

Chapter 3: Organizing for instruction

Many students with FASD require a specialized approach in different areas of their educational programming. Some students may show characteristics of FASD, but do not have a diagnosis. The following classroom strategies may be beneficial to organizing and supporting learning for all these students.

There are no perfect or fail-proof instructional strategies. Successful instruction is dependent on thoughtfully matching strategies with students' needs, trying out strategies in more than one context, observing and assessing how students respond, and using this new understanding to adapt instruction. Teachers need to ask themselves not *how can I teach this?* but rather, *how will my students best learn this?*⁴⁰

All of the educational strategies in this resource are based on the collective wisdom and experiences of teachers, consultants, parents and other professionals who have worked with or raised children with prenatal alcohol exposure. Until there are controlled, published research studies of strategies that are successful with students with FASD, teachers need to rely on the best practices identified by educators and parents.⁴¹ What may work with one student with FASD will not necessarily be successful with the next. This group of students is heterogeneous in their levels of performance, and patterns of strengths and difficulties. Teachers can adapt these strategies to best meet the individual needs of their students. Using a flexible, thoughtful approach, and maintaining an accepting and supportive attitude, are key to effective programming for these students.

A number of relevant instructional strategies are described in Alberta Learning's *Programming for Students with Special Needs* series, including *Teaching for Student Differences* (Book 1), *Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities* (Book 6), and *Teaching Students with Emotional Disorders and/or Mental Illnesses* (Book 8).

Structure the physical learning environment

Structuring the physical school and classroom environment contributes to effective educational programming for students with FASD. A thoughtfully structured physical environment can also benefit other students with special needs.

Many students with neurological impairments react to their physical environments in atypical ways. Because of poor sensory processing, they may not perceive physical stimuli as other students might. These students may become distracted in a typical elementary classroom that has bright lights, a number of activities happening simultaneously or loud noise levels. They may have difficulty focusing their attention and may become overwhelmed in stimulating classrooms. Some students may even hide under their desks or in a corner to reduce stimuli. Others may run wildly around the room, talk loudly to themselves or act out in other ways. Planning a safe, calm, flexible, efficient instructional setting will make instruction and learning more effective. The goal is to match the level of physical stimuli with a student's ability to make sense of stimuli from the environment. Students with FASD benefit from a structured, supportive approach to creating and modifying the learning environment.

40. Politano and Paquin 2000.

41. Kleinfeld and Wescott 1993.

Use the Environmental Scan of the Classroom, Appendix A6, pages 116–117, to assess the physical set-up of the classroom and how it might affect learning and behaviour.



Create a calm, quiet environment.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Use carpeting on the floor, or a portion of the floor, to reduce the noise level. Carpeting should be plain or neutral coloured so that it is not visually distracting.
- ▶ Put tennis balls or carpet pieces on the ends of the legs of desks or chairs to reduce noise as students move their desks and chairs.
- ▶ Use acoustic ceiling tile to reduce the amount of sound reflected from the ceiling back into the classroom.
- ▶ Note if there are any noises that are bothersome and take steps to reduce them, e.g., buzzing or humming lights and heating pipes, sounds of passing traffic and noises from other classrooms.
- ▶ Use headphones for quiet time. Students with FASD are not always able to block out noises and may be distracted by a teacher talking with another student or even a ticking clock.⁴²
- ▶ Set a quiet tone with relaxing music.
- ▶ Use study carrels to break up the space in the classroom. Such partitions can reduce classroom noise and visual distractions. They also decrease social interactions between students during independent work time.
- ▶ Arrange classroom furniture and partitions to create traffic patterns that discourage running and decrease students' tendencies to bother each other while they work.
- ▶ Reduce decorations, posters and displays on the walls.
- ▶ Consider using window coverings to reduce the effects of noise, temperature and light.

42. Reproduced with permission from Judith Kleinfeld and Siobhan Wescott (eds.), *Fantastic Antoine Succeeds! Experiences in Educating Children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome* (Fairbanks, AK: University of Alaska Press, 1993), p. 335.



Organize the space and furniture for flexibility in instruction.

Samples of specific strategies

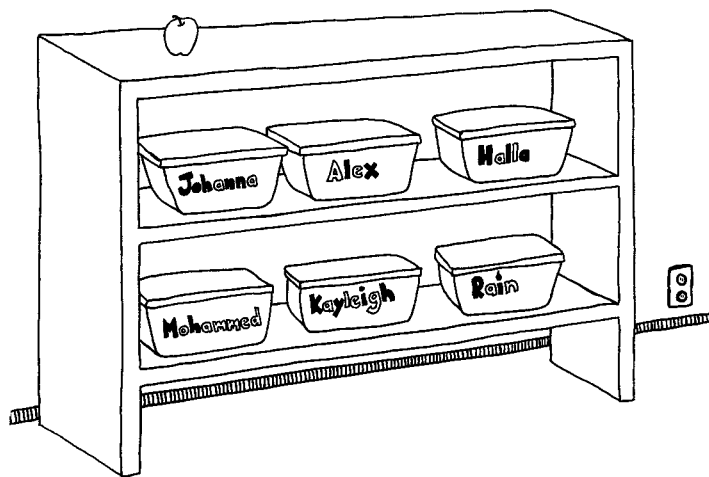
- ▶ If there is sufficient space, organize the classroom into several distinct activity areas. For example, the room can be organized with a computer area, a science area, an art area or other areas devoted to specific subjects and activities. In each place, students learn that they are to do specific tasks.
- ▶ Use study carrels and other independent spaces as “private offices” where students can work. These carrels can be used to limit distractions or as a place for students to calm down and regain composure after behavioural outbursts. Carrels should not be associated with punishment where students are sent only when misbehaving.
- ▶ Create separate workspaces for different tasks or different parts of the day. For example, a table at the front of the classroom can be used for group instruction or seatwork. Tables at a different location can be designated for small group work or independent work.



