

# Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in Australia

## In Juvenile Justice

**Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a lifelong condition that is caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol.** It can result in a range of physical, cognitive, and behavioural impairments. Young people with FASD are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system in Australia. Managing young people with FASD in a juvenile justice setting requires a tailored approach that considers their unique needs and challenges.



FASD is a lifelong condition that is caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol.



### 1 Recognise the signs of FASD

Young people with FASD may exhibit a range of symptoms, including difficulty with memory, executive functioning, and social skills. They may also struggle with impulsivity, hyperactivity, and emotional regulation. It's important to recognise these symptoms and understand that they are a result of a brain injury.



### 2 Conduct a comprehensive assessment

A comprehensive assessment can help identify the specific needs and strengths of a young person with FASD. This assessment should include a review of their medical history, cognitive functioning, and behavioural functioning. It's important to involve multidisciplinary professionals such as neuropsychologists, speech pathologists, and occupational therapists to complete a comprehensive assessment.

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### 3 Develop a tailored approach

Young people with FASD require a tailored approach that considers their unique needs and challenges. This may involve developing individualised care plans that address their specific needs and strengths. A tailored approach may include strategies such as visual aids, clear and concise instructions, and positive reinforcement.

### 4 Provide a structured and predictable environment

Young people with FASD benefit from a structured and predictable environment. This may involve providing a consistent routine, clear expectations, and a calm and supportive environment. It's important to avoid sudden changes or disruptions to their routine.

### 5 Provide support for emotional regulation

Young people with FASD may struggle with emotional regulation. It's important to provide support and strategies for managing emotions, such as mindfulness techniques, breathing exercises, or counselling.

### 6 Provide education and training

Education and training can help young people with FASD understand their condition and develop skills for managing their challenges. This may include education on FASD, social skills training, and training on daily living skills.

### 7 Involve family and support networks

Young people with FASD benefit from the involvement of their family and support networks. It's important to involve these networks in the young person's care and provide them with education and support on how to manage their specific needs and challenges.

Managing young people with FASD in a juvenile justice setting requires a tailored and multidisciplinary approach. By recognising the signs of FASD, conducting a comprehensive assessment, and developing a tailored approach, young people with FASD can receive the support and care they need to succeed, and shake the stigma and culture of shame.



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Download our community resources.

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