



# COMMUNICATION

## FASD BEHAVIOURS

- Children with FASD often have problems with both *receptive* (understanding what is being said to them) and *expressive* (speaking, or having others understand them) language.
- Your child may have difficulty with both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Your child may still develop a large vocabulary; therefore it is sometimes hard to notice his or her communication difficulties.
- Often a child can repeat something back to you, but may not fully understand it.

## STRATEGIES

- **Use repetition:** Use the same words for the same instruction every time it is given, this helps to place the instruction into your child's long-term memory.
- **Try to match your communication level to the child's:** If the child uses two-word phrases, try not to use more than two or three-word phrases when talking to them.
- **Use visual cues, simple terms, and concrete language:** Keep oral instructions short and simple.
- **Speak slowly:** Leave pauses for your child to process your words. Follow up to ensure he understands what you've said.
- **Be specific:** Say exactly what you mean. Children with FASD have difficulty with abstract concepts, double meanings, and idioms.

Because of their difficulties with expressive language and memory, children with FASD often have difficulty telling you what they are feeling.

Children who have a large vocabulary of "feeling words" can better express their emotions using language rather than through problem behaviour.

*Practice identifying and labeling your child's feelings using an emotions vocabulary chart, or create a personalized chart using pictures of your child's face demonstrating a variety of emotions.*

## QUICK TIPS

- USE DIRECT EYE CONTACT WHEN TALKING TO YOUR CHILD.
- USE AS MANY VISUAL CUES AS POSSIBLE, TO AID YOUR CHILD'S UNDERSTANDING AND HELP TO TRIGGER HER MEMORY.
- IT MAY HELP TO VISUALLY DEMONSTRATE WHAT YOU MEAN RATHER THAN JUST GIVING DIRECTIONS VERBALLY.

