

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) *For Healthcare Providers*

This is a customized health care provider version of our website. Please visit the main website to find more comprehensive information for families and schools (www.gemssforschools.org).

Physical characteristics and/or symptoms

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) are often diagnosed based on the complete set of characteristics in an individual. The effects of FASDs can vary in their presentation over the course of an individual's lifespan. The characteristics that may be seen in individuals with FASDs at different times in their lives may include:

Growth Deficiency:

- In height
- In weight
- In both height and weight
- Small size until puberty when "catch up" growth is common

Specific Facial Characteristics (most notable in Fetal Alcohol Syndrome):

- Smooth philtrum (The philtrum are the two vertical ridges between the nose and mouth.)
- Short palpebral fissures (Palpebral fissures are the openings for the eye between the eyelids.)
- Thin upper lip
- Flat midface
- Short upturned nose
- Underdevelopment of the upper ear

Central Nervous System Dysfunction:

- Microcephaly (small brain size)
- Tremors
- Seizures
- Hyperactivity
- Attention deficits

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- Impulsivity
- Distractibility
- Difficulty with abstraction
- Challenges with
 - Gross Motor
 - Fine Motor
 - Sensory integration
 - Memory
 - Processing information
- Learning disabilities
- Developmental delays
- Intellectual disabilities

Other Physical Effects:

- Heart defects
- Skeletal defects
 - Fused bones in arms, fingers, hands, and toes
- Vision and hearing problems
- Kidney and liver defects
- Dental abnormalities

Recommended Routine Surveillance

Emergency Protocols

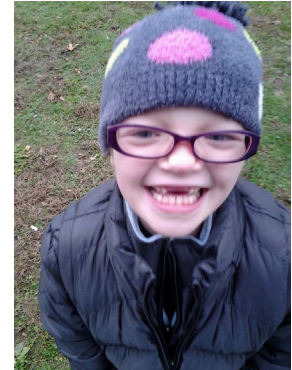
Specialists Who May Be Involved

Sample Forms

Seven Important Aspects of School Life

“[Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders at a Glance](#)” will help you talk with parents and schools about:

- Medical / Dietary Needs
- Education Supports
- Behavior & Sensory Supports
- Physical Activity, Trips, Events
- School Absences & Fatigue
- Emergency Planning
- Transitions



Resources

Emory Maternal Substance Abuse and Child Development

<http://www.psychiatry.emory.edu/PROGRAMS/GADrug/Edfas.htm>

This website offers helpful strategies for students with FASD, such as how to best give instructions, how to arrange the environment, and how to help with transition. This was developed at the Maternal Substance Abuse and Child Development Project through Emory University School of Medicine (<http://www.emory.edu/msacd/>).

You may also find these interesting:

- FAS and Social Skills
(<http://www.emory.edu/msacd/news/FAS%20and%20Social%20Skills.html>)
- FAS and Heart Defects
(<http://www.emory.edu/msacd/news/FAS%20and%20Heart%20Defects.html>)

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders International (FASD)

<https://fasdunited.org/>.

FASD United supports individuals and families living with FASD through referrals, advocacy, training, information dissemination, and a wide range of diverse initiatives and resources.

FASD Center for Excellence

www.fasdcenter.samhsa.gov/

The FASD Center for Excellence is a Federal initiative devoted to preventing and treating FASD. The website provides information and resources about FASD, including materials to promote awareness.

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/facts.html>

Includes Basics about FASDs from the CDC

FAS Diagnostic and Prevention Network

<http://depts.washington.edu/fasdpn/htmls/fasd-fas.htm>

The FAS Diagnostic and Prevention Network is a network of four FASD diagnostic clinics linked by the core clinical/research/training clinic at the Center on Human Development and Disability at the University of Washington in Seattle, WA.