



OWNERSHIP

FASD BEHAVIOURS

- Ownership is an abstract concept, one that is difficult to understand for children with FASD.
- Stealing is often related to the lack of understanding of ownership - the child's understanding may be that a specific person owns a specific object only as long as the person and the object are together. If they see something they want and it's available, they take it.
- Problems with short-term memory can also be an issue, because children with FASD may not remember taking something that isn't theirs.

STRATEGIES

- **Assign a colour or symbol to your child's belongings:** The symbol helps the child to understand what is his and what is not. He should not take or use items that don't have his symbol.
- **Deal with stealing quickly, firmly, and with appropriate consequences:** Don't get caught up in an argument, simply say "This belongs to..." and make sure she returns the item with an apology. Practice how she will say sorry and go with her for support.
- **Be clear about lending and borrowing:** Explain to your child that one cannot borrow things without returning them. Have others explain clearly when they expect their items back.

It is hard to know what to do when a child with FASD steals something. You will need to use your judgment in each case:

Are they stealing because they are behaving badly, or because they really didn't understand that it is wrong to take things that belong to other people?

You'll need to teach your child over and over again about what ownership means.

QUICK TIPS

- IT IS EASIER TO TEACH A CHILD WHAT IS HIS, RATHER THAN WHAT IS NOT HIS.
- SUPERVISION AND REDIRECTION ARE THE KEYS TO THE PREVENTION OF STEALING.