Organize personal workspaces to promote organization and develop independent work habits.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Give students additional space near their desks to organize their belongings. A shelf or plastic tub can be used to store personal materials. Placing items at eye level may make materials easier to find and put away.



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- ▶ Put supplies in boxes. Label the boxes with picture clues as well as words. Ensure that these boxes remain in the same location so students always know where to look for them. Colour code the boxes or their labels, e.g., yellow for language arts, blue for math.⁴³
- ▶ Provide boxes with pencils, pens, pencil crayons, scissors, glue sticks, rulers and paper that students can borrow. Students are able to be more independent if there are classroom supplies they can borrow without asking.⁴³
- ▶ Work cooperatively with individual students to find out what they need to organize themselves. Ask questions like these.
 - “What are some ways to arrange the inside of your desk so that the paper, pencil and eraser are always close at hand?”
 - “What should you do with your homework so that you can always find it quickly?”Brainstorm ideas with students and write down suggestions. Encourage students to choose one or two strategies to focus on.
- ▶ Encourage students to keep track of their own materials by labelling personal items and storage locations with their own names, pictures or a personal symbol in a colour of their choice.
- ▶ Encourage students to place notebooks, pencils, erasers, rulers and other materials in the same spot at the end of each activity.



Ensure lockers are easy to access.

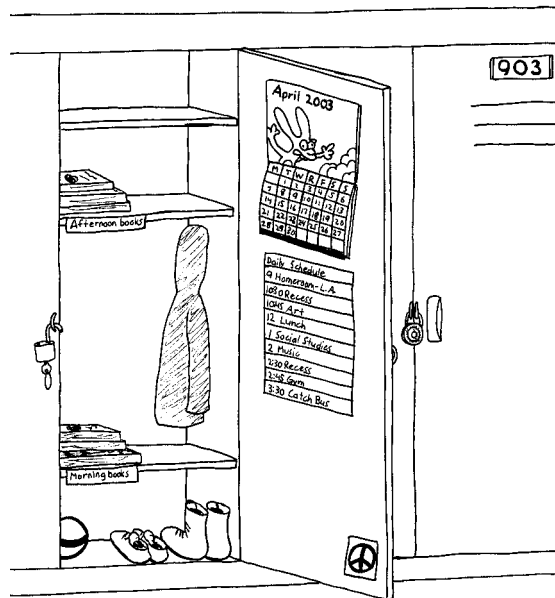
Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Whenever possible, assign individual lockers (versus shared lockers) in a less-travelled location or at the end of the hall.
- ▶ Make sure locks are easy to open. Key locks may be more appropriate than combination locks.
- ▶ Encourage students to keep their lockers organized using strategies, such as keeping books for morning classes on the bottom and afternoon books on the top.
- ▶ Schedule a regular weekly clean-up to keep lockers free of clutter.

43. Adapted with permission from Peggy Lasser, *Challenges and Opportunities: A Handbook for Teachers of Students with Special Needs with a focus on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (pFAS)* (Vancouver, BC: District Learning Services, Vancouver School Board, 1999), p. 76.

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- Post the daily schedule and monthly calendar of assignments on inside of locker doors.



Develop effective routines



Develop consistent routines that support learning.

Teaching a routine effectively requires direct instruction, practice and monitoring. Use clear and concise vocabulary. To avoid confusion, limit conversation during instruction and focus on essential information. New routines can take from two to six weeks to learn.

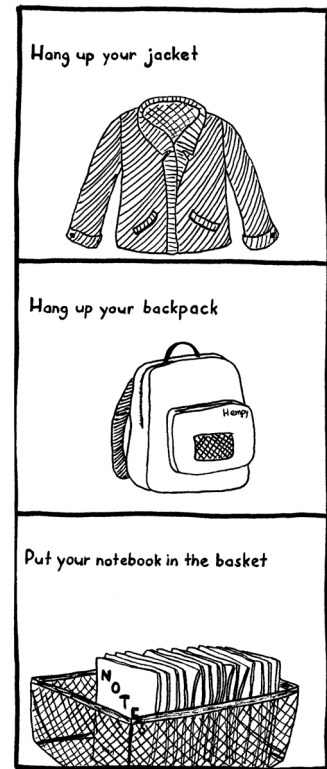
Establishing classroom routines is an important step in classroom organization. Work with students to develop expectations in the following areas:⁴⁴

- coming into class
- interacting with others
- requesting teacher attention, permission or assistance
- accessing supplies or equipment
- maintaining time on task
- completing assignments
- using unstructured time
- requesting choices or alternatives
- requesting time to talk to the teacher about something personal
- knowing what to do in emergencies.

