How can my child get organized, pay attention, and complete a task?

Executive Functioning and how to support EF

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Housekeeping

• For educational and quality control, we will be recording this zoom session.
• By participating, you are consenting to being recorded.
• Before this session is shared, we will edit to remove identifying information to protect your privacy.
• The Q&A section will be removed and only be shared as an anonymous transcript
Positive Behaviors = Positive Outcomes

- Thinking/Academics
- Relationships/Social-emotional
- Future Success/Independence and Self-Management
what are other words for spectrum?

range, gamut, scale, scope, compass, sweep, sequence, series, span, extent
Profile of a Graduate- The 5 C’s

– critical thinking,
– creative thinking,
– collaboration,
– communication and
– citizenship;

How are these 5 C’s impacted if you are twice exceptional, or if you vary at all on any of the 3 global positive behaviors??
Executive Functioning
Executive Functioning: Definitions

- **Planning:** selecting the goal
- **Organizing:** sequencing steps to meet the goal
- **Time awareness:** time management, setting priorities
- **Working memory:** holding plan and steps in mind while acting. Forwards and backwards thinking
• **Meta-cognition:** self-monitoring and evaluation

• **Response inhibition:** thinking before you act and managing impulses

• **Regulation affect:** management of emotions and arousal level

• **Initiation:** ability to get going
• **Flexibility:**
  - shifting attention,
  - changing of cognition and behavior as needed,
  - ability to see problems and solutions from different viewpoints
• **Persistence:**
  - ability to maintain drive and follow through until done
  - ability to inhibit responding to distractions mid task
Let’s think about this critically.

• Why is the problem occurring?
• When is the problem occurring?
• What skills need to be addressed?
• What accommodations or modifications are needed?
• Are your strategies working?
Planning the Intervention

• What is your strategy?
  – Environmental level (teaching/classroom)
  – Student level (teaching strategies/skills)
  – Motivation level (reinforcement for using strategies)
  – Across settings (school, home, community)
CHILD HAS TO OWN THE SKILL AND USE IT INDEPENDENTLY
Environmental Modifications

- The setting
- The task
- Provide prompts if needed
Student Interventions

- Development of skills
  - Need to teach executive skills directly
  - Student must “buy in” to using the skill consistently until second nature
  - Fade prompts (gradually)
  - Reinforcement to motivate
PROMPT HIERARCHY

1. FULL PHYSICAL
2. PARTIAL PHYSICAL
3. MODELING
4. GESTURAL
5. VERBAL (includes direct and indirect verbal prompts)
6. VISUAL (includes positional)

From least invasive to more independent.
Continually monitor student/child to determine when adult support can be withdrawn so that the children can learn to be independent in their responses.
Specific Executive Skills

- **Working Memory: (mental rehearsal and visualization)**
  - Modifications:
    - Agenda books
    - Outlines
    - Visual prompts
    - To-Do lists
    - Skeleton Notes
Specific Executive Skills

- Regulation of affect: (understanding emotions, positive self-statements, coping strategies)
  - Modifications
    - Reduce stimulation in classroom
    - Increase routine and predictability
    - Plan for frustration
    - Make goals achievable
    - Intervene early in behavior
    - Model calm response
Specific Executive Skills

- **Sustained attention: (self-monitoring and self-help)**
  - Modifications:
    - Reduce distractions
    - Preferential seating
    - Break tasks down
    - REINFORCEMENT
    - Silent timer
    - Orienting cues
    - Secret cue
    - High interest materials
    - Movement breaks
    - USE STUDENTS INTEREST
Specific Executive Skills

- **Task Initiation:** *(develop a routine for studying)*
  - Modifications:
    - Predictable routines
    - Start easy, then increase difficulty
    - Pair with other *(Get er done)* students
    - Goal setting *(longer assignments/projects)*
    - Time lines, check lists ,check ins
    - Incorporate choice
Specific Executive Skills

• **Planning and organizing: (visualize, outline, habit development)**
  – Modifications:
    • Clear and explicit directions
    • Rubric and models
    • Break down larger tasks with check ins
    • Sequential checklists
    • Long term planning tools
    • Calendars and agendas
    • Color code
Specific Executive Skills

- **Time management: (developing estimation and predictability)**
  - Modifications:
    - Schedules
    - Routine checklists with time limits
    - Timer parameters
    - REINFORCEMENT
Specific Executive Skills

- **Persistence: (goal setting and self-monitoring)**
  - Modifications:
    - Easily achievable short-term goals
    - Make goals explicit and meaningful
    - Goals should be close-ended (once done, it’s done)
    - REINFORCEMENT
    - Use engaging materials
    - Add group work for social development
Specific Executive Skills

- **Flexibility: (Switching Gears)**
  - Modifications:
    - Reduce unexpected changes
    - Provide warning
    - Practice
    - Gradual exposure
    - Pre-teaching
    - Increase support as needed
Specific Executive Skills

- **Meta-Cognition: (problem solving)**
  - Modifications:
    - What’s the goal?
    - What’s the plan?
    - Evaluate
    - Rethink and adjust
Supporting Social-emotional skills

- Students who get stuck and how to help
- How does it look in class
- Supporting for success
- Relationships
- Helping students build self-esteem and successful relationships
“Won’t” versus “Can’t”
- Look at the whole context of behavior
- Is the person stuck?
- Is there a problem that needs solving?
- Is trauma playing a role?

- Help the student problem solve their own behavior
How to teach replacement behaviors

- Model to demonstrate skill
- Provide explicit instructions
- Rehearse skill
- Provide feedback
- Practice in natural setting
- Reinforce students for demonstrating skill
Teach Replacement Behaviors

- Teach appropriate behaviors to use in place of inappropriate behavior (such as raising a hand to get the teacher’s attention rather than shouting out in class)
Teach self-regulation skills

- Programs that utilize Evidence-Based Strategies
- Provide verbal or physical cues to help children to self regulate their emotions such as “let’s stay calm” or allowing a student to go to a quiet area to relax or take a break to relax
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I can't stand this and ready to explode.</td>
<td>I want to hit or kick someone, or throw something. I need an adult to help me go to a safe place so I can calm down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I am getting too angry.</td>
<td>I am starting to clench my hands and my face feels hot. I need to go to my safe place to calm down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I am getting frustrated.</td>
<td>I need to walk away from a bad situation. I will tell my teacher that I need a break.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I am doing OK.</td>
<td>I am not happy, but I am upset. I can stay where I am and keep working. I can control my anger by myself.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COPING SKILLS**

- Take 10 deep breaths
- Slowly count to 10
- Squeeze hands together
- Imagine a happy place
- Push hands together
- Think of a happy memory
- Pull hands apart
OK

LET'S CHAT
Upcoming Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 26, 2020</td>
<td>Lunch and Learn: Using technology to support students with autism at home and in the community</td>
<td>Crystal Hence &amp; Josh Taylor</td>
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</table>

Registration Link:
https://vcu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJItcOmprDMvG9XuFNIwo6nrTeOPJz_TPOzg
Or, go to the www.vcuautismcenter.org and click on Lunch and Learn
For questions or more information
Please visit:

www.vcuautismcenter.org
Or
e-mail: autismcenter@vcu.edu