



*The journey is so much better,
when we are not alone.*

Charitable Registration No.
739239754 RR0001

“The Collapse and The Bridge” A Transitions Case Study Comparison

A Caregiver Lived Experience Perspective

Presented by Mary Byrnes
April 18, 2026

**Collapsing Bridge -
No Support**



**Sturdy Bridge -
With Support**

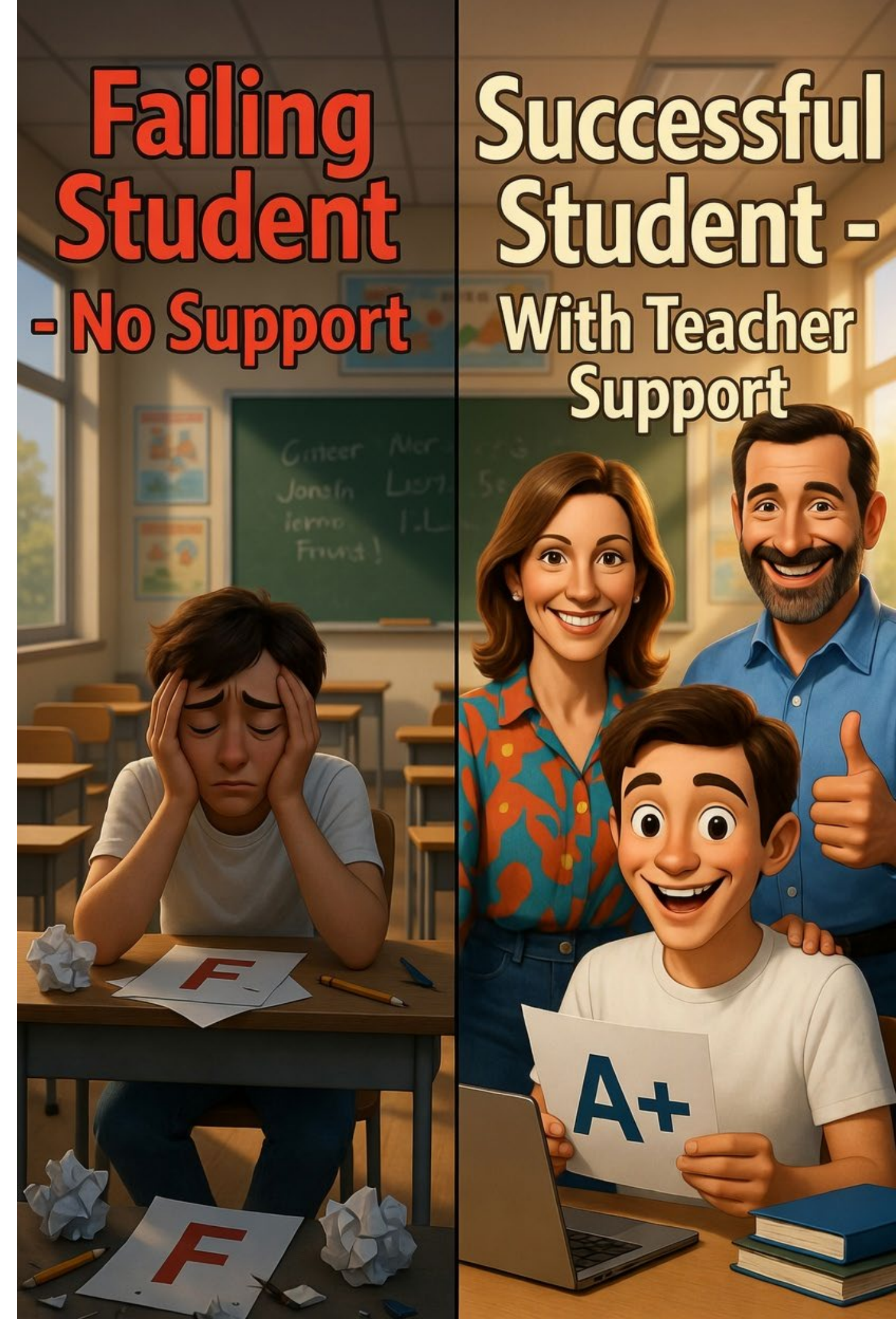




Agenda

- Introduction – The Expert by Necessity
- The 'Horror' Case Study - Grade 8
- The 'Triumph' Case Study – Grade 9
- The Analysis of Success
- The Calls to Action
- Connect with Us