44. Adapted with permission from Edmonton Public Schools, *Planning Student Programs: Health, Grades 1 to 9* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, 1993), Section II, p. 6.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Provide checklists of routines that students can see and use at their desks.
- ▶ Generate checklists for specific routines in the classroom. Strategically place these around the classroom, in the coatroom, listening corner, reading centre and on students' desks, so students are reminded of the routine in those areas.
- ▶ Use a pocket chart to show the activities that are coming up during the school day. Include starting times and other important information.⁴⁵
- ▶ Encourage the use of self-talk as students follow the checklists. Model and practise what to do in each routine. Initially make routines short (one to three steps) and gradually add extra steps.
- ▶ Provide pictures as well as words to describe routines.
- ▶ Teach routines with correction, not consequence.
- ▶ Eventually, encourage students to develop their own sequentially ordered lists of activities and tasks they need to complete regularly. These routines can be related to such areas as personal care or homework.



Teach time concepts

Students with FASD often have difficulty learning and using time concepts. They frequently take many years to learn to tell time using an analog clock. Even if they can read a digital clock or watch, they may not have a real sense of how long a minute, hour or day is. Abstract concepts introduced at the preschool level, such as “yesterday, next week and last year,” may still have little meaning for the junior high student with FASD. When they have to work within a specific time schedule, they may not understand what is required or have strong enough time concepts to meet the demands of the task. Showing time in physical, concrete ways can help these students develop a better sense of time and work more effectively within time limits.

45. Reproduced with permission from Peggy Lasser, *Challenges and Opportunities: A Handbook for Teachers of Students with Special Needs with a focus on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (pFAS)* (Vancouver, BC: District Learning Services, Vancouver School Board, 1999), p. 77.



Create concrete ways to teach time concepts.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Use pictures, charts and large visual formats to teach time. Use items like an egg timer, an hourglass or a growing plant to show change related to time passage.
- ▶ Post a visual chart of the daily schedule with times of activities. This helps students learn that there are patterns and it may reduce students' anxiety about what might be happening next. The chart provides a way for students to independently answer frequently asked questions, such as "What's next? What are we doing today? When is lunch?"
- ▶ Have students tape their own time schedules to their desks or in a specific place in their notebooks or binders. Include pictures of activities for younger students. Students can work through their schedules by removing pictures from the schedule after completing activities, or marking the current activity on the schedule with a paper clip or removable highlighting tape.
- ▶ Use classroom calendars to help students see that there is a predictable pattern to the school week and year. Explaining how calendars work and referring to them ensures students eventually learn time concepts by connecting more abstract concepts with the concrete, visual cues teachers supply.
- ▶ Whenever possible, advise students in advance of changes in the daily routine and schedule. Use several ways to explain the altered time pattern including words, picture charts and printed schedules.



Teach time-management skills.

Sample of a specific strategy

- ▶ Help students learn to use planning and assignment books to record their activities and assignments. At first it may be necessary to custom design easy-to-use formats with large squares and clearly labelled sections. Eventually, students should keep their own daily calendars.

Build skills for participating in whole class instruction

Just like other children, students with FASD almost always want to be part of the group and have friends. However, because of their cognitive and behavioural difficulties, they may lack skills for participating appropriately unless situations are planned to prevent potential problems.

At times, students with FASD may be overstimulated in group settings. Group size and the nature of the activity, as well as the time of day, may influence how well they can attend and participate. One student with FASD may work well in a small specialized group but may be out of control in a larger classroom. Each student must be assessed individually for his or her ability to perform in various groups and in various environments.



Use instructional techniques that increase students' capacity to focus and attend.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Ensure students have stopped the task they are working on before giving instructions for the next task. Give warnings that a change in activity will occur by turning off the lights, playing a particular piece of music or ringing a bell.
- ▶ Provide instruction in focusing and attention-training techniques, such as visualization, self-talk, organizational strategies and the ability to attribute personal success to personal effort.
- ▶ Use nonverbal cues and prearranged “secret” signals to regain students’ attention. Avoid drawing unnecessary attention to or embarrassing students by constantly calling their names. A secret signal could be moving to the area in front of their desks cueing that they need to listen or they will be called on next. A special hand signal may also work.
- ▶ Encourage students to keep their desks clear of all materials except for those required for the task at hand.



Use planning and pacing to increase students' capacity to attend to and follow oral instruction.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Move into new areas of academic instruction gradually, always reviewing past material so students can experience some degree of success.
- ▶ Preview new concepts and vocabulary at the beginning of learning activities, and highlight important concepts again at the end.
- ▶ Provide directions and new information in clear, well-articulated and simply constructed sentences with natural pauses. Allow students time to process between sentences. Be precise and concise in your instructions.
- ▶ Simplify directions by making them as specific as possible to the task at hand.
- ▶ Divide assignments into short, manageable tasks. Give directions for each short task.

