

An examination of the abilities, risks,
and needs of adolescents and young
adults with FASD in the criminal
justice system: A research update

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Overrepresentation in Justice Settings

▶ High representation

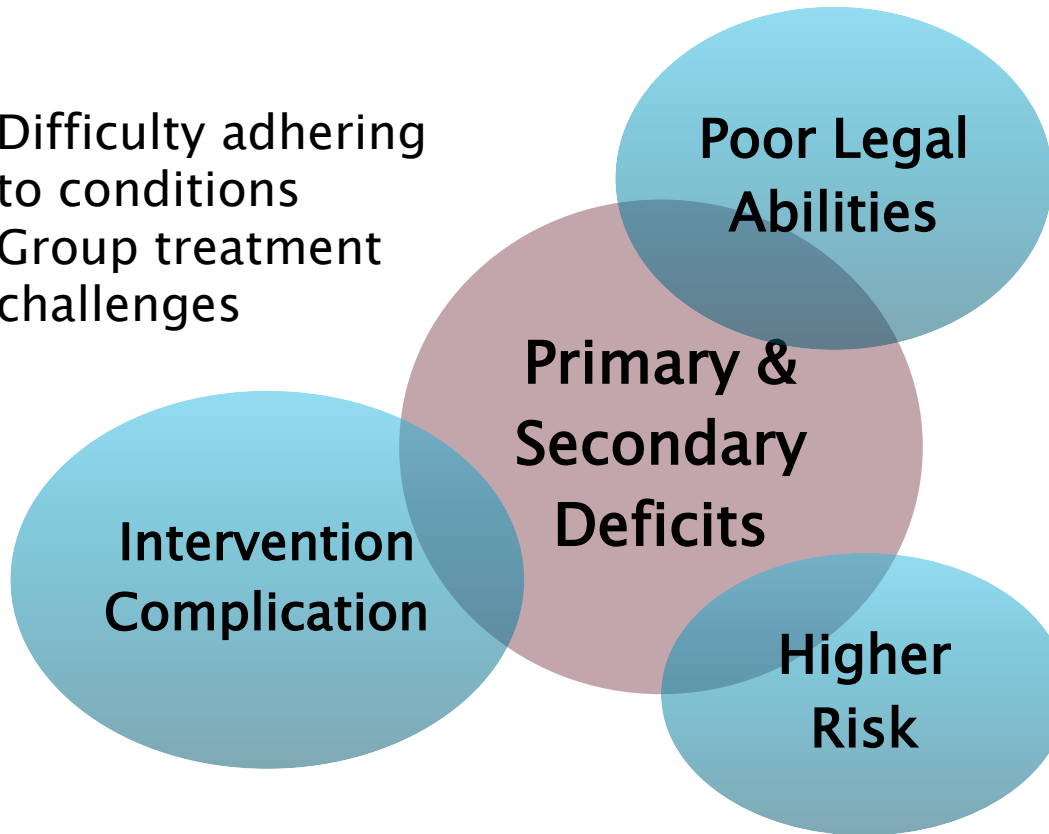
- Fast, Conry, &Loock (1999)
 - 23.3% youth in forensic assessment unit (3 FAS / 64 FAE)
- CSC Screening Study (2006)
 - 9.8% federally sentenced adults (1 pFAS; 8 ARND)

▶ Lack of Information

- No systematic research examining population

Reasons and Concerns?

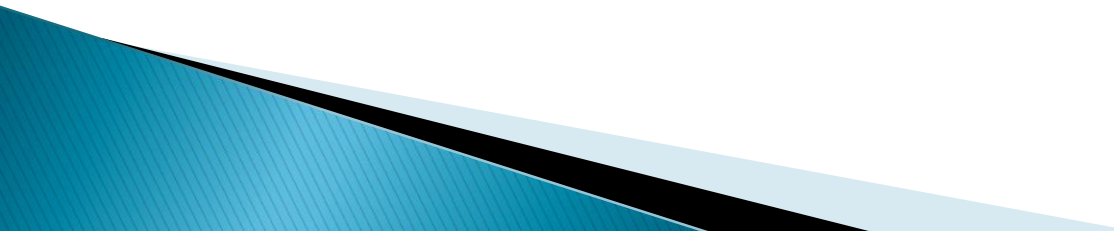
- Difficulty adhering to conditions
- Group treatment challenges



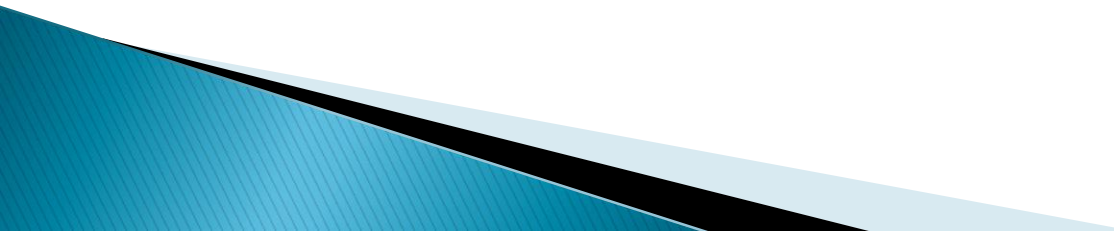
- Cognitive problems
- Decisional immaturity
- Communication problems

