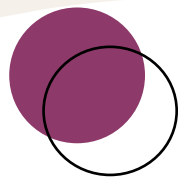


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Guidance in Growth & Change



NEAFAN

Northeast Alberta FASD Network





Transition Planning Tools for Youth with FASD

Even though the formal transition to adulthood has changed in the past ten years, it is still based on the idea of becoming independent. People with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), on the other hand, might never be fully independent as adults. Instead, they may become more interdependent. So, their transition into adulthood may be challenging because they are expected to take on more responsibilities and be more independent in many areas of life.

There is a lot of research on transitional-aged youth and youth who are leaving care, but there isn't as much on the needs of people with developmental disabilities,

especially those with FASD who are leaving care and moving on to adult services. It is not clear what services are available in Canada for young people with FASD who are in the age of transition. Also, no one knows how well existing programs help young people with FASD make the change from childhood to adulthood. The goal of a project, Review of Transition Planning Tools for Youth with FASD, was to look at the literature on transition planning processes for youth with FASD from all over Canada.

“The transition plan should reflect the youth’s vision and goals, promote independence and inclusion, and address the needs of both the youth and their family.”

This was done to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the existing transition planning tools and to make suggestions for the future of youth with FASD and their families.

The review suggests a specific, nation-wide strategy is needed that outlines a set of consistent transition planning recommendations to support FASD youth across Canada transitioning to adulthood. Transition plans need to be individualized to each person with FASD to focus on their unique strengths and challenges. More research is needed to understand how often transition planning tools are used to support youth with FASD; to compare outcomes of youth with transition plans and youth without; and to understand the experiences of youth with FASD throughout their transition process.



FASD Caregiving by Grandparents: Love, Reward, and Challenge

“It’s rewarding because I get the love: Grandparents raising grandchildren with FASD”, the title of a 2022 study published in the Child & Family Social Work journal has examined the experiences of grandparents who are raising grandchildren with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Through in-depth interviews with 10 grandparents, the study sheds light on the challenges and rewards of this caregiving role.

It found that grandparents who are caring for grandchildren with FASD face a range of challenges, including behavioural issues, educational difficulties, and financial strain, which can lead to feelings of isolation, guilt, and frustration. Despite these challenges, grandparents reported feeling

love and satisfaction in their role as caregivers.

The study emphasizes the importance of building a supportive network of professionals, family members, and other caregivers to help grandparents navigate the challenges of raising grandchildren with FASD. Grandparents may also need specific support and resources to help them provide optimal care for their grandchildren, such as access to FASD-informed training and resources, respite care, and financial support.

The prevalence of FASD in Canada is estimated to be around 4% of the population. This means that many grandparents in Canada may be caring for grandchildren with FASD. As the population ages and the number of grandparents raising grandchildren continues to grow, it is important for policymakers and healthcare professionals in Canada to recognize and address the challenges faced by these caregivers.

CONTINUED →

FASD Caregiving by Grandparents: Love, Reward, and Challenge (Cont.)

The findings of this study underscore the need for targeted support and resources for grandparents raising grandchildren with FASD, as well as the importance of recognizing and supporting the unique role that grandparents play in the lives of children with FASD.



“Supporting grandparents can help children with FASD thrive.”

In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of providing targeted support and resources for grandparents raising grandchildren with FASD in Canada. With the right support and resources, grandparents can provide optimal care for their grandchildren and help them lead fulfilling lives, while also receiving the recognition and support they deserve as caregivers.

FASD Integrated Service Delivery Review

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) is a common neurodevelopmental condition caused by exposure to alcohol in the womb, resulting in a range of physical, cognitive, behavioral, and social-emotional challenges.

Resources

FASD Resources

- The book by Liz Lawryk “Adopting a Child with FASD”
- School Behaviour Secrets (Podcast) FASD resource
- POPFASD: <https://www.fasdoutreach.ca/>

Instructional Coaching Resources

- Coaching with Miss B (PodCast)

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) is a common neurodevelopmental condition caused by exposure to alcohol in the womb, resulting in a range of physical, cognitive, behavioral, and social-emotional challenges.

People with FASD often require ongoing assistance to manage daily activities and avoid negative outcomes. Their needs are complex and require support from multiple disciplines and sectors. Integrated services are essential for this population and NEAFAN as a separate entity of the Alberta FASD Network follows an integrated approach that delivers coordinated FASD support and services in the northeast region of Alberta.

To provide a better understanding of the Alberta FASD Service Network model and to inform future research, practice, and policy a 2021 study aimed to review the evidence on this model, including its aims, impacts, and challenges, to inform future research, practice, and policy in the field of FASD.



“To review the evidence on this model, including its aims, impacts, and challenges, to inform future research, practice, and policy in the field of FASD.”

Key Messages

People with Disabilities: Better awareness of FASD, access to assessment and diagnosis, and life-long supports for individuals, caregivers, and families all have important impacts on long-term wellbeing for people with FASD. Tangible benefits

include increased safety, stability, and health; improved self-understanding and self-worth; greater autonomy; and stronger community engagement.

Professionals: Increased awareness and understanding of FASD, as well as cross-disciplinary networking and collaboration, improve capacity for effective service provision and supports for individuals with FASD, their caregivers, and their families. Service provider knowledge, confidence, and competence in working with individuals with FASD can be improved through targeted FASD training initiatives.

Policy Makers: The Alberta FASD Service Network model has led to notable individual, community, and societal level impacts, and may be adapted interprovincially and/or nationally with the potential for cost savings and more effective supports for individuals with FASD, their caregivers, and families. Federal policy makers should consider the promising evidence identified in this review and build upon the successes in Alberta by developing a coordinated national FASD strategy for all Canadians.



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Links & Resources

- [Grandparents raising grandchildren with FASD Article](#)
- [FASD Integrated Service Delivery Review](#)
- [Contact NEAFAN](#)

- Braiding with Sweetgrass (Book, AudioBook, ebook): resource for how to incorporate nature, plants, earth-science into the curriculum. Helpful for emotional regulation which is often difficult for students with FASD.
- <https://edutopia.org>
- [The Art of Focused Conversations for Schools by Jo Nelson: https://betterevaluation.org/sites/Art_of_Focused_Conversations.doc](#)
- <https://covisioning.com/>

