

Brain-Based Strategies for Daily Life with FASD

Using a brain-based approach means understanding that your child's challenges come from how their brain works differently. Focus on building strong connections, empowering your child, and gently guiding them toward better choices—all while staying attuned to their feelings and needs to help them grow and feel safe. Here are some strategies that you may find helpful:

COMMUNICATION

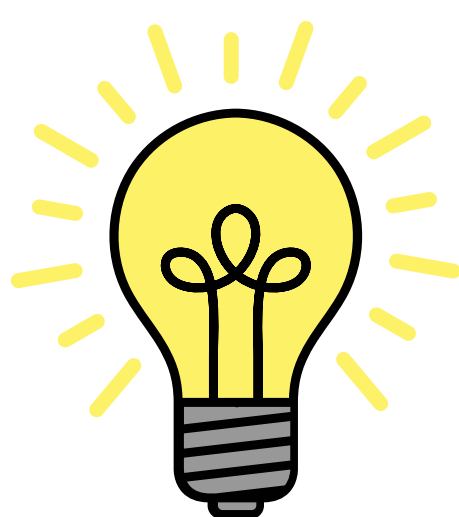
- Keep language calm, concrete, and simple.
- Give your child words –especially when overwhelmed—don't ask them to “use their words.”
- Demonstrate actions with visual or physical supports.
- Offer scripts or phrases to help them express what's needed.
- Check understanding and validate feelings before redirecting.
- Praise effort and gently repair disconnections, empowering trust through real-time learning and “re-dos.”

TRANSITIONS, OVERWHELM, SOCIAL SITUATIONS

- Offer advance warnings, consistent rituals, and safe spaces to ease changes.
- Co-regulate by staying calm and reducing demands.
- Proactively explain what to expect and use role play to prepare.
- Pre-teach social scripts and supervise with empathy.
- Adjust your expectations to fit your child's developmental level, not their age.
- Use accommodations like simplifying tasks, extra time, or creating a calm environment to help them succeed.

ROUTINES

- Use visual schedules and pre-select clothes and meals for consistency.
- Use structured routines and comfort items for regulation and safety.
- Support sensory needs – consider what their body and nervous system need to feel safe and calm
- Provide choices to build autonomy.
- Feed and water every two hours (meeting physiological needs to support regulation and felt safety)
- Allow “re-dos” , modeling real-time learning.



Use Re-dos to Support Learning

Re-dos provide children safe, repeated opportunities to practice and internalize positive behaviors through active, hands-on learning. This strengthens new brain pathways, builds confidence, reduces shame, & fosters secure attachment by emphasizing connection and empowerment over punishment.

When a child struggles with behavior, guide them back to the moment & help them practice the appropriate response. This active, playful repetition builds positive motor memory, reinforces skills, & boosts confidence.

By giving words & concrete choices instead of questions, you honor the child's communication style & brain-based needs, supporting real-time learning, connection, & resilience.

EXPECT
INCONSISTENCY &
ADAPT

Not every strategy will
work 100% of the time.

THINK BRAIN,
NOT BEHAVIOR

Remember that challenging
behaviors are reflections
of a dysregulated brain,
not defiance.