

FASD across the lifespan

<i>DOMAIN</i>	<i>Preschool aged children</i>	<i>Primary school</i>	<i>Young people</i>	<i>Adults</i>
<i>Sensory</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be over-sensitive to light, noise, stimulation, busy environments. May overreact with anger or running away when they hear loud noises • May be under aware of sensory input – may not be aware of hunger, thirst, temperature or pain • May avoid or seek out sensations - e.g. sand, dirt, playdoh, dislike labels on clothing • Dislike hair brushing, teeth cleaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with regulation in busy environments, e.g. classroom • May be inappropriately intrusive, not understanding personal space • May want to smell or touch items in the environment • As for pre-schoolers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties managing school environment • May find it harder to concentrate in noisy and bright environments e.g. classroom • May be tactile or respond strongly to smell • Difficulty with multiple conversations or talking with the TV on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty coping with challenging environments such as group discussions, being on a team • Easily overtired; may need to work in short bursts • May have difficulty socialising or working in noisy environments • May be affected by bright lights, perfumes, or other sensory input
<i>Emotional regulation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty regulating emotions, leading to tantrums, meltdowns, withdrawal, tearfulness, angry outbursts • Anxiety, separation anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty coping with frustration, conflict • May be angry, aggressive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional dysregulation may include aggression, self-harming • Mental health conditions – anxiety, depression, mood disorders may emerge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have mental health diagnosis, self-harming or suicidal thoughts • May have difficulty controlling aggression or offending behaviour • Difficulty coping with pressured situations
<i>Communication Receptive/ expressive language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech delays, slow to develop language, fewer words and less complex language • Difficulty following simple verbal instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty following or remembering 2-3 step verbal instructions • May say they understand, but lack real comprehension • May be able to repeat instructions, but not put into practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receptive or expressive difficulties continue. • May have superficially good verbal communication skills, but conversation may be lacking depth • May appear to understand instructions, but not be able to follow through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May say they understand and agree, but fail to follow through e.g. “talk the talk”, but not “walk the walk” • Misunderstanding communication or expectations
<i>Social Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social skills – slower to develop social skills such as sharing, turn taking, slower to develop cooperative play skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to make friends, but has difficulty understanding social rules and expectations • Difficulty with sharing, turn taking, following rules • May prefer to play with younger children or spend time with an adult • Difficulty reading body language or facial expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty making and keeping friends • Few friends and superficial friendships • Behaviour may seem immature to peers • May make social ‘faux pax” • May not show social skills e.g. remorse or take responsibility for actions, affecting peer relationships • Vulnerability to exploitation or being taken advantage of by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor social skills, limited support networks and few genuine friendships, may be isolated or struggle with social contact

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<i>Adaptive function/skills of daily life</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in toilet training, learning to dress or self-care skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need supervision for self-care - e.g. dressing, showering • May have toileting difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May continue to struggle with independence in self-care or household tasks • May need more supervision when cooking, etc., than expected for age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggle with tasks of adult life including managing a household, cooking, cleaning and self-care. • May struggle with skills of parenting and have difficulty parenting children safely
<i>Attention</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor concentration – short attention span • Difficulty focussing for periods of time, moving from one thing to another, lacking focus, • Difficulty sitting still 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have ADHD • Difficulties focussing in the classroom • Difficulties in filtering out noise, easily distracted • Forgets instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have ADHD • Loses belongings at school, forgets timetable. • Difficulty multi-tasking • May get fixated on an interest or topic and have difficulty shifting attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have ADHD – may be undiagnosed • Difficulty focussing on tasks, forgets information, doesn't follow through.
<i>Cognition/ Thinking and Reasoning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges in learning routines, rules, expectations or following simple instructions. • Difficulty adjusting to changes to routine. • May have intellectual disability or normal IQ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with abstract concepts – e.g. telling time, ownership (which can result in stealing) • May be very literal and argumentative • Difficulty seeing others' point of view • Challenges in learning routines, rules, expectations or following multi-step instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning difficulties impact on school performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to have developed coping strategies which mask underlying impairments • Learning difficulties make it harder to learn new skills such as in workplace or parenting skills
<i>Memory</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty remembering information and routines • May learn and then forget facts – e.g. colours, shapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty remembering routines or rules, even when they happen every day. • May have difficulty remembering what is learned, or may seem to learn but then forget what has been learned • May make up stories to fill memory gaps – not intentionally lying - “confabulation” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have difficulty telling an accurate account of events • May lose belongings, forget timetable, forget to bring or complete homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty remembering appointments or agreements • May not remember what was spoken about earlier • Forgets to take medication, eat regularly or follow through plans; needs prompting

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<i>Executive Function - planning and decision making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impulsivity • Risk taking – running, climbing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impulsivity • May get ‘stuck’ on something - e.g. “perseveration”. Can’t be distracted or shifted • Disorganised, can’t plan to start or complete tasks • Loses belongings • Inattentiveness and impulsivity becomes more problematic as the expectations on child to self-regulate increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impulsivity leading to risk taking • Difficulty planning and organising self, managing a locker or belongings • Difficulty coping with new situations, managing time or money, and being independent - e.g. using public transport. The gap between their peers widens as expectations increase • Lack of inhibition may lead to socially inappropriate and/or sexually inappropriate behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with skills of adult life, such as managing money, negotiating bills or payments, banking, loans, housing or Centrelink • Challenges in the workplace • Difficulties with planning, problem solving and emotional regulation may impact on getting or keeping a job • More difficult to change behaviours, leave abusive relationships, engage in alcohol or drug treatment, work with child protection or comply with court conditions
<i>Academic skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slower to learn and write letters and numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild delays become more noticeable over time • May struggle more with maths than reading or writing. Recognises words, but may not comprehend sentences when reading • Difficulty with abstract concepts – e.g. time, money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with abstract concepts • Reading skills e.g. reading aloud more advanced than comprehension • Gap between child and their peers increasing as academic expectations increase • Falling further behind peers, as world becomes increasingly abstract • Greater difficulty mastering new academic skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with literacy and numeracy in adult life • Difficulty meeting deadlines or handing in work • May write very slowly • Learns from example/doing more than from verbal instruction
<i>Secondary Effects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meltdowns, tantrums, defiance and angry outbursts • Frustration and anger; hitting and hurting others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with a negative peer group • Withdrawing, loneliness, isolation or exclusion • Defiance, running away, disengaging • Aggression, towards children or teachers • Suspension, school exclusion and school refusal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioural disruption • Being unmotivated or disengaging • School avoidance, refusal, exclusion • Being wrongly labelled lazy, stubborn, not trying, intentionally or wilfully misbehaving • Involvement in criminal behaviour • Self-harming or suicidality • Inappropriate sexual behaviours • Being exploited by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be in abusive relationships or be sexually or financial exploited • Criminal involvement • May exhibit abusive behaviours towards others, showing impulsivity rather than planning • Difficulty finding or keeping a job • Drug and alcohol problems • Mental health problems