



# Reducing Recidivism:

Improving Supervision Outcomes for Probationers  
with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

# MOFAS Mission

Our mission is to eliminate disability caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy and to improve the quality of life for those living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders throughout Minnesota.

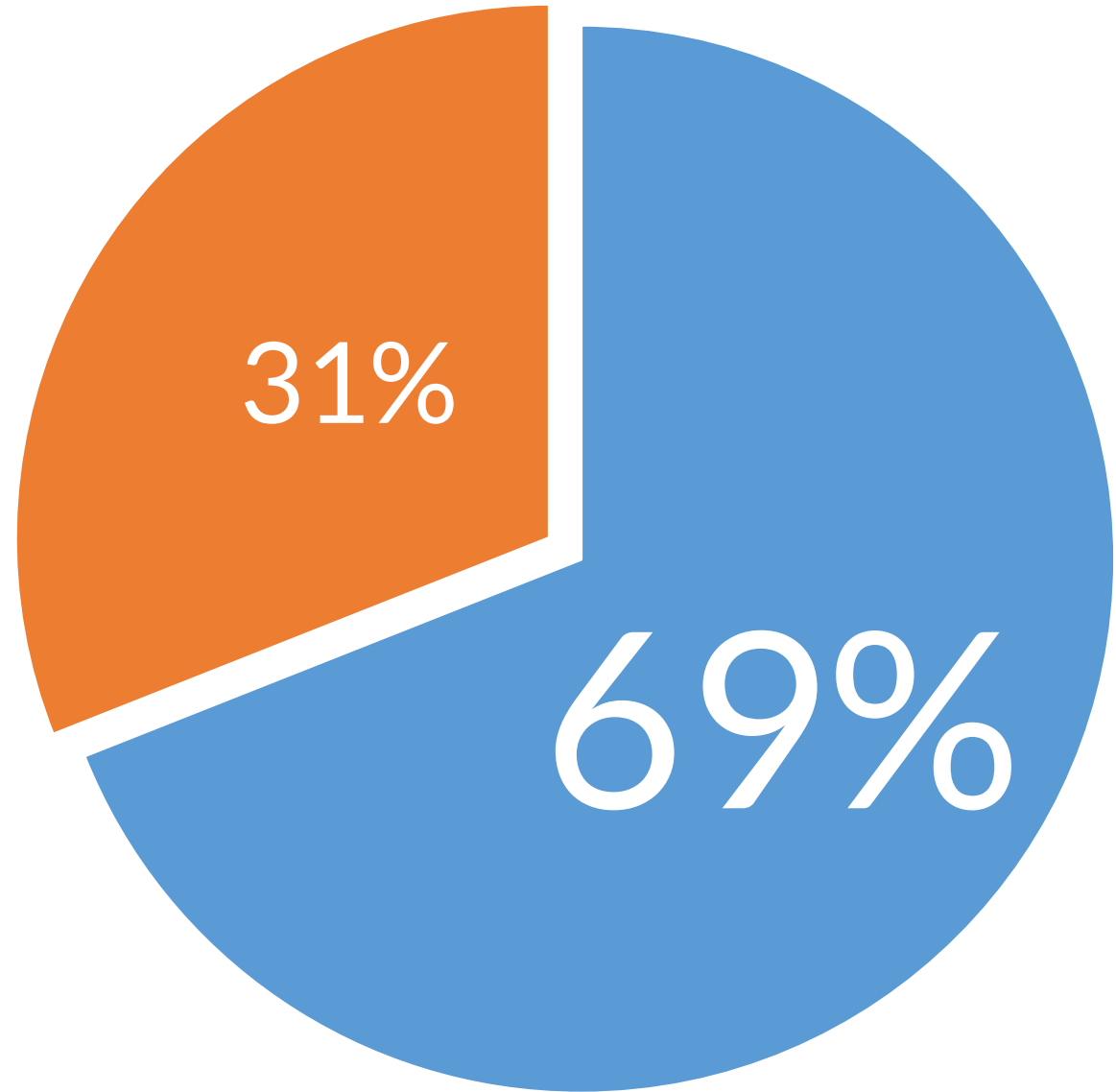
# MOFAS Vision

Our vision is a world in which women do not drink alcohol during pregnancy and people living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders are identified, supported, and valued.