- ▶ Move around the classroom. To cue individual students to pay attention, stand by them, place a hand on their shoulders or desks, or move closer. Use eye contact and visually scan the classroom to focus students' attention.
- ▶ Ensure students understand the sequence of instructions given before beginning any independent work. Ask students to repeat instructions in their own words and demonstrate what they are being asked to do. Many students can repeat instructions verbatim, but do not know how to transfer that set of verbal directions into specific behaviours.
- ▶ Review instructions on an individual basis for students who have comprehension difficulties.



Use visuals to support instruction.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Accompany spoken instructions with written instructions for later reference and to enhance recall.
- ▶ Use visual references, such as pictures, diagrams, graphic organizers, outlines, models and demonstrations, along with verbal instructions and information.
- ▶ Use highlighting pens or cutout frames on overhead transparencies to capture essential features of a task. Use bingo chips and coloured transparency strips to highlight key information on overheads used during instruction. Some students benefit from having a print copy of the overhead master on their desks for easy reference during instruction.
- ▶ Write important information on the board to reinforce and focus students' attention. Use coloured chalk to underline and emphasize specific words and information.



Allow movement and nontraditional approaches to eye contact during listening activities.

Many students with special needs do not appear to be listening when they actually are. Requiring them to sit perfectly still, hands on their laps and eyes on the teacher, often leads to stimulus overload. If they focus on these requirements to control their bodies, they may have difficulty processing what is being said.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ For some students, cultural differences make sustained eye contact problematic. Allow students to attend visually for briefer periods.

- ▶ Some students benefit from being allowed to play with something in their hands, such as plasticene, a small toy or ball, while listening. This physical activity can channel excess tension and provide a release, allowing students to improve their capacity to listen, attend and process information.
- ▶ Some students might benefit from a small inflatable cushion on a chair or on the floor. This type of cushion allows the student to get “the wiggles” out while still sitting.



Structure student groupings.

- ▶ Be flexible when forming student groupings. Try to help the student with FASD become involved with others of the same-age group in positive ways. Observe the student’s performances in groups. Does he or she perform at a higher level of cooperation and engagement when mentored by an older student? Does the student improve when given independent playtime with younger children at his or her developmental level? Try to provide an optimal learning group.
- ▶ When planning group activities, pair the student with FASD with students who act with tolerance toward others. Encourage students to treat each other in positive, accepting ways.
- ▶ Circulate around the room to assist small groups and reinforce cooperative working behaviour.

Teach social and adaptive skills

Many students with FASD have difficulty developing functional and adaptive living skills. These difficulties relate to limitations in cognitive and language capacities, that in turn reflect underlying neurological impairments. Students may have problems with social communication skills and complex thinking, such as planning, predicting, organizing and generalizing.

Many adolescents and adults with FASD appear emotionally immature even if they have normal intelligence levels and adequate academic skills. They often act like children half their chronological age. For example, a 14-year-old with FASD may appear like a seven-year-old emotionally. Because of the discrepancy between chronological age, and adaptive living and social skills age, individuals often have difficulty relating to same-age peers, keeping jobs and following community rules. Teaching functional skills that are culturally relevant is an essential part of educational programming for most students with FASD.

Learning functional and supportive life skills helps students live and succeed in the everyday world. Most students acquire these adaptive skills incidentally and intuitively by observing others, modelling adults and peers, and being surrounded by people who use these social skills. Students with FASD need to be systematically taught these same skills and practise them in the settings where they will be used.

Essential and Supportive Skills for Students with Developmental Disabilities (Alberta Education, 1995) provides examples of life skills in the areas of: domestic and family life, personal and social development, leisure/recreation/arts, citizenship and community involvement, and career development.

A functional life skills program:

- allows for multiple teaching opportunities
- leads to meaningful outcomes for students
- is appropriate to students' developmental levels
- focuses on students' strengths, talents and positive accomplishments so they experience success and feelings of self-worth.

Many individuals with FASD require some form of structured, supported living situation and/or ongoing supervision throughout their lives. They may require assistance in developing appropriate social interaction skills. Some students take longer to acquire skills but are able to achieve relative independence.

To enhance skill development, social skills instruction should begin during early intervention programs and be systematically integrated into all programming areas throughout students' educational experiences.



Assess social and adaptive skills on an ongoing basis.

Assessment of functional life skills should:

- be conducted frequently
- be conducted in the context of the natural environment
- focus on present and future environments in which students will live and work.

An important part of any assessment of adaptive and social skills involves obtaining information from parents through informal interviews. Behavioural scales and checklists can also be helpful in rating the level of student functioning and performance.



Teach skills students need in daily life.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▷ Involve students in selecting the skills they want and need to learn.
- ▷ Develop checklists of basic social and living skills.
- ▷ Teach safety and street-crossing skills.
- ▷ Teach simple money management, social interaction skills and work-related social skills.
- ▷ Teach and reinforce appropriate leisure skills.



