

IDENTIFYING FASD IN THE CLASSROOM

Family history of substance use or alcohol use during pregnancy should trigger an immediate consideration of FASD

Red Flags

Red Flags are helpful tools to bring attention to situations where Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) may warrant consideration. With the exception of a direct notification of alcohol exposure in utero, individual red flags are not necessarily representative of FASD; however, when multiple red flags occur in the same individual, it is essential to consider the possibility of FASD as a contributing factor.



School dropout and expulsion rates are significantly higher for students with FASD.

-CDC, 2023; Taylor & Enns, 2018; May et al., 2018

Children who are adopted or who have experienced out-of-home care are five times more likely to have FASD.

-Chasnoff et al., 2016; Popova et al., 2018

- Multiple mental health diagnoses (especially ADHD, RAD, ODD and mood disorders)
- Discipline does not seem to work, or effects do not last
- Repeat failure despite increasing interventions
- Adaptive functioning much lower than expected based on cognitive ability
- Autistic traits (but may or may not meet full criteria for autism)
- Acts younger than expected for their age
- Atypical social relationships
- Receptive language lower than expressive language (an atypical profile)
- ADHD diagnosis with poor response to ADHD medications
- Significant scatter in cognitive testing profile
- Difficulty learning from one's own mistakes
- Test results and classroom academic performance may not be aligned (often testing demonstrates higher ability than demonstrated in class)
- Significant variability in academic performance from day to day (or within a day) (e.g. knowing and able to demonstrate a skill one day and unable to do so the next)