

Common behaviours, misinterpretations and characteristics of students with FASD

Behaviour observed	Could be misinterpreted as	Accurate interpretation for FASD
Noncompliance	Doing it purposely and maliciously Attention seeking Stubborn	Difficulty translating verbal directions into action Doesn't understand May need to have words/processes taught explicitly and repeatedly Needs to become familiar with ways of operating within the school culture to understand expectations
Repeatedly making the same mistakes	Doing it on purpose Manipulative	Cannot link cause to effect Cannot see similarities Difficulty generalising from one event to another May require screening for hearing difficulties
Often late	Lazy, slow Poor parenting Doing it on purpose	Cannot understand the abstract concept of time Needs assistance getting organised Limited access to resources such as clocks, phones and other time keeping devices
Not sitting still	Seeking attention Bothering others Doing it on purpose	Neurologically based need to move while learning Sensory overload Needing alternatives that help calm them while concentrating
Poor social judgment	Poor parenting Abused child Doing it on purpose	Not able to interpret social cues from peers Not sure what social conventions are appropriate in different contexts Not understanding the implications of actions, so having difficulty with empathy
Overly physical	Doing it to bother other people Deviancy	Hyper- or hypo-sensitive to touch Does not understand social cues regarding boundaries
Does not work independently	Poor parenting Doing it on purpose	Chronic memory problems Cannot translate verbal directions into action Does not fully understand the task or expectations
Stealing	Deliberate dishonesty Lack of conscience	Does not understand the concept of ownership over time and space Immature thinking Unable to generalise what is wrong from one setting to another
Lying	Deliberate dishonesty Lack of conscience	Problems with memory/sequencing Unable to accurately recall events Trying to please by tell you what they think you want to hear
Egocentric	Selfishness Only cares about self	Only seeing the superficial or concrete level of social behaviour Does not link cause and effect
Volatile	Poor parenting Aggressive nature Short tempered	Exhausted from stress of trying to keep up Extremely over-stimulated
Inconsistent performance	Not trying hard enough	Chronic short-term memory problems Inability to generalise learning from one situation to another

Source: Adapted from [Understanding and addressing the needs of children and young people living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders \(FASD\): A resource for teachers](#)