Create a supportive learning environment to develop social skills.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Manage the environment so students have opportunities to learn and practise social skills.
- ▶ Teach social skills in natural and supportive environments.
- ▶ Establish clear boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviours.
- ▶ Provide appropriate levels of supervision.
- ▶ Enforce limits over and over.
- ▶ Integrate culturally relevant values, such as making eye contact, giving compliments and asking questions.
- ▶ Focus on the social skills that students will need to be successful in both present and future environments.
- ▶ Use concrete examples and visual aids to enhance social learning.
- ▶ Use praise and reinforce often.
- ▶ Teach skills specific to an environment.
- ▶ Teach critical aspects of communication, such as posture, eye contact, voice quality and proximity.
- ▶ Introduce the concept of seeing things from another person's point of view. Most students need a lot of support with this concept.
- ▶ Teach appropriate ways to express feelings and say "no."
- ▶ Use assessment tools, such as the Getting Along with Others Inventory, Appendix A7, pages 118–119, to help identify and set goals for specific social skills. Consider which inventory items are appropriate for individual students.
- ▶ Offer learning situations that are cooperative versus competitive.
- ▶ Use peer support and mentoring to enhance learning.
- ▶ Encourage students to pursue their personal strengths. Provide at least one experience a day that uses strengths. For example, if a student is musically talented, include a choir practice or music class in his or her daily program.
- ▶ Ensure that students' times for special assistance, such as tutoring or work completion, do not conflict with favourite activities or those times in the day when they can demonstrate strengths and talents.



Use role-playing and practice in context.

One effective instructional strategy for helping students learn new skills is the use of role-plays. Role-playing allows students to try out words and behaviours they need in different situations.

Role-playing is acting out situations, usually without costumes or scripts. The context for the role-playing situation is discussed and roles are selected or assigned. Students have planning time to discuss the situation, choose different alternatives or reactions and plan a basic scenario. Role-plays can be done in pairs with no observers or can be done in front of a supportive group of observers. Sharing the role-play with a larger group encourages accountability, provides opportunities to learn from others and may provide a frame of reference for class discussion. At the conclusion, students have an opportunity to discuss how they felt and what they learned about that particular situation. An important part of role-play is the follow-up discussion.⁴⁶

Role-playing can be done in small groups or as a whole-class activity. Role-plays involving one student and an adult are also effective.

Learning a series of skills in a role-play situation does not guarantee that students can successfully apply those skills in the natural environment. Many students with FASD have difficulty generalizing from role-play situations to daily life. It is often necessary to teach and practise social skills in hallways, cafeterias and other places in the community where they will be required.

Role-playing provides students with opportunities to explore and practise new communication skills in a safe, nonthreatening environment, express feelings, and by taking on the role of another person, “walk in another’s shoes.”⁴⁶

To use role-plays in the classroom:

- always have students role-play positive aspects of skills or situations
- if it is necessary to role-play negative situations, teachers should take on the negative roles
- provide specific situations
- provide time for students to develop and practise their role-plays (five to 10 minutes is usually sufficient)
- limit the use of costumes and props
- provide students with tips for being participants and tips for being observers
- always follow with discussion.⁴⁶

Share the following tips for role-play participants.

- Face the audience, and speak loudly and clearly.
- Don’t rely on props or costumes. Use body language to communicate your message.
- Focus on your role-play partners and the message you want to communicate.⁴⁶

46. From Alberta Learning, *Kindergarten to Grade 9 Health and Life Skills Guide to Implementation* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2002), pp. 83–85.

Share and discuss the following tips for being good observers.

- Show good listening by keeping quiet and still during role-plays.
- Be supportive by clapping and using positive words of encouragement and feedback.
- Laugh at appropriate moments. Do not laugh at role-play participants.⁴⁶

During role-plays, observe how students are handling the situation and consider:

- are concepts being expressed accurately in language and action
- are any students confused or uncertain about the purpose, use of materials or their roles
- are changes needed in space arrangements or materials?⁴⁶

In the classroom, role-plays can be an effective strategy for practising new skills and exploring new ideas. They can address several of the multiple intelligences,⁴⁷ and be motivating and memorable learning activities.⁴⁶ Once students have completed a role-play successfully, teachers can videotape the correct interaction to reinforce the skill. Students can view themselves performing social skills as many times as needed. Watching themselves on video can be motivating for many students.



Use social stories to teach social understanding.

Another effective strategy is the use of social stories. Social stories describe social situations that are difficult or confusing for students. Each story identifies and describes relevant social cues and desired responses to a target situation. They are written at a level that considers students' abilities and learning styles.⁴⁸ Pictures can also be used to help make stories clear.

A social story for a student who has difficulty handling frustration may be accompanied by picture illustrations and read like this:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| If you get upset . . . | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No crying• No hitting the table. |
| You need to . . . | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relax• Put your head down• Have a quiet voice.⁴⁹ |

Many of the social routines outlined in prosocial skills resources, such as *Skillstreaming in Early Childhood* by McGinnis and Goldstein, can be individualized to student needs and become social stories. These social stories can be scripted into simple video role-plays or taped so students can revisit them.

46. From Alberta Learning, *Kindergarten to Grade 9 Health and Life Skills Guide to Implementation* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2002), pp. 83–85.

