

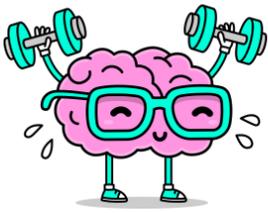


EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING IN SCHOOL



WORKING MEMORY

Provides a mental workspace to hold in mind and mentally manipulate information over short periods of time whilst mentally engaging in other relevant activities. The capacity to do this supports our learning in many activities in the classroom. Children often have to hold information in mind whilst engaged in an effortful activity.



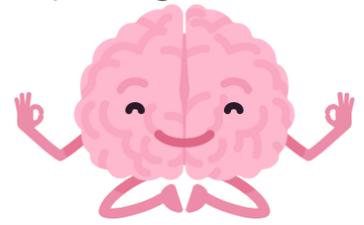
COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY

Ability to switch thinking between multiple concepts simultaneously. Helps students to think more flexibly and develop empathy, to promote emotional regulation and social functioning. Teachers can model cognitive flexibility by being open-minded and demonstrating how to adapt to new situations and challenges.



INHIBITORY CONTROL

Interacts with working memory and cognitive control to monitor and adapt the students thoughts, actions and feelings. This helps them to withhold or suppress a response that is no longer relevant or recovery of irrelevant information from memory. Helps students to have self-control and inhibit responses that could distract them when completing a task.



ORGANISATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Organisation, ability to keep things orderly, figure out how to accomplish their goal and have an understanding how long a task will take.



Problem Solving, Thinking and Reasoning, working through details of a problem to reach a solution, may include mathematical or systematic problems. Supporting children to be able to analyse and evaluate information and develop good reasoning skills, so they can apply strong critical thinking abilities.

WHAT EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING LOOKS LIKE IN THE CLASSROOM

- Challenges holding a sentence in their head to then write it down, finds copying from the board hard or writing down what someone is saying.
- Often have problems following lengthy instructions.
- Place-keeping errors, for example repeating or skipping letters, missing out large chunks of tasks.
- Task abandonment, child gives up.
- Ok once they have had support to start or needs step by step.
- Needs more time. and has difficulties organising self.
- Can bore easily, seem distracted.
- Are reserved in group activities in the classroom, rarely volunteering answers and sometimes not answering direct questions or shouting out irrelevant information.
- Seems as though they have not paid attention.
- Frequently lose their place in tasks.
- Considered to have short attention spans and also to be easily distracted.



HOW TO SUPPORT CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

- Take a movement break.
- Help children to regulate, using a scale or asking solution focused questions.
- Literacy mind map: tell me the summary.
- Repeat instructions and write them down.
- Homework on a slip to take home, not copying off the board.
- Notebook to record ideas and write down key points in lessons.
- Booster sessions, small group interventions to develop tools and skills.
- Break tasks and instructions into small components to minimise memory load, by shorting sentences to be written or number of items to be remembered.
- Increase the meaningfulness and degree of familiarity of the material to be remembered.
- Homework planner tools to record homework and note reminders when its due, use one A4 sheet weekly instead of diary.
- Encourage the use of memory aids such as, useful spellings on white boards and cards, providing number lines, punctuation checklists.
- Provide prior knowledge of changes to routines, to allow for preparation, use visuals.