- Impulsivity
- Sensation seeking
- Susceptibility to peer influence

Research Questions

1. Level of understanding and appreciation of legal rights upon arrest and interrogation?
 2. What proportion may be unfit to stand trial?
 3. What are the rates and offending trajectories and do they differ?
 4. What risk and protective factors are more related to offending and other adverse outcomes?
 5. Are current risk assessment tools appropriate?
 6. What are the health needs? (mental health, victimization, substance use problems)
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Study Objectives

- ▶ Gather empirical data regarding justice-system involvement and health needs
 - ▶ Identify challenges related to due process and procedural justice
 - ▶ Make recommendations regarding treatment targets, timelines, and other needs
 - ▶ Improve clinicians' ability to make informed recommendation and management plans re: risk
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Present Study

- ▶ Prospective longitudinal cohort design
 - Baseline, 6–months, 12–months, 2–years
- ▶ Two groups
 - FASD (Dx via Canadian Guidelines)
 - Comparison: CJS non–FASD (screened)
- ▶ Participants referred/recruited from community clinic and justice settings
- ▶ Study sessions
 - Baseline (3hrs) semi–structured interview & psychometric testing
 - Follow–ups (45 mins)
- ▶ Parent/guardian interview

Measures

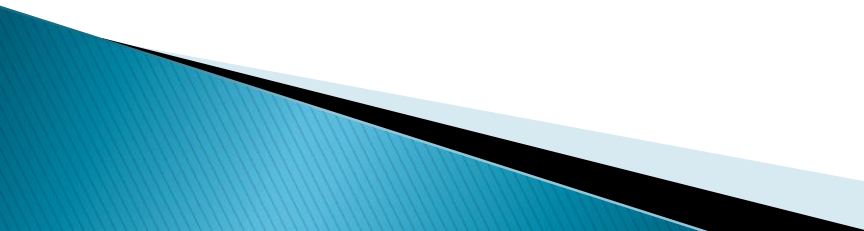
- ▶ Instruments for Assessing Understanding and Appreciation of Miranda Rights (Grisso, 1998)
- ▶ Understanding Police Interrogation Questionnaire (Woolard et al., 1998)
- ▶ Fitness Interview Test–Revised (Roesch et al., 1998)
- ▶ Gudjonsson Compliance Scale (Gudjonsson, 1997)
- ▶ Wide Range Achievement Test–4th Ed. (Wilkinson & Robertson, 2006)
- ▶ Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (Psychological Corporation, 1999)
- ▶ MAYSI–2 (Grisso & Barnum, 2000)
- ▶ Drug & Alcohol use Questionnaire (Bosworth & Espelage, 1995)
- ▶ Self–Report of Offending Questionnaire (Huizinga et al., 1991)
- ▶ Victimization – Problem Behavior Frequency Scale (Multisite Violence Project, 2004)
- ▶ Stressful Urban Life Events Scale (Attar et al., 1994)
- ▶ YLS–CMI (Hoge et al., 2002)
- ▶ SAVRY (Borum et al., 2003)
- ▶ PCL–YV (Forth et al., 2003)
- ▶ Asante Centre for FAS Probation Officer Screening & Referral Form (2010)
- ▶ Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (Gioia et al., 2000)
- ▶ Fetal Alcohol Behavior Scale (Streissguth et al., 1998)
- ▶ Child & Youth Resilience Survey (Ungar et al., 1998)
- ▶ Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Roberts et al., 1999)
- ▶ Semistructured interviews for youth and collateral informants (developed for current study)

Progress: 2009–2010

- ▶ Official approvals & reviews:
 - Simon Fraser University Research Ethics Board
 - BC Youth Justice–Youth Forensic Program Evaluation and Research Committee
 - BC Corrections Research Branch Review Committee
 - PLEA BC Research Review Board
 - Manitoba Department of Justice
 - YCJA/Court Approval, Manitoba

Progress: 2009–2010

▶ Supporting Agencies

- Manitoba FASD Youth Justice Program
 - Manitoba Youth Community Corrections
 - Manitoba Adult Community Corrections
 - New Directions for Children, Youth, Adults, and families, Manitoba
 - Asante Centre for FAS
 - PLEA Services
 - BC Ministry of Child and Family Services Key Workers
 - BC Youth Probation & Youth Justice
 - BC Adult Community Corrections
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Progress 2009–2010

- ▶ Additional Funding Partners
 - BC Mental Health and Addictions Services
 - Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research



- ▶ Training
 - 40 hours each for 2 part-time research assistants

Project Update

▶ FASD Group

- 34 Participants enrolled (68% complete)
- Age range 13–22 ($M=18$)
- 74% male (9 girls)
- 47% in custody at enrollment

▶ Early snapshot

- Range of charges (auto theft to 2nd degree murder)
- Very high compliance challenges
- Serious self-harm and suicidality
- Serious instances of victimization
- One death awaiting enrolment

Questions?

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