

FASD: WHAT TO EXPECT IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Expected independence may not match a student's developmental needs.

FASD informed assessments should guide support needs.

MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPECTS STUDENTS TO



Move independently between classes



Organize materials and assignments



Plan ahead and manage time



Read social situations



Make safe decisions



Ask for help when needed

DEVELOPMENT MAY BE UNEVEN

A student may have age-appropriate vocabulary, knowledge, or IQ while needing substantially more support with judgment, organization, social understanding, emotional regulation, or safety.



The differences may not be visible.

LOOK BEYOND AGE AND APPEARANCE

A DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENTAL TRACK



Strong skills in one area can exist alongside much younger functioning in another. Speaking well does not always mean understanding or independence.



SUPERVISION IS SUPPORT

A quiet workspace may not be enough. The student may need help getting started, frequent check-ins, supported transitions, or an adult nearby.



SAFETY NEEDS MAY CONTINUE

Wanting to belong, combined with impulsivity, younger social judgment, or difficulty anticipating consequences, can increase vulnerability to peer influence.

WHAT SUPPORT CAN LOOK LIKE



One consistent adult across classes



Brief, concrete directions



Visual steps that stay available



Supervision matched to functional need



Advance preparation for transitions



Direct teaching and practice of safety and social situations

When demands exceed a student's developmental capacity, confusion or vulnerability may be mistaken for defiance, carelessness, or poor motivation.