

Barriers to Learning & Solutions for Students with FASD

Barriers	Possible Strategies & Solutions
Verbal expressive ability is much more advanced than verbal receptive skills or ability to produce written products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not assume that what they say is indicative of what they know • Allow them to provide verbal explanation and interpretation of what something means or have them demonstrate • Reword or repeat instructions • Provide cues and model how to do something
Can't process several directions at once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide one direction at a time. • Give them more time to respond to each direction • Give them cues if they forget • Remember: Student with ODD still won't comply but a child with FASD will complete task. • Create visual task analysis charts • Provide a checklist
Cannot keep track of multiple plans, each with several goals and a number of steps per goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearse with students who will take part in their IEP and then provide checklist. • Provide support to follow plans academic or behavior • Work on one goal at a time.
Can't remember what they were supposed to do when (whether its an hour, day or week after being told)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working and short term memory ideas • Reduce Cognitive Load • Use of texting to remind young adults. • Set alarms or reminders
Cannot understand abstract concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach underlying skills • Provide manipulatives • Use concrete examples • Role play to act out concepts • Provide Examples & NOT-examples of concepts
Cannot filter what they are thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support points of insight & help relate comments to overall • Foster their creative ideas, • Model journaling without censorship or grading • They don't mean to be rude or intrusive, just say what they think. • Model good ways to speak your mind • Provide a quiet environment
Literal thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be careful of specific directions, they will do what they are told. • Do not use sarcasm, joking, similes, metaphors, proverbs, idiomatic expressions. • Do a task analysis of a skill, do not assume that the students will fill in a step • Explain & consider misinterpretations of words
Difficulty with number concepts: time, money, measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide direct instruction for time & money • Provide schedules for month, mark off each day. • Provide support for shopping with a peer to help with money • Set alarms or timer, and use consistent phrases in telling time • Teach Time by association – how long it takes to drive to school

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Try to “go along with the crowd” so that they have friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model their peers, so provide positive ones • Provide Social skills training • Work on Strengths • Identify positive role models and foster those relationships as they won’t thrive on their own • Do better in 1-to-1 situation
Difficulty making & maintaining friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide positive mentors • Foster relationships through strengths & interests • Social skill training so that others do not see them as weird, strange, being inappropriate • Find something that student likes to do and let them do that regardless of their behavior • Be careful about their attitudes about death (people who die get lots of attention, death be at peace)
Does not learn by experiencing consequences of their behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term consequences –no more than 1 day • Do not use natural consequences • USE positive reinforcement - immediately • Use repeated role playing • Do not take away what they like to do as a consequence for their behavior. • Give them second chances
Act oppositional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain might be overloaded • Try using fewer directions or only one • Find out if student knows what to do • Find out if student understands the directions & can do the task • Provide a chill-out space when they start to get frustrated.
Keep breaking the rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather be bad, instead of being stupid. • Make sure rules are simple, in a positive form • Have students explain what the rule means and not just repeat the rule • Act out the rules or see if they can provide a Not-Example
Problems with lying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students do not have a good sense of a timeline, so they fill in the gaps • Discover the “purpose” of the lying, a behavior analysis • Verify the person’s story from credible sources, not always peers. • Not always connect between what they feel, to how they act so they might “look” like lying.
Problems with verbal outbursts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask if they need help and be available if they do • Look for signs of stress and give them time to regroup • Provide a quiet environment to distress • Consider cognitive overload • Provide more opportunities for them to succeed
Problems with Adaptive Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct instruction for daily living skills • Increase support for older students by providing relevance of academic skills to daily living • Understand that supporting typical organization skills is not enabling
Say they know what they need to do and cannot do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have them act out what to do • Have them complete an example • Provide guided practice