# Why Should You Care?

If you work in the corrections or justice field you have or you will come into contact with individuals impacted by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

# **Poll Results: I have worked with an individual with FASD**



# Learning Objectives

- Overview of FASD
- Identifying individuals with FASD on your case load
- Practical strategies for working with individuals on the spectrum

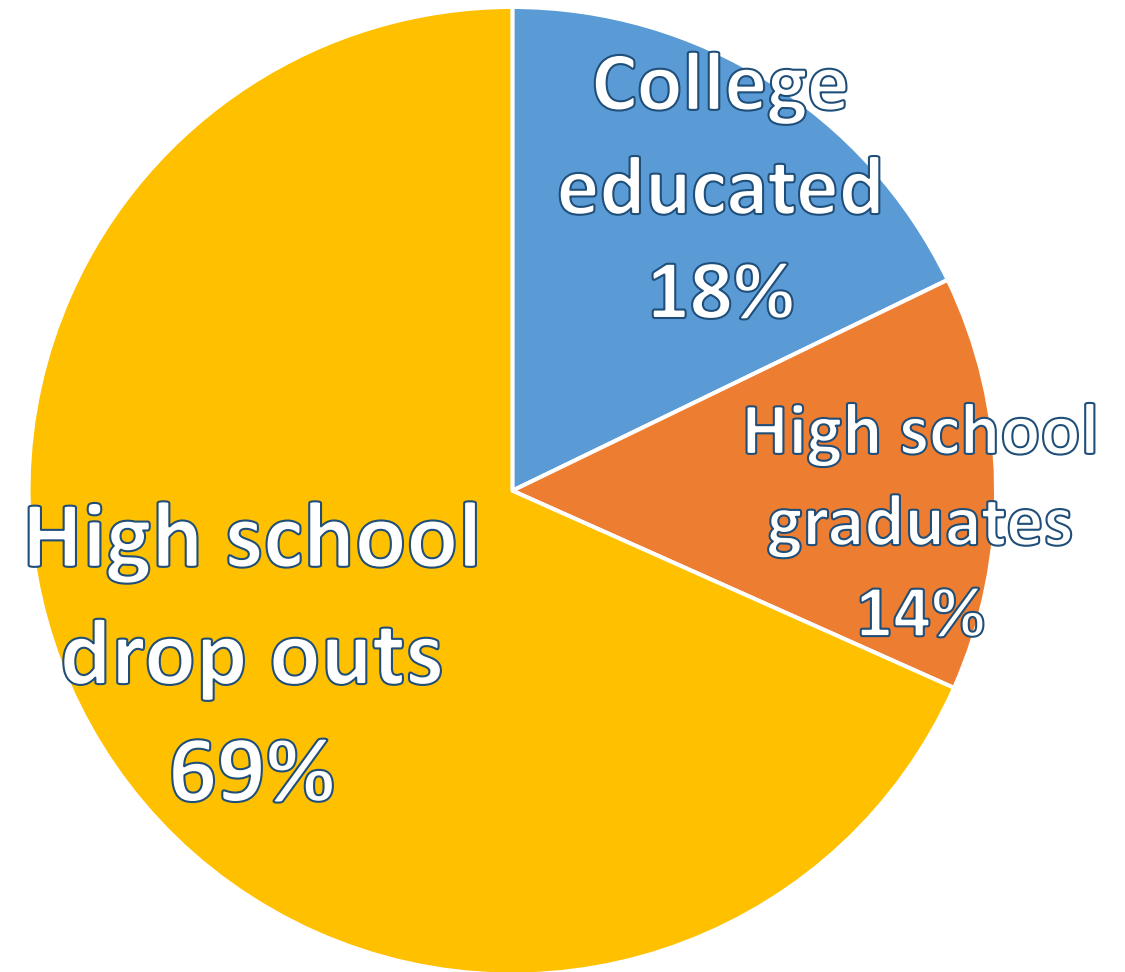
# What is FASD?



# FASD: An Invisible Disability



# Poll Results: What demographic of women are most likely to drink alcohol during pregnancy?



**What demographic  
of women are most  
likely to drink  
alcohol during  
pregnancy?**



College  
educated

**What demographic  
of women are most  
likely to drink  
alcohol during  
pregnancy?**

College educated

Between ages 35-44

Making more than  
\$50,000 / year

# How Prevalent is FASD in the U.S.



Up to 1 in 20 U.S. School Children  
are estimated to have an FASD.

