

**ALARM** – An acronym for Assessing Behaviours (Conry & Fast 2000, pp.16-23)  
 Julianne Conry and Diane Fast provide another way to assess possible FASD behaviours.

Characteristics	Comments
Adaptive behaviour problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the most devastating long-term disability associated with FASD</li> <li>-affects employment, managing money, healthy use of non-structured leisure time</li> <li>-impaired social judgement</li> <li>-highly susceptible to manipulation, easily led</li> <li>-abused by others</li> <li>-unable to learn from experience</li> <li>-poor life skills, such as hygiene, personal relationships, independence, and judgement in social/work situations</li> </ul>
Language problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<i>Receptive Language</i>: may not cognitively receive written, aural, and non-verbal language presented as forms, verbal instructions, gestures; therefore cannot process data for comprehension</li> <li>-<i>Expressive Language</i>: may not be able to speak, write or non-verbally convey their message (i.e. give information to the police at the scene, their lawyer, or the court)</li> <li>-may have associated speech challenges</li> <li>-may use “big words” inappropriately</li> <li>-easily confused or led via complex language (e.g. “Is it not true that...?”)</li> <li>-may appear to possess good verbal skills but comprehension level is much below word usage</li> </ul>
Attention concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Approximately 60% of people with FASD have attention deficit problems (Streissguth <i>et al</i>, 1996)</li> <li>-may appear distracted, restless, unable to stay on task, and have problems with processing information and reasoning</li> <li>-people with FASD and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are impulsive and may put themselves into dangerous situations without comprehending consequences</li> <li>-problems with learning and school</li> <li>-easily influenced by others to do things “on the spur of the moment” i.e. break-ins, shoplifting, drug running</li> </ul>
Reasoning problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-inability to link actions to consequences or respond appropriately</li> <li>-do not learn from experience</li> <li>-delays in judicial process means accused may not connect his sentence with his behaviour, the seriousness of the offence, or understand the sentence</li> </ul>

## Memory deficits

- Short-term memory most problematic (sometimes can't remember what you said at the start of a sentence by the time you finish it)
- may not process and therefore can't remember simple instructions
- intermittent memory means that they might forget something today, but remember it two days from now, therefore giving varied information on different days
- may not be able to recount events in the order they occurred (may give you the middle of the story, then the beginning, then the end)
- memory deficits combined with a different concept of time may result in an inaccurate picture of the timing of the events
- may tend to adopt a version of events suggested through repeated questioning
- prone to confabulation due to impaired memory, poor expressive skills and the desire to appease the court