Failing Student
- No Support



Successful Student -
With Teacher Support





The Introduction

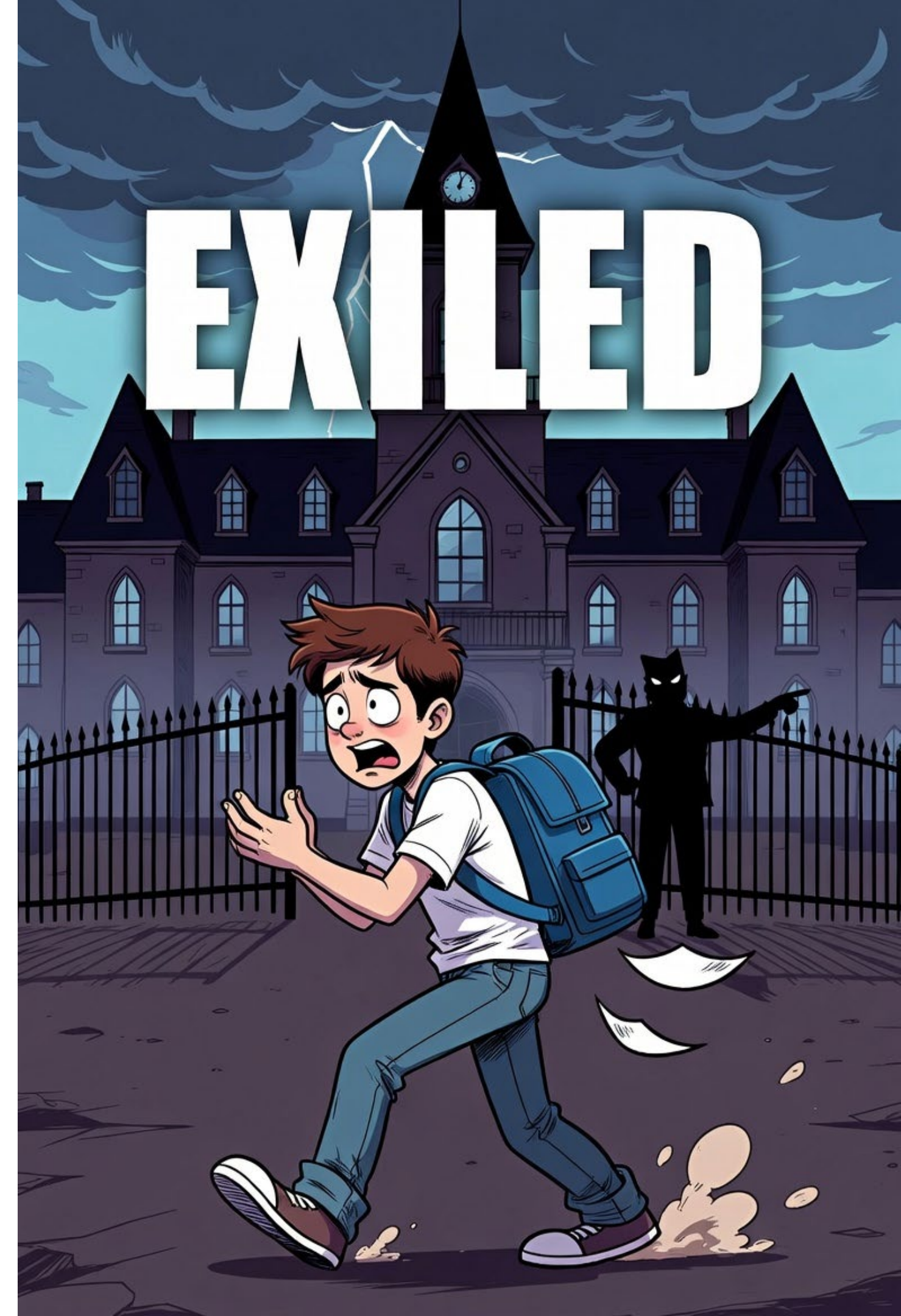
- The "Expert" by necessity.
- The paradox of FASD: A brain-based disability meeting a behavior-based system.
- The transition cliff: Why moving schools is the "Super Bowl" of FASD stressors.





The 'Horror' Case Study

- The setup: Transitioning from a successful day-treatment program to an out-of-region elementary school Grade 8 Complex Needs Classroom.
- The barrier: A plan existed on paper but was ignored by the receiving team.
- The fallout: Elopement, dysregulation, and 9 weeks of "educational exile."
- The emotional toll: Punitive treatment and the heavy hand of the Superintendent.





The 'Triumph' Case Study

- The Pivot: Taking the lead in May for a Grade 9 transition.
- The Strategy: The Collaborative Agenda—merging research with lived experience.
- The Nuance: A tale of two attitudes. The "old" school's dismissal vs. the "new" school's total buy-in.
- The Result: The best school year ever.





The Analysis of Success

- Why it worked: Honest relationship building and the "FASD Lens."
- The unique variable: Staff willingness to be learners, not just teachers.





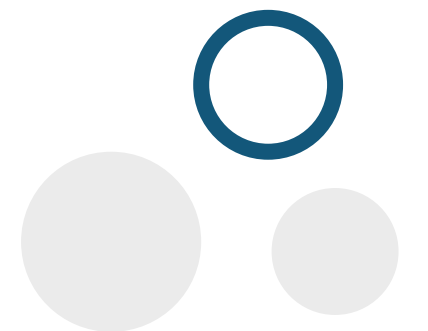
The Calls to Action

- Standardization of collaborative transition plans.
- Mandatory FASD-informed training for all transition stakeholders.
- Integration of lived experience and research as a legal requirement for IEPs.





Transition Planning for School Success For the Win!





FASD Resources

Websites:

- CanFASD <https://canfasd.ca/>
- FASD Ontario <https://www.fasdinfectsaf.ca/resources-library/>
- FASD Collaborative <https://www.fasdcollaborative.com/>
- FASD United <https://fasdunited.org/>
- Harrison's Hope <https://harrisonshope.ca/>

Books:

- Raising Kids and Teens with FASD by Barb Clark
- Essential FASD Supports: Understanding & Supporting People with FASD by Nate Sheets
- Embracing Zak by Jodee Kulp
- Embracing Hope by Carl Young & Joel Sheagren
- Fetal Alcohol/Neurobehavioral Conditions: Understanding and Application of a Brain-Based Approach, by Diane Malbin
- Trying Differently Rather Than Harder, by Diane Malbin and updated version by Lynn Alsup, et al
- Smart but Scattered TEENS by Richard Guare, Peg Dawson & Colin Guare
- Smart but Scattered and Stalled by Richard Guare, Peg Dawson & Colin Guare
- Parenting Your Porcupine by Antonia Rathbun Lindsey



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Contact Us

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