



# THE “EXTERNAL BRAIN”

## FASD BEHAVIOURS

- The cognitive impairments in children with FASD can cause them to have poor memory, lack of impulse control, poor judgment, and difficulty with ‘cause and effect’ reasoning.
- This means they often need support from others to help them think through decisions, behaviours, and consequences as well as help them remember their routine, schedule, and how to complete tasks assigned to them.
- In other words, your child may need you or a trusted person to act as their *External Brain*.

## STRATEGIES

- **Assess the level of need by making an inventory of your child’s needs:** Your child may need all, some, or few of the following External Brain functions - time-keeper, friend-chooser, money-manager, information-interpreter, hygiene-monitor, and decision-maker.
- **Use tools:** Schedules, agendas, behaviour charts, and whatever else works to give your child external cues about what he needs to do.
- **Educate others:** Teach your child’s siblings, teachers, principal, coach, etc. about FASD and the needs of your child so they can help support him.
- **Build a ‘circle of support’:** Ask responsible and trusted people to act as External Brains for your child when you are not around.

Individuals with disabilities often require assistive devices to help them function to their maximum potential in life, for example: a blind person uses a seeing-eye dog to help her get around.

For a child with FASD, an External Brain helps them to function as best they can.

*The External Brain mentors, assists, guides, supervises and/or supports the child to maximize their success.*

*Assess the risk factors in your child’s life to determine how often they need support.*

## QUICK TIPS

- THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT REQUIRED WILL DEPEND ON YOUR CHILD’S SPECIFIC ABILITIES AND DISABILITIES.
- BE HONEST AND OPEN WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT THEIR DISABILITY AND NEED FOR SUPPORT TO HELP THEM TO ACCEPT THE CONCEPT OF AN “EXTERNAL BRAIN”.

