

FASD TIP SHEET

TIPS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD BE SUCCESSFUL IN GROUP SPORTS & ACTIVITIES

1. Remember that coaches or other group leaders, care about children. They want every child to have a good season or experience in the group. Talk to them about the things that are hard for your child. If you share information about your child with the adult group leader, they will know more about how to help your child succeed.

2. Share some information about FASD with the group leader or coach. They need to understand why your child needs longer to do things or has some trouble following directions. They also benefit from knowing about what usually happens when your child becomes stressed, and what interventions usually help. You can provide them with both general information about FASD and child specific information about FASD.

3. If your child has a close friend, try to have them join a group together. It will help your child to go with someone she or he knows. It can be beneficial to for their friend to be their buddy for the sporting activities.



4. Your child's friends and team mates can be a support to your child and can help him make good choices.

5. Help your child to choose activities that he enjoys and has fun doing. This gives him a chance to be successful.

6. Regular group lessons or activities can be quite rigid about what needs to be learned or performed in a set amount of time. Many children with

FASD need to repeat more times to become more skillful, or they may need to repeat a level to master it before moving on to the next level. If your child doesn't want to repeat a level until she gains the needed skills, find out if your community offers one-on-one lessons for children with special needs. For instance, the Arc, YMCA or YWCA would be able to help you find out more about lessons in your area.

7. If your child gets overexcited or overstimulated in groups because noise, bright lights or the confusion of many children doing lots of things at once are hard for her to cope with, help your child before there is a problem. Work with the group leader and organize a quiet activity for all the participants to do before settling down to practice, rehearsal, or the regular group activity. This will help the child with FASD to keep from getting overexcited.

8. Supervise, supervise, supervise. Go to your child's team practices, games, rehearsals, and meetings (if possible). Be an adult volunteer!

9. Practice with your child to help him learn the new skills.

10. As an observer, help your child by explaining things. Watch for inappropriate behaviour, and help her if she misunderstands something. Work out specific hand signals or a special facial expression with your child in advance; use them to communicate a message to help your child when he cannot (or doesn't want to) leave the group to get support or direction from you, or when you cannot join the group without interrupting the activity or embarrassing your child.