

Dysmaturity vs. immaturity

(developmental age vs. chronological age)

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Dysmaturity and immaturity are two very different things. For children with FASD, developmental age and chronological age do not always correspond.

- **Immaturity:** With support, the child can function in a manner that is compatible with their chronological age.
- **Dysmaturity:** The child's developmental age is less advanced than their chronological age.

Tips: "Thinking younger" reduces the frustration both children and parents feel when parental expectations are not being met.

- Focus on the child's strengths.
- Try differently instead of focusing on what does not work.

Physical dysmaturity



- A five year old (chronological age) child could act like a two year old child, which needs to be considered, especially when starting school. For instance, a five year old (chronological age) child starts school while a child with FASD and a younger developmental age (two years old) naps.
- A twelve year old (chronological age) child may act like a child with a developmental age of six. For example, a twelve year old (chronological age) child acts responsibly, while a child with a younger developmental age (six) has to be told to behave.

Tips: Observe the age of the children with whom your child gets along best; this will give you an indication of your child's developmental age. Children with FASD usually prefer to play with children who are chronologically younger than them. They are good with younger children. Remember that each child is different and develops at their own pace.

Social dysmaturity

- Behaviours that are appropriate for a six-year-old are usually inappropriate for a teenager. (A teenager with FASD can behave like a six-year-old.)

A child with FASD:

- Needs constant supervision;
- Could seem irresponsible for their age;
- Could have difficulty in various social situations.

Tip: Change the way you think.

A baby *instead* His developmental age is less advanced than his chronological age.

He doesn't want *instead* He can't.

References:

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