-cancelling headphones.

### 4 Provide positive reinforcement

Positive reinforcement can be a powerful tool for behaviour management in individuals with FASD. This can include verbal praise, tangible rewards, and social recognition. It is important to provide reinforcement immediately following the desired behaviour, and to be consistent and specific in feedback.

### 5 Use a multi-sensory approach

Individuals with FASD may benefit from a multi-sensory approach to learning, which engages multiple senses in the learning process. This can include hands-on activities, movement breaks, and sensory play.

### 6 Provide accommodations

Accommodations, such as extra time for tasks, modified assignments, and assistive technology, can help to support academic success in individuals with FASD. It is important to work with the individual and their family to determine appropriate accommodations based on their specific needs.

### 7 Partner with families

Partnering with families is critical for supporting young people with FASD in the classroom. Families can provide valuable insights into the individual's strengths and challenges, as well as strategies for behaviour management and academic support.

## Conclusion

Managing young people with FASD in a classroom setting can be challenging, but with the right strategies and supports, it is possible to promote academic success and positive behaviour.



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for The Voice

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