(Centers for Disease Control 2016)

# FASD is not a Diagnosis

<b>FAS</b>	<b>Fetal Alcohol Syndrome</b>
<b>PFAS</b>	<b>Partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome</b>
<b>ARND</b>	<b>Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder</b>
<b>ARBD</b>	<b>Alcohol Related Birth Defects</b>



What is the  
approximate  
percentage of  
unplanned pregnancies  
in the United States?

About half of  
all pregnancies  
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What is the  
approximate  
percentage of  
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About half of all  
pregnancies are  
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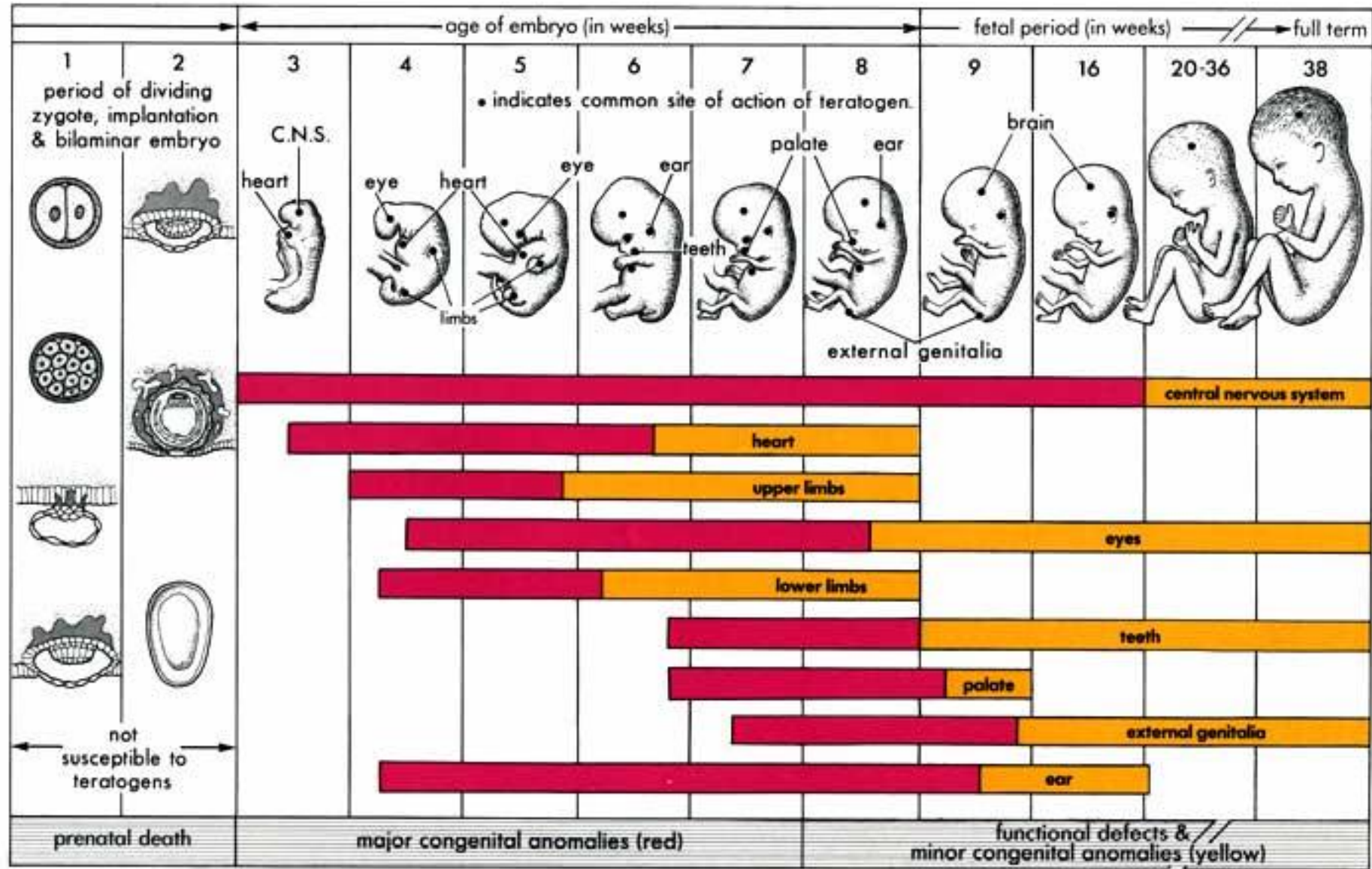
85% of those with  
substance abuse  
disorders

