



Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD): The Parent Perspective on Education and Implications for Educational Psychologists

Find the full study here: [2022GriffithsREdPsyD.pdf \(uea.ac.uk\)](https://2022GriffithsREdPsyD.pdf(uea.ac.uk))



Aims/Background context



(why did we do it)

- The prevalence of FASD is higher than other neurodevelopmental disorders such as Autism, but FASD is less understood.
- Parents of those with FASD cite school as one of the biggest family stressors.
- Since 2013, only one Canadian study and two UK-based unpublished theses has considered FASD and educational psychology practice together, and neither included the parent perspective.

Research questions:

- 1) How do parents perceive their child's experience of school?
- 2) What are parents' experiences of the family-school interaction?
- 3) What are parents' experiences of EPs supporting the educational experiences of their child?

Design/Methods



(what did we do)

- Nine interviews were conducted remotely with adopters or foster carers of individuals who had a confirmed diagnosis of FASD (aged between 5 and 16 years old).
- Interview transcripts were analysed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

Four themes were identified:

- 5) Understanding the Individual
- 6) Sense of Belonging
- 7) Collaboration and Communication
- 8) Knowledge and Awareness of FASD

Results/Discussion/Impact



(what does this mean for children & families in Suffolk)

- 1) Understanding the Individual**
 - Schools and educational psychologists need to individualise their approach when working with those who have FASD, including their families.
 - Education is not an easy journey for those with FASD, and often this is communicated through 'difficult' behaviours- this is not a choice, but rather a need.
- 2) Sense of Belonging**
 - Supporting these individuals through a relational approach works best. Nurture not punishment.
 - Building positive relationships with both adults and peers is highly important.
- 3) Collaboration and Communication**
 - Parents are experts of their child and are often highly knowledgeable about FASD. Professionals need to listen to them without judgement.
- 4) Knowledge and Awareness of FASD**
 - Additional training is needed to improve understanding of FASD in schools, our service has therefore delivered this in several Suffolk schools.

Summary provided by Dr Rebecca Griffiths (Senior Educational Psychologist), June 2024.