

SUPPORTING WORKPLACE COGNITION

Supporting self-awareness in people with FASD

Self-awareness is the ability to keep track of yourself, your actions thoughts and emotions and consider how they fit with the situation.



Being self-aware is important at work as it allows us to deal with stress, manage time better, understand the impact we have on others, take on feedback, modify our emotions and behaviours and feel more confident in our abilities.

People with FASD may:

- Have difficulty understanding and labelling their own emotions.
- Display poor self-awareness of their emotions, difficulties, and limitations.
- Have difficulties regulating their emotions, for example dealing with frustration.
- Have an inaccurate self-image or self-perception (e.g., believing they are a lot worse at a task than they actually are).

Poor self-awareness can cause problems with relationships at work and affect the quality of work. Poor self-awareness can also interfere with the person's ability to manage their emotional responses and impulses.

Way an employer may promote self-awareness:

- ✓ Anticipate lack of self-awareness and/or insight, and provide support if mistakes are made.
- ✓ Create a workplace culture where feedback is provided in a positive, constructive way and positive behaviors are acknowledged.
- ✓ Prompt accurate self-statements by having honest conversations with the person and sharing your observations of their behaviour.
- ✓ Provide generous, tactful, realistic, and supportive feedback
- ✓ Encourage the employee to self-evaluate their performance and help identify what they did well and not so well, and what they would change next time.

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An employer can promote behaviour and emotion regulation by:

- ✓ Providing direct instructions of expected and unexpected behaviour.
- ✓ Helping to identify useful strategies for regulating their emotional reactions (e.g., taking a break, talking it out with a work buddy/mentor, supervisor, etc., breathing techniques, physically removing oneself from the situation, reframing the situation into more positive terms, etc.).
- ✓ Offering frequent positive feedback and praise for demonstrating positive social and emotional behaviours.



Being aware of what and why one feels and behaves in a particular way and how this may impact on self and on others are key ingredients supporting wellbeing at work. There are useful, simple strategies to foster self-awareness and the regulation of emotions and behaviour in employees with FASD.