# Facial Features of FAS





Brain is  
Susceptible  
to Alcohol  
throughout  
all 3  
trimesters



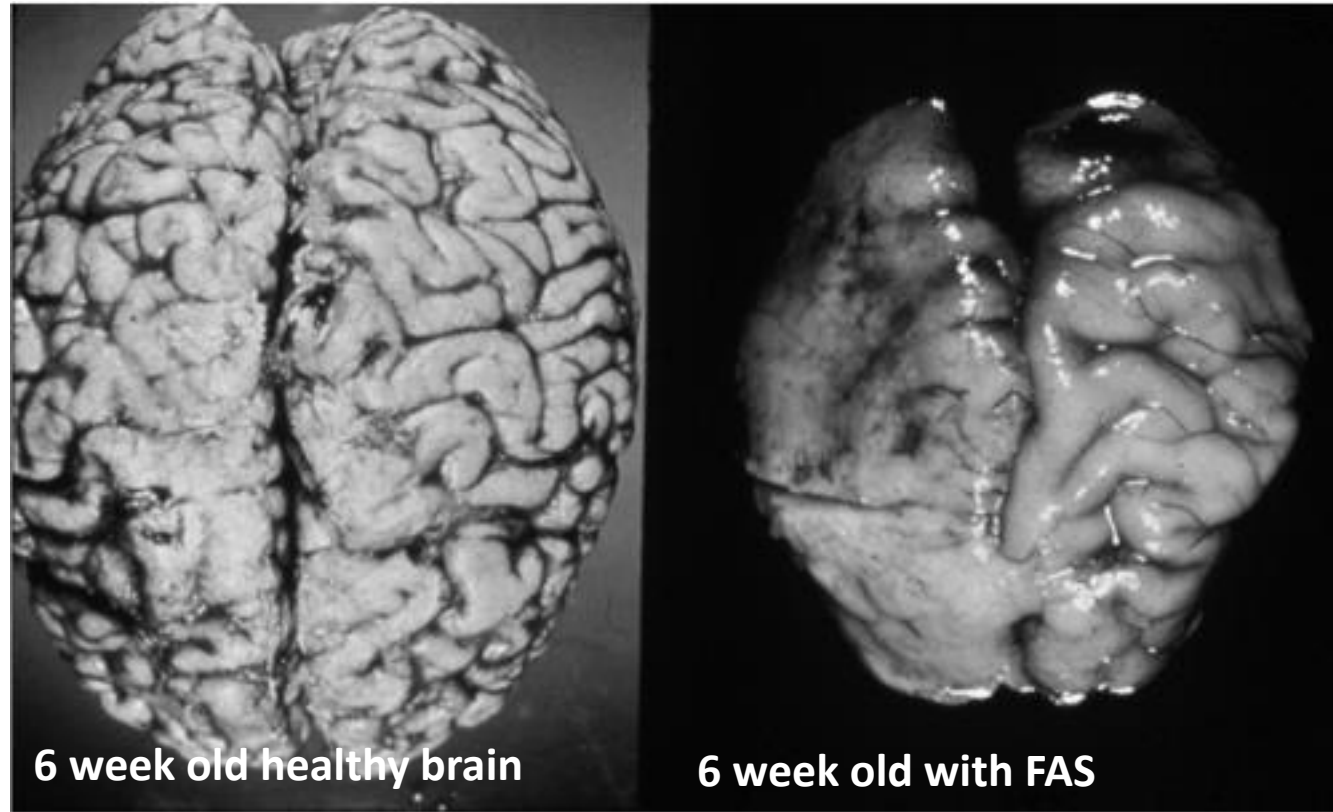
# An Invisible Disability



***FASD is often referred to as an invisible disability.  
Can you identify the youth with an FASD?***

# FASD & the Brain

## Autopsy Study



6 week old healthy brain

6 week old with FAS

# FASD & the Brain

Smaller head size

Smaller brain size

# FASD & the Brain

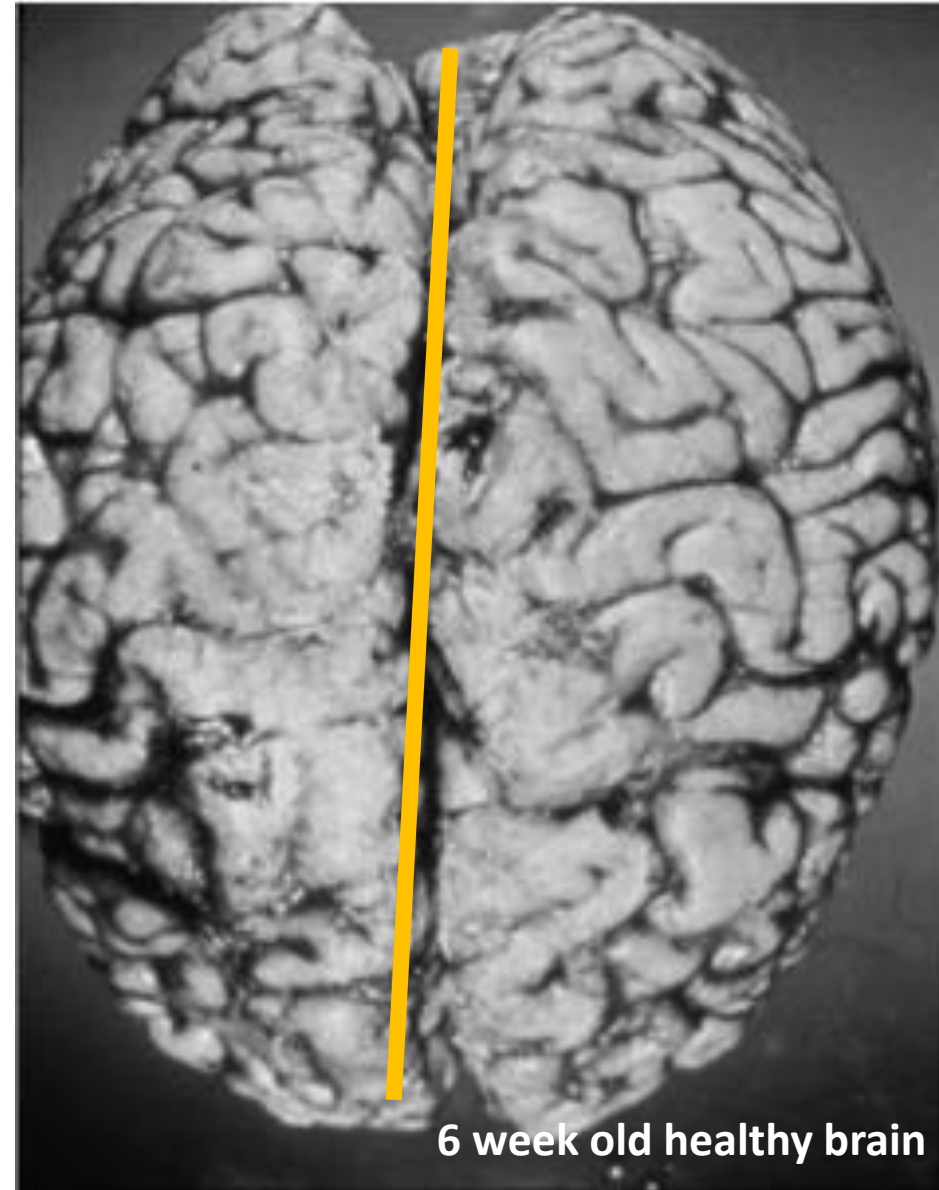
Smaller head size

Smaller brain size

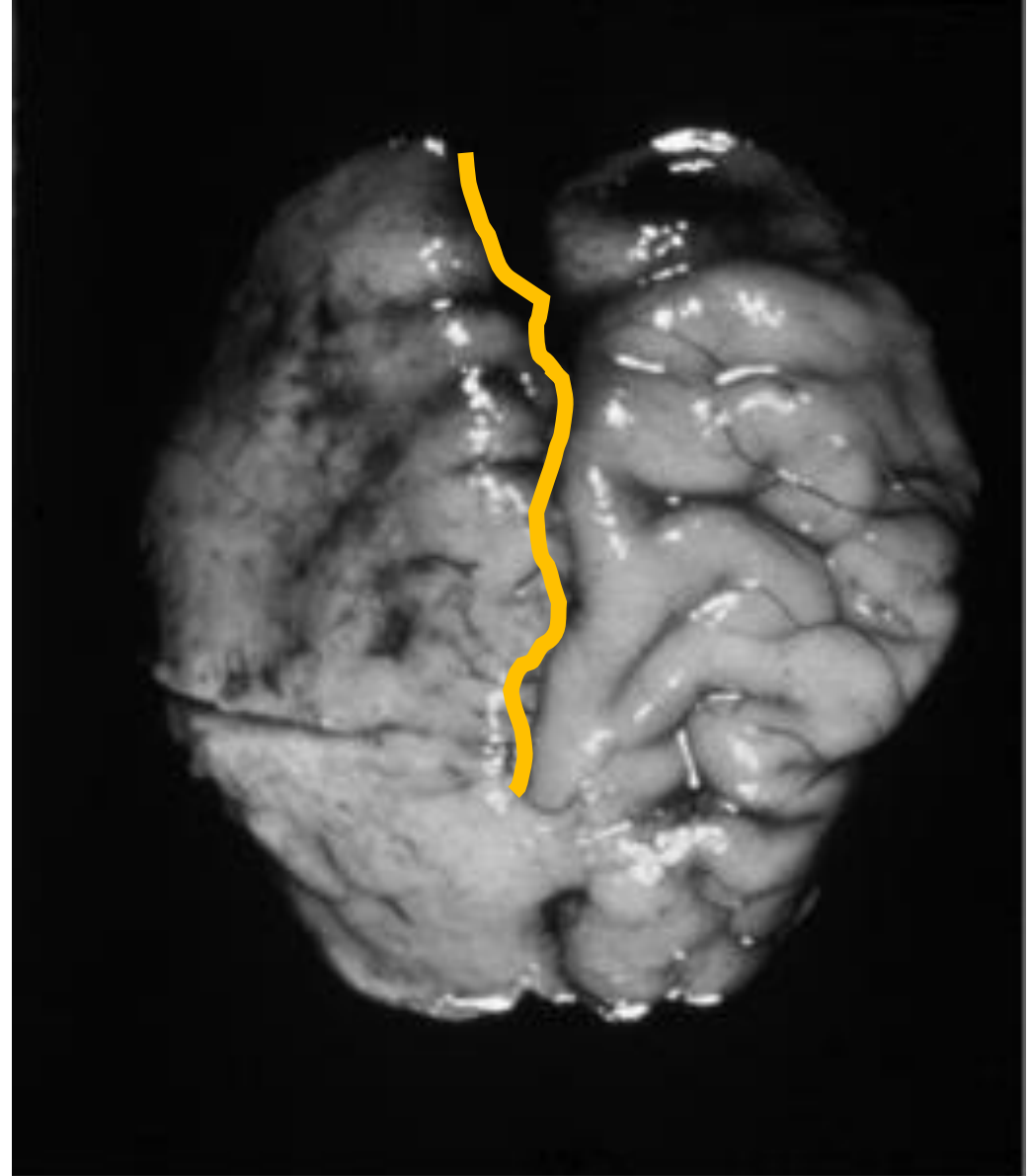
Disrupt normal brain formation



# FASD & the Brain



# FASD & the Brain



# FASD & the Brain

Smaller head size

Smaller brain size

Disrupt normal brain formation

Processing speed impacted



# FASD & the Brain

Processing speed impacted