47. Gardner 1993.

48. From *Teaching Children with Autism, Strategies to Enhance Communication and Socialization* (p. 222) 1st edition by QUILL. © 1996. Reprinted with permission of Delmar Learning, a division of Thomson Learning: www.thomsonrights.com. Fax 800–730–2215.

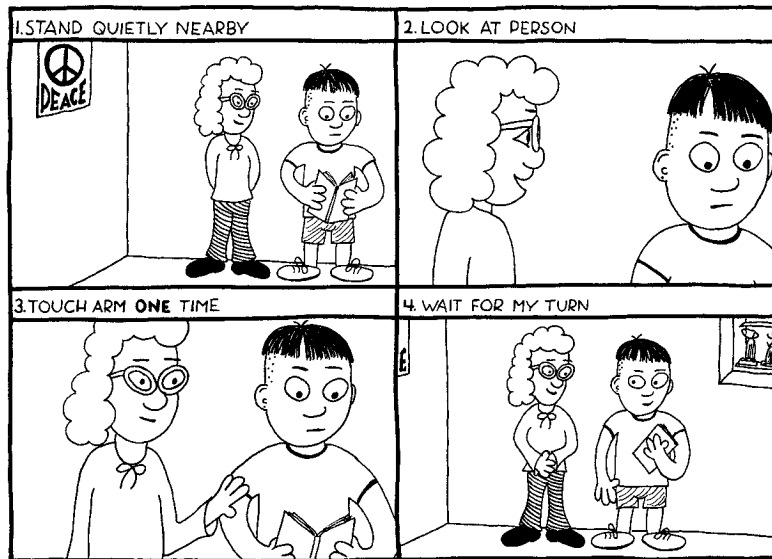
49. Reproduced with permission from Linda Q. Hodgdon, “Solving Social-behavioural Problems Through the Use of Visually Supported Communication,” in Kathleen Ann Quill (ed.), *Teaching Children with Autism* (New York, NY: Delmar Publications, 1995), p. 282. For more information, visit www.usevisualstrategies.com.

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Social stories:

- describe correct behaviours and responses for situations
- have a nonthreatening tone
- translate goals into understandable steps
- teach a variety of appropriate strategies to assist in coping with behaviours, such as aggression, fear or compulsions
- teach new routines and rules
- help students handle changes in routines
- present academic material in a realistic, concrete manner⁵⁰
- teach sequencing skills.

Getting a Person's Attention



Teach bullyproofing skills.

Students with FASD are often gullible and may be vulnerable to teasing, bullying and victimization. Assertiveness training can require high-level thinking skills and a high degree of social awareness. Some students benefit from class discussion of bullyproofing while other students may need one-to-one coaching.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Discuss the many reasons why people bully others, including feelings of unhappiness, loneliness and frustration, illusions of power, and attempts to make themselves feel bigger and stronger. Use concrete examples and simple language.

50. Adapted from Carol Gray (ed.), *The Original Social Story Book* (Jenison, MI: Jenison Public Schools, 1993), p. 1 (Social Story Kit). Adapted with permission from Future Horizons, Inc.

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- ▶ Discuss how students feel when they are bullied. Emotions include fear, sense of helplessness, depression or feelings of powerlessness.
- ▶ Discuss the reasons why people who witness bullying sometimes walk away. Reasons include being scared they'll get hurt, not wanting to be called names, not knowing the people involved or not caring enough to get involved.
- ▶ Outline and role-play specific strategies to help stop bullying. Examples follow.⁵¹
 - In a clear, forceful manner, tell the person who is bullying to stop.
 - Let the person know you are going for help and find a teacher or another adult to step in.
 - Invite a person who gets bullied to have lunch or join in an activity with you.
- ▶ Use class discussion to brainstorm and role-play strategies to avoid being bullied. Strategies include:⁵²
 - stand up straight and look confident
 - diffuse situations with humour, such as snappy comebacks
 - distract bullies with compliments
 - refuse to get into physical fights
 - stick with friends
 - tell someone you trust.
- ▶ Explain how bullying on television or in the movies is often portrayed as funny but in real life, bullying is unpleasant and hurtful.
- ▶ Through class discussion and brainstorming, develop a class tip sheet on strategies for bullying-proofing. Review and post short, simple tips.



Provide appropriate health and sexuality education.

Socially appropriate behaviours must be incorporated into instruction on a regular, systematic basis from an early age. In *Just Say Know*, Hingsburger (1995) outlines several challenges that arise when providing appropriate social-sexual instruction including: confused self-concepts, isolation from heterogeneous groups of peers, lack of sexual knowledge, learned patterns of inappropriate sexual behaviour, inconsistent social-sexual environments and lack of personal power.⁵²

To modify health and sexuality education programs for students with FASD:

- present information in small units
- increase the use of concrete, visual materials
- increase the use of role-play situations to practise skills
- use additional supports, in context, to assist in applying knowledge to everyday situations.

