The Problem

334,547 X 398
The Answer

133,149,706
An individual with an FASD

Lives with a brain injury

and may also be living with one or more of the following:

- Developmental disability
- Cognitive impairment
- Intellectual disability
- Mental health issues
- Social development issues
- Behavioural issues or disorders
While this book has a particular focus on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, people with other disabilities or barriers may also be supported by the strategies in this book.
Strategies for Employment Service Specialists

Other disabilities or barriers supported by the strategies:

- Very long term unemployment (more than two years)
- Lack of confidence and self esteem
- Motivational problems
- Limited education, training or skills
- Limited independent living skills
- Mood disorders including depression
- Anxiety conditions
- Personality Disorders
- Anger/conflict/behavioural difficulties
- Poor communication/language skills
- Learning disorders
- Acquired brain injury
- Intellectual disability
Could you please shovel the ramp?

All these other kids are waiting to use the stairs. When I get through shoveling them off, then I will clear the ramp for you.

But if you shovel the ramp, we can all get in!

Clearing a path for people with special needs clears the path for everyone!
The National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) defines Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) as:

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These effects may include physical, mental, behavioural, and/or learning disabilities with possible lifelong implications. The term FASD is not intended for use as a clinical diagnosis.
| Period of dividing zygote, implantation & bilaminar embryo | CNS. | Heart | Eye | Heart | Ear | Palate | Ear | External Genitalia | Brain | Full Term |
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Cognitive Features

- Memory problems - difficulty storing and retrieving information
- Inconsistent performance
- Impulsivity
- Distractibility
- Disorganization
- Slow auditory pace
- Ability to repeat instructions but inability to turn them into action
- Difficulty with abstractions – math, time, money management
- Inability to predict outcomes or understand consequences

Laporte, Annette et al. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder - FASD Guidebook for Police Officers
If Dad Drinks Alcohol...

Sperm develop over a three-month period and may be damaged by alcohol. Damaged sperm can still fertilize an egg. If this happens, the following may occur:

- Infertility and miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- Low birth weight
- Birth defects
- Learning disabilities
Secondary Disabilities

A 1996 Seattle study of over 400 clients with FAS/E found the following statistics:

- 60% - disrupted school experience
- 60% - trouble with the law
- 50% - go to jail or institution
- 50% - inappropriate sexual behaviour
- 30% - substance abuse
- 80% - unable to live independently
- 80% - problems with employment
- 90% - mental health problems
## Timelines and FASD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Developmental age equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronological Age</td>
<td>====&gt; 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive Language</td>
<td>====&gt; 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>====&gt; 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Money, time concepts</td>
<td>====&gt; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional maturity</td>
<td>====&gt; 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical maturity</td>
<td>====&gt; 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading ability</td>
<td>====&gt; 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>====&gt; 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living skills</td>
<td>====&gt; 11</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

[http://www.come-over.to/FAS/timeline.htm](http://www.come-over.to/FAS/timeline.htm)
Diagnostic Chatagories

1. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS, after excluding other diagnoses)

2. Partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (pFAS), after excluding other diagnoses

3. Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND), after excluding other diagnoses

4. The term alcohol-related birth defects (ARBD) should not be used as an umbrella or diagnostic term, for the spectrum of alcohol effects. ARBD constitutes a list of congenital anomalies, including malformations and dysplasias and should be used with caution

Chudley, et al. 2005 Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder: Canadian guidelines for diagnosis
Diagnostic Team

The Team should consist of the following professionals with appropriate qualifications, training and experience in their particular discipline:

- Coordinator for case management (e.g., nurse, social worker)
- Physician specifically trained in FASD diagnosis
- Psychologist
- Occupational therapist
- Speech-language pathologist

Additional members may include addiction counselors, childcare workers, cultural interpreters, mental health workers, parents or caregivers, probation officers, RCMP, psychiatrists, teachers, vocational counselors, nurses, geneticists or dysmorphologists, neuropsychologists, family therapists.
Experts believe the following:

- Justice Vickers (BC): a significant proportion of criminals live with a mental disorder, including FASD.

- Bruce Ritchie (ON): studies indicate that more than half the prison population was likely exposed to high levels of alcohol prenatally. He further asserts that the current rates of FASD are grossly under-diagnosed and under-reported.

- Dr. Josephine Nanson (SK): FAS affected approximately 50 percent of young offenders appearing in Saskatchewan provincial court.

- Chartrand et al. (Justice Canada) state that up to 61 percent of adolescents and 58 percent of adults who experience conflicts with the legal system have Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND).
Compared to the general population, people with developmental disabilities are:

- More likely to be victims of crime
- Less likely to have their offenders brought to court and convicted
- More likely, if charged, to be convicted and incarcerated


http://www.lawcourtsed.ca/index.cfm?act=main&call=4D406983
The most frequent crimes of offenders with Developmental Disabilities are:

- Sexually-related
- Municipal
- Drug-related
- Assault
- Theft
- Arson
- Murder


http://www.lawcourtsed.ca/index.cfm?act=main&call=4D406983
People with Developmental disabilities are victims of:

- Assault
- Sexual assault
- Robbery
- Physical and sexual abuse

More often than are members of the general population

http://www.lawcourtsed.ca/index.cfm?act=main&call=4D406983
Victims With FASD

*Dr. Sterling Clarren and other researchers in their study of women who had children with a diagnosis of FAS in Seattle, Washington found that:*

- One hundred percent of these people were seriously abused. It was a universal experience. The sexual abuse stories were so horrible that the nurse who did these interviews generally needed therapy herself after she completed these interviews. These folks had really been abused.

- With respect to children, who will grow to be youth and adults in society, Dr. Clarren also stated, “Seventy five percent of kids we see in our clinic have had seen physical abuse. We are not seeing Fetal Alcohol Syndrome folks, we are seeing Fetal Torture Syndrome”.

[Dr. Sterling Clarren, Yukon 2002 Prairie Northern Conference on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome]
Intelligence is the ability to **learn** and **apply** knowledge.

To **learn** includes the ability to:
- Pay attention and focus
- Understand information
- Remember information

To **apply** includes the ability to:
- Use abstract thinking
- Use problem-solving
- Generalize knowledge

http://www.lawcourtsed.ca/index.cfm?act=main&call=4D406983
A person with a Developmental Disability may:

- Have some distinctive physical features
- Behave in a way that draws notice
- Show some physical or sensory disability
- Be actively hiding the disability

http://www.lawcourtsed.ca/index.cfm?act=main&call=4D406983
Deficits vs. Success

Dr. Bertram says that many of the current therapies or interventions being used with children with FASD focus on their deficits – for example, anger management therapy for a child who is acting out in school or extra time devoted to reading or math for a child struggling in those subjects.

“Traditional intervention programs have these kids doing things their brains are not adept at doing, and their success rates are not great. We flipped things around and said, ‘Why don't we build intervention programs based on things they are good at.'”

McIlroy, Anne Jan. 29, 2010 Motor-skill activities hold promise of rewiring children's damaged brains Globe and Mail
Working and Living with an FASD Individual

Structure, structure, structure
- Reduce choices
- Prearrange environments
- Prepare individual for changes

Less talk, more visual/kinaesthetic learning opportunities
- Visual cues
- Asking questions

Be concrete – Don’t assume anything
- Difficulty generalizing
- Poor problem solving skills

Be aware of the ‘time bombs’
- Stimulation levels
- Difficult periods

Adapted from: Empowering our Communities on FAS/E 1998