- Adjust speed in communicating

# FASD & the Brain

## Processing speed impacted

- Adjust speed in communicating
- May get only every third or fourth word

# FASD & the Brain

## Processing speed impacted

- Adjust speed in communicating
- May get only every third or fourth word
- Give time to process responses

# Common Symptoms & Risk Factors

Impulsivity

Difficulty picking  
up on social cues

Easily influenced  
by others

Sensory  
Processing  
Disorder

# It Takes a Village



## Health

- Pediatrician
- Neurologists (2)
- Pediatric Ophthalmologist
- Audiologist
- Otolaryngologist
- Pharmacy
- Medical Supply Providers
- Gastroenterologist
- Feeding Specialist
- Nutritionist
- High-Risk Infant Clinic
- FAS Diagnostic Clinic
- Lab and X-Ray Services
- Surgeons
- Pulmonologist
- Respiratory Therapist



## Education

- Physical Therapist
- Speech/Language Pathologist
- Infant Educator
- Cultural Recreational Therapy (e.g. drumming)
- Birth-3 Program: Occupational Therapist, Speech/Language pathologist, Teacher, Aid, Play Therapist



## Social and Community Services

- Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee
- Tribal Social Worker
- Child Welfare/Case Worker
- Tribal Council
- Respite Providers
- Foster Care System
- Day Care
- Div. of Dev. Disabilities/Case Worker and Family Resource Coordinator
- Substance Abuse Treatment (birth mother)
- Mental Health Counseling (birth mother)
- Parenting Education (birth mother)



## Legal and Financial Services

- SSI
- Medicaid
- Guardian Ad Litem
- Judge-Foster Care Issues
- Attorneys for Birth Parents