51. The Alberta Teachers' Association 1999.

52. Hingsburger 1995.

Watch for signs of sexual abuse, such as:

- unusual or sophisticated sexual behaviour
- talking about sexual issues in public
- compulsive compliance behaviours
- extremes in behaviour, such as being overly private or lacking a sense of privacy
- changes in daily living skills, social or performance skills
- changes in emotional stability, including loss of emotional response, loss of appetite, avoidance of former close friends, changes in leisure habits
- changes in sexual expression, aggression, noncompliance and accident proneness.⁵²

To build a community of safety that supports students with FASD:

- identify one person in the school that a student trusts and can talk to
- teach students refusal skills—allow opportunities for students to say “no” and have that decision honoured
- develop privacy awareness, and help students develop a healthy self-concept and self-confidence
- remind students not to go with strangers or allow themselves to be manipulated by others
- provide an environment that promotes and supports appropriate interaction skills with others.⁵²

Plan for nonclassroom settings

Students with FASD often experience difficulty adjusting to nonclassroom school settings, such as the playground, school bus or lunchroom. Success in these settings requires extra planning and supports. To work successfully with students with FASD, support personnel, such as bus drivers and lunchroom supervisors, may require extra training and coaching.⁵³



Develop strategies for positive playground and recess experiences.⁵³

Samples of specific strategies⁵³

- ▷ Review expectations and routines for recess shortly before recess.
- ▷ Consider alternatives to recess, such as use of computer room, games room or the gym.
- ▷ Find a student to act as a special buddy to the student with FASD during recess.
- ▷ Provide a clear but limited number of choices.
- ▷ Have teacher aides supervise a select group of students on the playground, if necessary.
- ▷ Allow students with FASD to help supervise younger students during recess.

52. Hingsburger 1995.

53. Adapted, by permission of Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, from *Towards Inclusion: Tapping Hidden Strengths: Planning for Students Who Are Alcohol-Affected* (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 2001), pp. 5.16–5.17.

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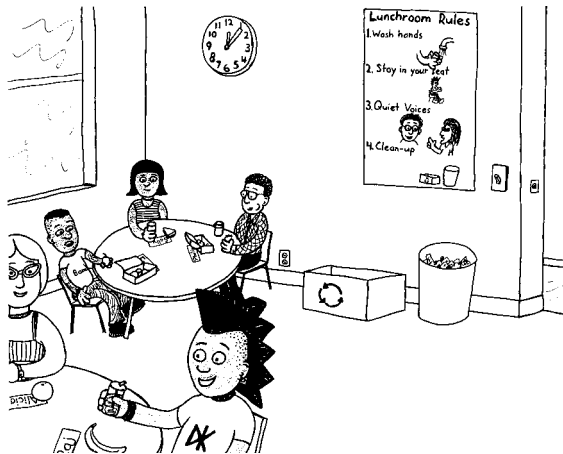
- ▶ Develop a plan for handling emergency situations that occur on the playground.
- ▶ Consider an alternate recess time. Some students benefit from a recess with a small group rather than the entire school population.
- ▶ Structure recess activities to avoid potential problems. Arrange specific activities, teach games, assign equipment, designate areas for individuals to play.



Develop strategies to ensure a safe lunch hour.⁵³

Samples of specific strategies⁵³

- ▶ Provide information and training about lunchroom expectations and routines.



- ▶ Teach a lunch-hour routine.
- ▶ Post lunchroom rules in print and visual formats.
- ▶ Provide training to lunchroom supervisors.
- ▶ Assign seating with appropriate peers in the lunchroom.
- ▶ Arrange activities to fill the lunch break, such as videos, supervised gym activities or art projects.
- ▶ Consider an alternate lunch setting for a small number of students.
- ▶ Develop a plan for handling emergency situations with the school administration.

53. Adapted, by permission of Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, from *Towards Inclusion: Tapping Hidden Strengths: Planning for Students Who Are Alcohol-Affected* (Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 2001), pp. 5.16–5.17.



Develop strategies for riding the school bus.⁵³

Samples of specific strategies⁵³

- ▶ Provide the bus driver with strategies for working with students who have FASD.
- ▶ Provide classroom and on-bus training to students.



- ▶ Use a bus seating plan, placing students who have FASD with appropriate peers.
- ▶ Post bus rules with visual prompts.
- ▶ Teach and reteach routines and expectations.
- ▶ Use social stories to prepare students for the bus ride.
- ▶ Provide the bus driver with a way to communicate concerns.
- ▶ Provide extra supervision on the bus for students with severe difficulties, if necessary.

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Plan for transition to new programs.

Plan activities to help students prepare for smooth transitions to new programs, new environments and from one grade to the next.

Samples of specific strategies

- ▶ Include collaborative, comprehensive transition plans in IPPs.
- ▶ Organize a student support team meeting to ensure students moving from one program to another have smooth transitions.
- ▶ Help students identify, compile, think about and share relevant information with receiving teachers, such as:
 - what they like, their strengths and their difficulties
 - aspects of their lives that are important to them, e.g., share pictures of families or pets
 - the subjects or times of the day they find most difficult, and the subjects or times of the day they do best in
 - friends or individuals with whom they identify.
- ▶ Give students opportunities to create collages or videos of themselves involved in activities that indicate something important about themselves. They can share these products with their new teachers.
- ▶ Help students choose samples of work from various subject areas to share with receiving teachers. They can comment in writing (scribed if necessary) why they have chosen items and what they indicate about their skills.
- ▶ Organize visits to new sites and arrange for students to use the facilities, such as home economics rooms, shop rooms or cafeterias.
- ▶ After the visits, talk with students about aspects of the environment that they find frightening or intimidating.
- ▶ Orient students to school buildings, grounds and bus stops.

