

Executive Function Questions and Answers?

What are executive functions?

Executive functions are the brain processes that underlie planning, organization, decision-making, attentional, and behavioral regulation.

Why are executive function skills important?

One of the leading contributors of academic and behavioral problems in children today is the increasing demands placed upon their executive function skills, and to compound the problem there is often no supports in place at home and school to develop these functions. Keeping up with the demands of academic productivity can seem a daunting task for children.

What can we do to help?

Knowing that all children's executive function skills are on a continuum and developing into early adulthood has important implications for interventions. Establishing environmental supports that will help children fully develop their executive functions, ultimately may help them reach their full potential by turning supports into behaviors that become routines.

Use the following checklist to help determine if your child or students may need more supports in place to develop their executive function skills.

- May start projects or assignments without necessary materials
- May not leave enough time to complete assignments
- May skip steps in multi-step task
- May waste time doing a small project and fail to do the big project
- May have difficulty identifying what material to record in note-taking
- Written work is poorly organized
- When given three things to do, remembers only the first or last
- May lose important papers or possessions
- May fail to turn in completed work
- Difficulty getting started on tasks which may appear as oppositional behavior
- May pick smaller, immediate reward over larger, delayed reward
- May run out of time before completing assignments
- Has good ideas but doesn't get the job done
- May have difficulty making transitions and/or coping with unforeseen
- Doesn't check to insure that each step is completed
- Under or Overestimates the time needed to finish tasks
- Doesn't check work before submitting it
- Cannot find clothes, shoes, toys, book, pencils, etc.
- May act upset by a change in plans?
- Does connect doing tonight's homework with grades?
- May have trouble with tasks that have more than one step?
- May become overwhelmed with large assignments?

- ❑ Often starts assignments or chores at the last minute?
- ❑ May not plan ahead for school assignments?

How Sky Academy is helping all children?

All of Sky Academy students are learning more about material management and time management strategies tailored to help them become better organized, more able to manage materials, manage time, and feel less anxious. Strategies your child are learning include implementing a notebook system, maintaining the notebook system, techniques for keeping the backpack, utilizing a monthly and yearly planner, prioritizing, goal setting time analysis, and task analysis.