# Chronological v. Developmental Age



# Did you know?

12.8

Average age children with  
FASD begin having trouble  
with the law

American Bar Association

# Case Study

60%

Risk Factors

FASD and  
Victimization



Streissguth, et. al 1996



# Case Study

## When FASD and ACES collide

Colton Harris-Moore AKA the Barefoot Bandit smiles after his 7-year sentencing



# Case Study

“Criminal Master Mind” – FBI agent

Committing crimes since age 7

Basic needs unmet at home

Colton Harris-Moore AKA the Barefoot Bandit smiles after his 7-year sentencing

# Case Study



Retired Correctional Officer Bob Steeves worked for 25 years as a correctional officer including working in a maximum security prison

# Case Study

Vulnerable  
to

- Gangs
- Exploitation
- Manipulation

Become

- Prey
- Public Safety Risks

(Blatchford, 2011; Kelley; 2010).

# Strategies Not Solutions

Expect inconsistency

Celebrate consistency!

Strategies are not always transferable from one person to another.

**There is  
no  
magic  
bullet!**

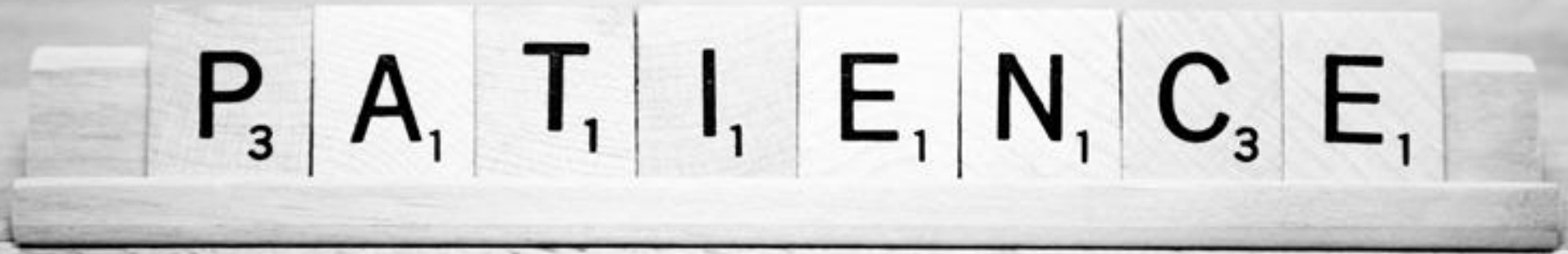


Image: [Jason Aaberg](#)

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Celebrate consistency!

Strategies are not always transferable from one person to another.



**“Seek first to understand,  
then to be understood.”**



# ***Why we recommend screening for FASD***

## **Modifying Interventions**

Improved outcomes

Individuals can be seen as having a disability

Reduced frustration and anger

Approaches can be modified

Reframe poor self perceptions

Preventing future alcohol exposed pregnancies



# Promising FASD Screening Programs

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## 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District of MN

170 youth screened

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77 (45%) screened positive

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87% completed diagnosis

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85% diagnosed with an FASD

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58% had no new offenses and no probation violations

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Both Projects Funded by SAMHSA 2008 - 2012

# Promising FASD Screening Programs

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17<sup>th</sup>

Judicial  
District of  
Colorado

---

805 youth screened

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202 (25%) screened positive

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92 completed diagnosis

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48% diagnosed with an FASD

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Diagnosis and Probation modification dropped  
recidivism rate to 15% from baseline 50%

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Both Projects Funded by SAMHSA 2008 - 2012

# Understand Their Profile

Reading and writing skill level

Cognitive functioning

Mental Health

ACES and Trauma

Social and communication skills

Sensory Issues

Self-Esteem

Life Skills

Areas for support

Strengths

# Strategies

Recognize the concept of neuro-diversity and change the paradigm around IQ and intelligence!