Help students generalize new skills and concepts

Students with FASD frequently encounter difficulty transferring skills from the initial teaching situation to new situations. To encourage generalization of learning, select individual program goals that can be taught across learning situations. Consider all the times throughout the day and the different ways students may be required to carry out specific tasks. Give students opportunities to use the same skills and strategies in different settings, and with different teachers and peers.

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The curriculum matrix is a tool teachers can use to determine how students can use one skill in several different settings.

Curriculum matrix⁵⁴

NAME										
IPP GOALS	Math	Social	Health	L.A.	I.A.	Foods	Drama	Other Environments		
								Home	Voc.	
Goal 1: Evaluate possible plans and select one	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Goal 2: Demonstrate increased ability to make decisions	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Goal 3: Be actively engaged in a variety of new learning situations	X				X	X	X	X	X	
Goal 4: Learn and apply a variety of new strategies to improve study skills	X	X	X	X				X		
Goal 5: Work cooperatively with others	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

The matrix links goals from a student’s IPP with instructional opportunities for practising and achieving these goals. To create a matrix, list individualized program plan goals in the left column, and courses of study and activities across the top. To encourage generalization of skills to settings outside the school, include home and community. Identify learning goals that can be taught logically and appropriately during specific courses and activities. Eventually, students will begin to generalize skills from one situation to another.⁵⁴

Target skills for generalization that are:

- used frequently and in several situations
- reinforced in the natural environment
- critical to students and likely to increase their independence both at school and home.

Samples of specific strategies

- Teach skills in several different settings.
- Use real-life situations, and realistic materials and learning environments, whenever possible.
- Provide additional prompts to help students recognize when to use the skill.
- Initially, encourage all teachers involved to use the same wording, approaches, sequences and materials with the student.
- Build skills into a routine or chain of related skills.

54. From “Meeting Functional Curriculum Needs in the Middle School General Education Classrooms” by Sharon Field, Barbara LeRoy and Sharon Rivera, *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 26, 2, 1994, p. 42. Copyright 1994 by The Council for Exceptional Children. Reprinted with permission.

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- ▶ Communicate with the home as new skills are mastered. If appropriate, encourage use of skills at home.
- ▶ Provide a periodic reinforcement schedule to ensure skills are maintained.
- ▶ Conduct periodic assessments to determine how well students are generalizing concepts or skills.
- ▶ If the skill is not generalized, re-teach it.

The SCORES model⁵⁵ on the next page outlines important components to consider when planning for students with FASD. The model summarizes basic concepts and strategies presented in Chapters 2 through 5. It is a tool school teams can use as they plan programming strategies and interventions for students with FASD.

55. Adapted with permission from Peggy Lasser, *Challenges and Opportunities: A Handbook for Teachers of Students with Special Needs with a focus on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (pFAS)* (Vancouver, BC: District Learning Services, Vancouver School Board, 1999), p. 150.

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- S** **Supervision**
 - close supervision to keep students safe and prevent problems
- Structure**
 - teach students that every day has a consistent structure to it
 - routines are explicit, firmly in place and followed
 - each class and every learning activity is planned and structured
 - use task analysis to ensure that all steps required to complete an assignment are given and understood
 - directions are simple, and given orally and in visual form
- Simplicity**
 - keep everything simple—rules, routines, directions, language, explanations and expectations
- Support**
 - provide unconditional emotional support to the student
 - ensure support for students’ families and teachers as necessary to deal with emotional issues such as grief, loss and frustration
- Success**
 - identify students’ strengths and help students recognize and use their own strengths
 - develop IPPs with short-term objectives that ensure frequent success
 - look for positive events, set up situations to ensure accomplishments and celebrate success
- C** **Communication**
 - takes place between the home and school regularly
 - everyone involved with these students knows what others are doing to help and communicates when there are changes in plans
 - teach students how to communicate feelings and needs
- Consistency**
 - routines, rules and expectations are consistent
 - give steps to complete a task in the same way every time
- O** **Organization**
 - teach organization skills in the classroom
 - the classroom is organized—a place for everything and everything in its place
 - learning activities and daily routines are organized
- R** **Rules**
 - simple and easy to follow
 - concrete—“Don’t hit” rather than abstract “Be safe”
 - all staff use the same words for each rule
 - check whether students know and understand what the rules mean
 - if a student does not follow a rule, an adult corrects the behaviour immediately, without scolding and encourages the student to try the behaviour again, this time following the rule
- E** **Expectations**
 - realistic, attainable and easily understood
 - take into consideration special and individual needs of students
 - for life and social skills as well as academics
 - clearly specify what is to be expected and accomplished for any given task or activity
- S** **Self-worth**
 - students feel accepted, valued and safe
 - give positive encouragement each day
 - build on students’ strengths to help them cope with the frustration of things they cannot do

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