

MEMORY

November 2017

Issue #10



Are you looking for more information or support? Call us!
506-862-3783

SELF-CARE

As a parent, it's important for you to take time for yourself.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, step away from the situation and take a moment.

As we know, children with FASD have trouble with their memory. They also have poor attention skills because their attention span is short. Their processing speed is slower, so remember that it might take them longer than you want but that they will get it! **Key words** when working with children with FASD:

CONSISTENCY – PATIENCE – REPETITION

Here are a few pointers to better understand how learning changes as children age and a few tips to promote learning and memory.

Babies and toddlers

They can remember things that interest / frighten / excite them (for up to 10 months after exposure). They need reliable routines. They generalize. From 18 to 24 months, they start to remember images.

Tips: Provide a stimulating environment. Build stability through daily routines. Create a secure climate – they need to feel safe. Remind them with pictures (e.g. if you're going to grandma's, show a picture of grandma).

Ages 2-5

They start to mimic what they see. Repetition is key. They learn through melodies and rhymes.

Tips: Repetition is always important, so repeat as many times as you have to. (It might take longer for a child with FASD to get it, so be patient.) Ask specific questions, such as, "Did you have crackers for lunch today?" (to jog your child's memory). Let them do things themselves. Suggest small activities that are **ATTAINABLE** for them.

Ages 5 and up

They need preparation, with everything in its place. They start to visualize images.

Tips: Breaking things down into chunks makes them easier to learn and remember. Encourage greater autonomy but remain realistic. They remember things better when they have done it themselves. Be prepared when going somewhere new. Avoid overwhelming your child. Repeat ahead of time and often so they remember.

References:

- Kulman, R. (2013). *5 tips to Improve Working Memory Skills. Learning Works for Kids.*
- Morin, Amanda. (2017). *8 Working Memory Boosters. Understood for learning & attention issues.*
- *Top 10 Lists to Improve Your Child's Memory (2009). Judy Willis. Psychology Today.*

Overall tips

- Make things simple.
- Visualization skills: Encourage your child to create a picture in their mind of what they hear or read.
- Have them teach you: Doing this involves making sense of the information.
- Encourage active reading: Jotting down notes / underlining / highlighting.
- Encourage games that use visual memory, e.g. matching games.
- Encourage playing cards: This works memory in two ways, by remembering the rules and the cards.
- Chunk information into smaller pieces. Help them make connections, form associations, find ways to connect information.
- During a multi-sensory activity: Write it down so they can see it, say it out loud so they can hear it, toss a ball when discussing it.

Ages 6 to 12

They need to recognize numbers, the alphabet, and related operations. They start to learn more about these concepts.

Tips: Repeat numbers, the alphabet, and related operations with your child using visual aids such as flash cards. Incorporate the things they are learning into situations and activities they like.

Ages 12-14

They learn by doing things themselves. A key is consistency in incorporating their strengths and interests into their daily routines and structures.

Tips: They need to feel that they are actively participating in their own learning without being judged.

Ages 14 to 16

Teenagers with FASD are concrete thinkers. They need to be guided to complete tasks that have been broken down into small, individual steps and that involve cause and effect.

Tips: Engage with them and try to minimize resistance by letting them go at their own pace.

Ages 16 to 18

Independent living is usually the expectation for this age group. Young adults with FASD need to have the proper supports in place that encourage independent living and provide supervision.

Tips: Through routines and repetition, reinforce the skills they need in order to support their memory.

Resources:

- *Strategies Parents Find Helpful in Raising their Children Living with FASD; Czaee Rajwani: p. 15.*
- *Suzanne Young (2004). Du plus petit au plus grand. Centre jeunesse de Montréal – Institut universitaire.*
- *NB FASD Centre of Excellence 2 day training presentation.*