

10th International
Conference on
Adolescents and Adults
with FASD

Hidden in Plain Sight

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**The URGENT need to Recognize and Respond
to FASD in Foster Care Systems**



Disclosures

We have no disclosures.

Narrative Literature Review

Paper in Progress

Authors - Multidisciplinary Team

**Focus: Prevalence, recognition and
system response**

Why a multi-disciplinary approach

FASD is common but frequently underrecognized

Foster care populations appear to be at elevated risk

Missed recognition changes outcomes across multiple systems

Care providers of all types are impacted but few are equipped to provide appropriate care

The Core Challenge

Children who experience foster care appear to have higher rates of FASD, but the condition remains under-identified:

Vulnerable population

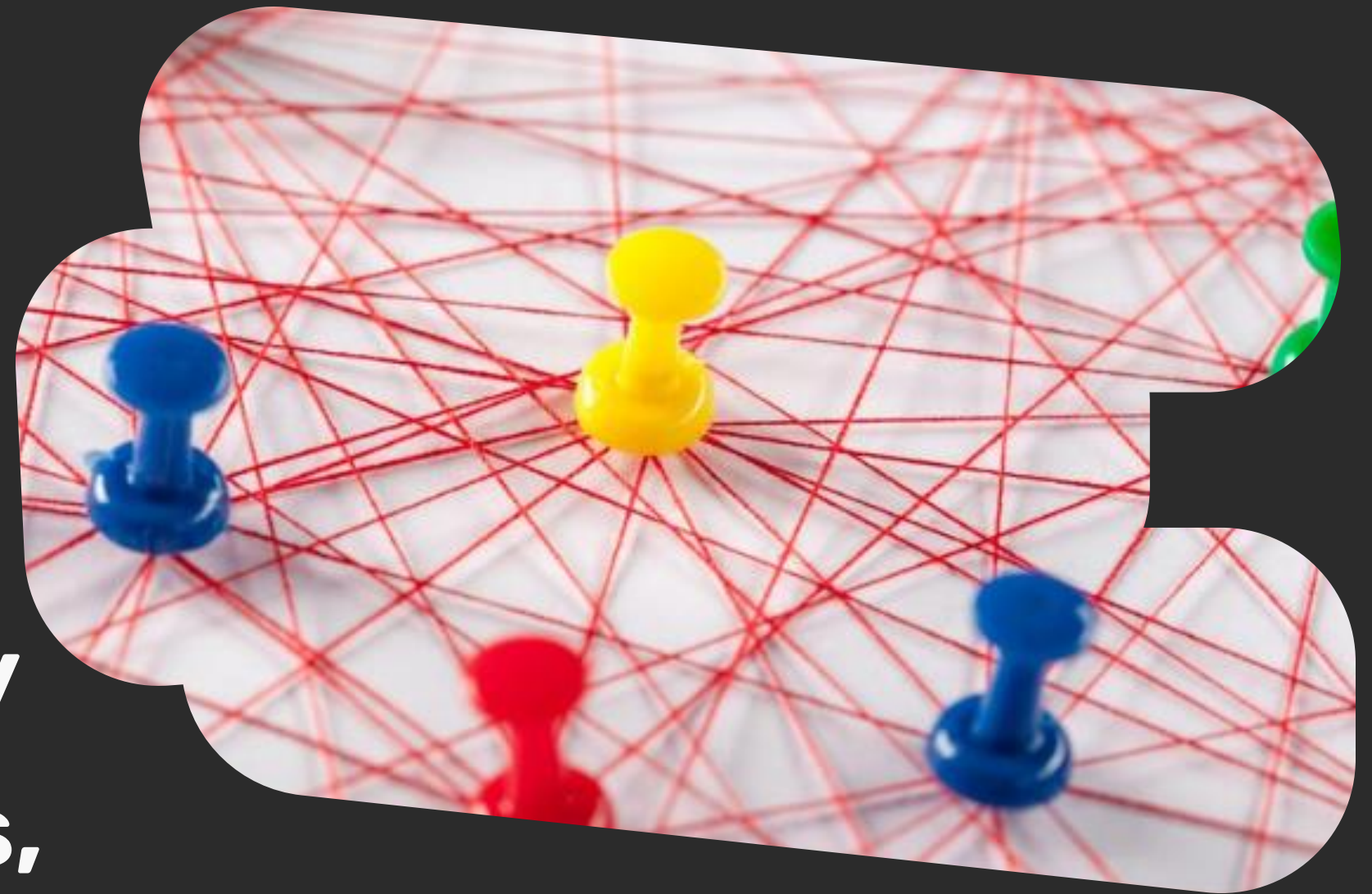
Low recognition

Lifelong consequence when missed



NARRATIVE REVIEW

- **Broad and complex topic**
- **Literature spread across multiple disciplines**
- **Need for interpretive synthesis, not just summary**
- **Designed to identify themes, tensions, and gaps**



MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM



- **NP** providing FASD diagnostic evaluations
- **LCSW** treating patients with FASD
- **FASD/Behavior Consultant** and self advocate
- **Foster care ministry coordinator**
- **Behavioral interventionist**
- **Social worker** in private and state child placement agency

Discipline Impact

**Clinical care: underdiagnosis,
diagnostic overshadowing,
treatment mismatch**

**Mental health: behavior misread as
primary psychiatric pathology**

**Behavioral intervention: standard
strategies may fail without brain-
based adaptation**

**Child welfare: placement
instability, case-planning
challenges, unmet developmental
needs.**

**Caregiver support: burnout,
confusion, blame, grief**

**Education/training: low
awareness, inconsistent**

EMERGING THEMES IN LITERATURE

**FASD is underrecognized in
foster care populations**

**Systems often respond to
behavior before disability**

**Prevalence appears higher than
in the general population**

**Cross discipline education on
FASD is lacking**

**Symptom overlap contributes
to diagnostic confusion**

**Gaps remain in recognition,
service alignment, and cross-
system coordination**

Missed Recognition Matters

When FASD is missed:

- the child may be mislabeled**
- caregivers may be blamed**
- interventions may be poorly matched**
- placements may destabilize**
- schools may over-discipline**
- disability-related needs may go unaccommodated**
- behaviors overshadow strengths**

Multidisciplinary Challenges

Require

Multidisciplinary Responses



CALL TO ACTION

**Everyone
has a role
to play**

1. Recognize risk earlier

- **Build FASD awareness into foster care and child welfare settings**

2. Train across disciplines

- **Equip clinicians, case workers, educators, and caregivers**

3. Respond in brain-based ways

- **Align expectations, supports, and services with neurodevelopmental disability**

Thank you to our Co-Authors

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