



VISUAL/SPATIAL SKILLS

FASD BEHAVIOURS

- Children with FASD may have difficulties with visual/spatial skills, including perceiving and judging visual information, understanding spatial relationships, using mental imagery, symbol recognition, and storing visual images in short- and long-term memory.
- These children may also experience poor hand-eye coordination and confusion over left and right.
- Visual stimuli can be distracting and overwhelming for children with FASD.
- Deficits in visual/spatial skills may result in difficulties in fine and gross motor skills and math skills.

STRATEGIES

- **Play games:** Improve visual discrimination by playing games such as matching, “I Spy”, card games, puzzles, and mazes.
- **Design copying:** Model the process of copying an image aloud. E.g., “I’m going to make the letter J. It looks like a hook to me. I start way at the top and then curve around at the bottom.” Use books that teach drawing using a step-by-step manner of copying parts of a figure.
- **Reduce visual stimulation:** Hang minimal pictures on walls and from the ceiling, colour-code objects on shelves, use a sheet to cover items not being used (e.g., on a bookshelf) or closed cupboards.
- **Mark visual boundaries:** Mark your child’s space in the living room or around their desk at school with tape or carpet squares.

Find the strategies that work best for your child - you may find that some are helpful while others are not. Other strategies that may help improve your child’s visual/spatial skills:

Visual schedules that provide direct step-by-step instructions using picture sequences can help break down tasks and daily routines.

Enroll your child in extra-curricular activities that focus on visual-spatial skills, such as art classes, knitting or sewing classes, archery, bowling, or hopscotch.

QUICK TIPS

- DISCUSS THESE STRATEGIES WITH YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER TO BETTER MEET YOUR CHILD’S NEEDS IN THE CLASSROOM.
- FOCUS ON YOUR CHILD’S STRENGTHS AND HELP THEM DEVELOP SKILLS IN AREAS OF DIFFICULTY.

