

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in Australia

Information for Teachers

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a group of conditions caused by prenatal alcohol exposure. It is a leading cause of preventable intellectual disability in Australia. FASD can affect individuals for their entire lives and have significant impacts on families, communities, and society. As a teacher, it is important to be aware of FASD and how it may affect your students.

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Prevalence

The prevalence of FASD in Australia is unknown but estimates suggest that up to 5% of the population may be affected. **FASD is more common in certain populations, including Indigenous Australians and those living in remote or disadvantaged areas.**

Impact on Learning

Individuals with FASD may face challenges in the classroom due to their cognitive, behavioural, and social difficulties. These challenges may include difficulty with memory, attention, communication, and following instructions. Individuals with FASD may also struggle with social interactions, which can impact their ability to make friends and engage in group work.

Accommodations

Teachers can make accommodations to support students with FASD. These accommodations may include providing clear and concise instructions, using visual aids, breaking tasks into smaller steps, and providing additional support or repetition. **Teachers can also provide a structured and predictable environment, which can help students with FASD feel more comfortable and secure.**



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Awareness and Training

Teachers can raise awareness about FASD and provide training for their colleagues. This can include information about the causes and symptoms of FASD, as well as strategies for supporting students with FASD in the classroom. Teachers can also work with families and other professionals to ensure that students with FASD receive the support they need.



Collaboration

Collaboration with parents, caregivers, and other professionals is important for supporting students with FASD. Teachers can work with families and other professionals to develop individualised education plans (IEPs) and identify appropriate accommodations and support. Teachers can also collaborate with speech therapists, occupational therapists, and other professionals to provide a coordinated approach to support.



Conclusion

FASD is a complex condition that can have significant impacts on individuals and their families. As a teacher, it is important to be aware of FASD and how it may affect your students. **By providing accommodations, raising awareness, collaborating with families and professionals, and being inclusive, teachers can support students with FASD and create a more inclusive classroom.**



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