

FASD 201: Handout 8

Accommodation Strategies

There is not one intervention that applies to everyone. It will be necessary to customize strategies based on individual strengths and traits. Some recommendations are research based, others are anecdotal. More research is needed in the field of FASD intervention strategies.

Environmental and Situational Adaptations

To best understand the individuals with whom you are working, stop and observe their behaviors with in the context of their brain-based disorder. You cannot directly change their behavior, but you can modify their environment to address the situation causing their behavior.

- Eye contact is useful to engage their listening skills
- Structure and routine help address executive functioning deficits.
 - Recess
 - Travel
 - Transitions
- Free play is important, but there can be structure. For example, give limited choices during “down-time”.
- Consistent discipline and response to experiences are beneficial for children. The “just this once” strategy is difficult for children to process.
- Emotional rewards should take precedence over material rewards.
- Symbols and labels show consistency in the environment at home and at school
- Minimizing stimulation can reduce stress caused by processing concerns.
- Physical movement can redirect energy.
 - Gross Motor movement (running and jumping)
 - Extra-curricular activities (Individual sports may be more successful)
 - Physical exercise can boost learning and memory because it stimulates certain areas of the brain.
- Fine Motor
 - Fidgets to fiddle with
 - chewing gum while focusing on writing, etc.
- Hypersensitive children might need accommodations to reduce the intensity of the senses.
 - Sunglasses can reduce bright lights.
 - Soft clothing can soothe sensitive skin.
 - Avoid crowds or Exit situations if concerns arise.
 - Avoid loud noises.
 - Minimize excessive touching.
- Hyposensitive might not process sensations

- Don't over dress children in hot weather because they might not acknowledge excessive body temperature.
- Watch for hunger cues or provide food at regular intervals because they may not sense hunger.
- Bear hug and deep pressure massage may help calm some children.
- Work with children to learn about appropriate personal space since they may not be aware that it makes others uncomfortable.
- Individuals can be hypersensitive to some stimuli and hyposensitive to others. Reactions can also be situational. It takes time and observation to problem solve.
- Social
 - Playmates should be appropriate to his or her functional age rather than his/her chronological age – which may differ.
 - Supervision of play interaction can prevent negative interactions with peers.
 - When possible, brief, structured, at home peer interactions are best to build a foundation with playmates.
 - Identify areas of shared interest to identify friends.
 - Positive reinforcement
 - Child Friendship Training is a formal way to improve social skills.
 - Peer entry into a group at play
 - Conflict avoidance and negotiation
 - Adaptation for FASD:
 - Review the concrete steps of social interactions, including “buzzwords”
 - Oral and written instruction
 - Repetition
 - Clear expectations and reflection communicated by an adult facilitator
 - Verbal modification at the child's developmental language level (avoiding analogies, metaphors, etc)

Academic Adaptations

- Formal assessments can help determine accommodations, but are not critical for problem solving academic environmental accommodations
 - IQ testing
 - Neuropsychological testing to identify learning styles
- Parent and teacher understanding of the brain based disease and how it presents in children
 - Translate behavior and Evaluate possible causes
 - Check for understanding: Fidgeting – may mean they don't understand material
 - Review stimuli to see if sensory integration may be an issue
 - Hitting others might mean that others are violating the child's space
- Positive Behavioral Supports
 - School-wide efforts or programs targeting specific groups or individuals – or both

- A Pro-active, not reactive, campaign to focus on appropriate behaviors and expectations
- Frequent, consistent reinforcement (consequences) of positive behaviors and, when necessary, negative behaviors
- Measurable outcomes that are meaningful and contextually appropriate
- Addressing behavior can improve academics
- Classroom accommodations to reduce external stimulation so students focus on learning
 - Less clutter
 - Reduce stimuli
 - Teach in front of a plain, non distracting background
 - Seat assignments provide necessary structure
- Accommodation to help students grasp the concept of time
 - Visual schedules, including pictures and symbols
 - Consistent routines with minimal transitions and signals
 - Explain time in relation to concrete tasks (length of a movie, drive to school)
- Concrete, step-by-step directions. Give as few or as many as a student can process at one time.
- Teach using multiple methods
 - Written
 - Oral
 - Manipulatives
 - Relationships and comparisons (A student might think a bicycle and candy bar cost the same amount.)
- Repetition of instructions and concepts increases comprehension.
- Targeted skills trainings, including computer software programs which can provide immediate, constant feedback, as well as strengthening fine motor skills.
- Pair -up “buddies” that work together or transition together
- Parent assisted homework assignments
- Immediate consequences
- Use positive directions such as “Keep your chair on the floor” rather than “Don’t tip your chair”.
- Incorporate and permit large motor movement in non-traditional workspaces
 - Standing at a desk
 - Laying on the floor
 - Replacing a chair with an exercise ball
 - Walking breaks

Adapted From:

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