

Functional Behavior Assessment Modifications for FASD (and other brain based disabilities)

Standard FBA Steps

FASD-Informed Modifications

1. Define the Problem Behavior
Use objective, observable terms.

1. Reframe Behavior as a Symptom
Describe behaviors as brain-based (e.g., “difficulty transitioning” instead of “noncompliant”).

2. Gather Background Information
Review records, IEPs, history.

2. Include Brain-Based Assessments
Factor in prenatal exposure, cognitive fatigue, developmental history.

3. Interview Key People
Teachers, parents, staff.

3. Focus Interviews on Brain Function
Ask about sensory triggers, regulation struggles, and environmental stress—not just misbehavior.

4. Direct Observation
Collect ABC data.
(Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence)

4. Observe for Environmental Mismatches
Watch for overwhelm, sensory overload, transitions, and task complexity—not just ABC patterns.

5. Analyze Data for Patterns
Identify triggers and reinforcers.

5. Analyze for Regulation Patterns
Look for dysregulation cycles, fatigue, and mismatch between demands and abilities.

6. Develop Summary Statement
Hypothesize function (e.g., escape, attention).

6. Summarize with a Brain-Based Lens
Identify unmet needs and neurological stressors instead of purely behavioral “functions.”

7. Create Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
Teach alternative behaviors, reinforce positives.

7. Build Accommodation Plans
Focus on reducing triggers, supporting regulation, and adjusting environments—not just teaching replacement behaviors.