

# Insights-Informed Design Principles

**Insights-informed design principles describe goals and evaluation criteria** that need to be considered when developing solutions. They tell us what we need to keep in mind in order to create a solution that meets the needs of the people we serve. CanFASD and Overlap Associates collaborated to draft a set of insights-informed design principles based on the [Harmonized Housing Framework](#) and in-depth, qualitative interviews with individuals with FASD, their caregivers, and the service providers who support them.

Individuals with FASD face intersectional barriers, and while none of the solutions we create will operate in isolation, we need to recognize the various areas where our solutions may provide influence. The insights-informed design principles are sorted into three components that speak to different areas for growth: **Individual-level**, **System-level**, and **Research and Practice**. Recognising these separate components and how they interact is essential to creating solutions that address the intersectional needs of individuals with FASD.

## Individual-Level Areas of Growth

To address individual-level areas for growth, the solutions we develop must:

- **Recognise human rights and support individuals' dignity and holistic needs.** This means creating solutions that address the *entire* individual and ensure that individuals can maintain good mental, physical, and emotional health.
- **Be adaptable to individuals' needs.** Individuals with FASD have complex, diverse needs and require varying levels of support. Support services should recognise this and provide support that is responsive to different needs along the full housing continuum.
- **Inspire feelings of hope and safety.** Individuals with FASD experience reinforced hopelessness and feelings of betrayal as there is a lack of safe and supportive housing and even less available funding to access it with. Solutions should operate from a strengths-based perspective and incorporate failsafes to assist individuals who fall through the cracks of the system.
- **Ensure geography does not impact access.** Living in a rural setting is a barrier to accessing support. It is important to ensure that supports are available within walking distance or accessible through reliable public transport. Individuals with FASD also need to have access to reliable internet connections.

## System-Level Areas for Growth

To address system-level areas for growth, the solutions we develop must:

- **Promote collaboration between different systems and dismantle or mitigate systemic barriers to funding and support.** Recognising that several systems and factors play into access to housing, it is important to create solutions that help these systems connect with and reinforce each other to promote autonomy and remove system barriers.
- **Address and dismantle the stigma faced by individuals with FASD.** There is a lack of understanding around FASD, which is fuelled by its invisibility as well as the stigma around substance use. Solutions need to improve awareness of FASD and destigmatize seeking support for substance use.
- **Provide flexible compassionate housing.** Individuals with FASD require varying accommodations. Solutions should provide alternative methods of payment and supports that are adaptable to the needs of the individual accessing the housing. Solutions should also include supports that prevent evictions.

## Research and Practice Areas for Growth

To address research and practice areas for growth, the solutions we develop must:

- **Leverage research findings and put them into practice.** Solutions should be easy to understand and implement, and supply service providers with use case scenarios and examples of how to apply emerging and existing frameworks.
- **Foster awareness of supports and individual assessment.** Solutions should account for multiple opportunities for diagnosis and be responsive to a wide range of functional needs. Individuals with FASD and caregivers should be able to access a central information point for a solution that meets their needs.
- **Be embedded in co-creation and person-centredness through evaluation and mapping.** Housing supports and other services should be co-created with the individuals who they impact and all services should continually seek feedback from people to ensure that solutions are meeting their needs. Solutions should also be easy to access and navigate.