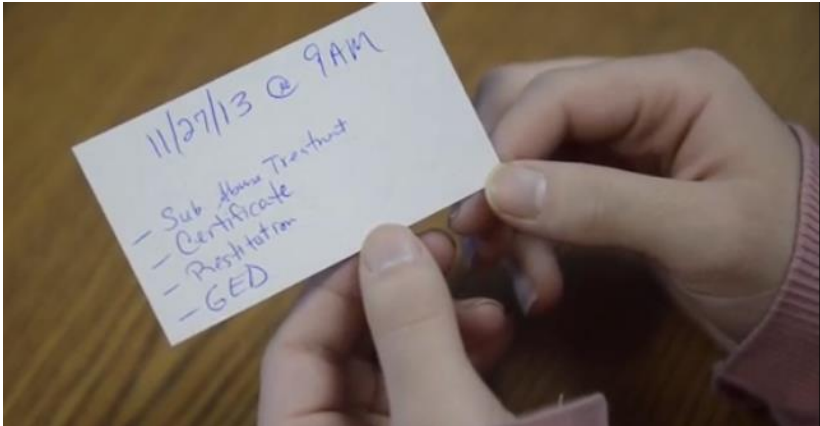
# Strategies



## Practical Tips

- Allow extra time for processing
- Simple, short directives
- Concrete and specific
- Share the rules early and often
- **Importance of options**
- Use same verbiage
- Check for understanding
- Monitor for frustration
- Tell them what you want them to do
- **Avoid confabulation risks**

# Modifying Interventions



## Communication methods

- Build on verbal exchanges (auditory, visual, and tactile approaches)
- Graphs/Charts
- Checklists
- Using smartphones for appointment reminders

# Strategies

## Probation Icon Project



No Weapons



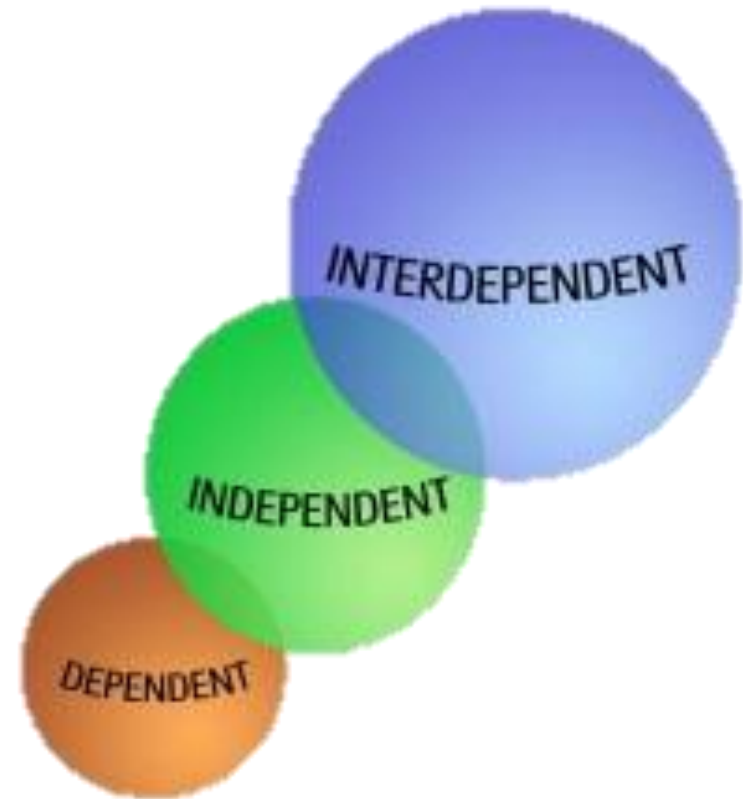
Abstain from alcohol and drugs



No contact/communication

# The External Brain Strategy

The goal is **interdependence** rather than independence





# Modifying Interventions

# STRETCH

## the schedule and

## shorten meetings

# Modifying Interventions

*Understand and address the challenges inherent within group dynamics for individuals on the spectrum.*



## Factors to consider that can impact behavior

- Dehydration
- Fatigue
- Missed Medications
- Additives in Diet
- Sensory overload
- Confabulation
- Exercise
- Emotional Stress

# Modifying Interventions

**More Intense  
Structure**

**Controlled  
Predictable  
Setting**

**Advance  
Preparation  
for Change**

**Do not  
overschedule**

**Keep time  
consistent  
and  
productive.**

# Strategies



There is often a critical need to address social skills, life skills, and adaptive functioning skills with clients on the spectrum!

# **Modifying Interventions**

**A few words on  
consequences...**

# Modifying Interventions



Adapt the Physical Environment Reduce visual distractions

- Minimize clutter
- Reduce the brightness of lighting
- Calming colors



# Modifying Interventions

Develop Self-Advocacy Skills



*“We’re encouraging people to become involved in their own rescue.”*



# Contact Information

[www.mofas.org](http://www.mofas.org)

email: [ruth@mofas.org](mailto:ruth@mofas.org)

Phone: 651.917.2370