

# DEVELOPMENTAL OVERVIEW OF FAS/E

through the Eyes of Parents

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## TODDLERS (1-5)

Parents report that toddlers with FAS/E are:

- ◆ sometimes medically fragile
- ◆ usually require high maintenance, keeping parents alert and on duty 24 hours a day
- ◆ often exhausted and irritable from uneven sleep patterns
- ◆ highly manipulative
- ◆ a danger to self and others because they do not grasp the universal laws of cause and effect
- ◆ void of the normal sequential learning abilities in reasoning, judgment and memory
- ◆ very difficult to manage when out in public
- ◆ no natural fear of danger, e.g., lacking in the normal abilities to distinguish between friend and enemy
- ◆ misunderstood by service providers because their IQ's appear to be developing normally

## CHILDREN (6-11)

Parents report that children with FAS/E are:

- ◆ impulsive, unpredictable and mischievous, creating ongoing safety hazards, such as setting fires and running away
- ◆ often exhausted and irritable from uneven sleep patterns
- ◆ innately skilled in manipulative tactics
- ◆ void of normal sense of justice
- ◆ overlooked as permanently disabled because their IQ's are normal
- ◆ desperate for stimulation and excitement to keep them entertained and happy
- ◆ emotionally volatile and often exhibit wide mood swings throughout the day
- ◆ often disconnected from their own feelings and are unable to identify or express logical reasons behind their volatile outbursts
- ◆ isolated and lonely because the desire to be included remains intact while the reasoning skill to figure out why they are excluded is lacking
- ◆ angry and resentful toward more structure and supervision than their peers need
- ◆ void of natural empathy for others

**Note: These characteristics may appear to be typical behavior in a normal person, but in individuals who have been disabled by prenatal exposure to alcohol, these traits occur in grossly exaggerated form and do not respond to typical interventions.**

(Continued)

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## ADOLESCENTS (12-17)

Parents report that adolescents with FAS/E are:

- ◆ moral chameleons (despite consistent loving care, family values and even general rules of social behavior are not being internalized)
- ◆ often exhausted and irritable from uneven sleep pattern
- ◆ at high risk for being drawn into anti-social behavior: stealing, lying, running away, etc.
- ◆ continuing to be a safety menace to themselves and others
- ◆ still in need of limits and protection like a three year old
- ◆ often obsessed by primal impulses such as sexual activity and fire setting
- ◆ able to recognize and will submit to raw power, making them vulnerable to gangs
- ◆ seriously impaired when it comes to making decisions (not having the judgment or reasoning skills to make decisions)
- ◆ terrified of major transition or change, e.g., middle school, moving, etc.
- ◆ extremely vulnerable to ideas in movies, videos, music, TV and advertisements
- ◆ unaware of normal hygiene needs
- ◆ unable to take responsibility for their actions

## ADULTS (18 and over)

Parents report that their adult children with FAS/E are:

- ◆ moral chameleons
- ◆ often exhausted and irritable from uneven sleep patterns
- ◆ extremely vulnerable to anti-social behavior and at great risk for finding the structure and supervision they need in the criminal justice system
- ◆ unlikely to follow safety rules concerning fire hazards, safe meal preparation, vehicle operation, infectious diseases, basic life needs, etc.
- ◆ notably lacking in the ability to manage money
- ◆ volatile if pushed too far to do something they see as unreasonable, such as asking them for money to pay their rent or groceries.
- ◆ quite vulnerable to co-dependent relationships, which can turn violent
- ◆ incapable of taking daily medication or birth control pills on a regular and effective basis
- ◆ vulnerable to panic attacks, depression, suicide ideation, mental and emotional overload, and sometimes psychotic breaks
- ◆ very impaired as to entertaining themselves and keeping out of mischief
- ◆ not nearly as capable as they appear to be
- ◆ in desperate need of appropriate sheltered employment opportunities

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