



# FASD: A Caregiver's Learning Series

## Virtually Facilitated In-Service Training

This learning module includes three sessions that will help you understand Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and how to better support children/youth with FASD.

### Session 1 – What is FASD?

#### Description

In this session, you will learn what FASD is and how prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) can impact the whole body, most importantly, the central nervous system, the brain and their many functions. You will also learn about the importance of how diagnosis, assessment, and ongoing support improve developmental outcomes for an individual with FASD.

#### Learning Objectives

- Describe FASD as a lifelong disability.
- Define the words used to describe FASD.
- Explain how brain development and function is impacted by PAE.
- Describe FASD as a brain-based disability rather than a set of *difficult* behaviours.
- Explain the importance of an FASD diagnosis.
- Explain how assessment and providing lifelong supports improve outcomes for a child/youth with FASD.

### Session 2 – FASD Across the Lifespan

#### Description

In this session, you will learn how prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) impacts development across the lifespan. You will explore the concept of dysmaturity, the importance of interpreting behavior, and why traditional caregiving strategies may not work with children/youth with FASD. To optimally support an individual with an FASD, our perspectives require a shift to understanding FASD as a brain-based disability. This shift in perspective will set the stage for the Session 3.

#### Learning Objectives

- Explain how prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) impacts a child/youth's developmental path.
- Define dysmaturity and describe its impact.
- Discuss how our interpretation of a child/youth's behaviour responses impacts how we support them.
- Use strengths-based and growth-oriented language when communicating with others about children/youth with FASD.
- Identify ways to improve developmental outcomes for children/youth through the lifespan.
- Describe the systems that caregivers work with, the challenges that can happen, and how to advocate for the needs of the child/youth.

# Session 3 – Caring for Individuals with FASD

## Description

Research shows that a stable home with caregivers who understand FASD and the importance of community advocacy, can have the most positive influence on a person with FASD. In this final session you will learn how emotional regulation, building good habits and creating competence support better outcomes for children/youth with FASD. You will also learn that research demonstrates how the five pillars of stability are necessary to support you and the children/youth with FASD in your care.

## Learning Objectives

- Describe some common strengths of children/youth with FASD.
- Discuss the attitudes and approach to caregiving that support better outcomes for children/youth with PAE.
- Identify how connections to culture can support resilience and wellbeing in a child/youth with FASD.
- Identify and apply the most successful caregiving strategies when caring for a child/youth with FASD.
- Apply the five pillars of stability to help a child/youth with FAS succeed.
- Explain why caregiver self-care is important when caring for a child/youth with FASD.
- Develop a personal action plan for self-care.

## Guided Discussion Questions

1. Now that you understand FASD as a Brain Based Disability how has that changed your caregiving?
2. How is the development over the life span different for a child with FASD and a child who was not prenatally exposed to alcohol?
3. What is one of the caregiving strategies that you are implementing since taking the training?