

Executive Functioning Workshop: March 6, 2020

What are the Characteristics Employers look for?

Dependability, able to take prerequisite tests, showing up for work, ability to take on different tasks in different settings, etc.

Ask people follow up questions (what do you mean by that?) Which is very important for the teen brain because they think they are connecting

Theme #1: Experience is the Foundation

Learning and memorizing are very short term and if it's not connected to something real you won't remember it.

Executive Function Skills include:

- Goal-directed behaviors
- Organization processes
- **Self-regulation: all examples role into this and we are seeing this in a decline**
- Time-management activities
- **Focusing and maintaining attention (our spans have decreased to one minute; reduced significantly, which is why we need to engage them (one minute per age). Spark things to make your child think.**
 - o **The Age of Continuous Partial Attention Era**
- Strategic, critical, purposeful analysis
- Problem solving
- **Flexibility and adaptability- the last executive function skill to be formed**
- Self-awareness
- Application to social settings

Executive Function Process:

Foundation Skills

Setting goals
Planning
Organizing Materials
Managing time

Initiating/Inhibiting (they are opposites! Start something new have to stop something else, multitasking, but the brain can only do one thing! Not neurology possible! Music while studying is distracting- not a good idea. Purposeful movement is good)

Self-Awareness

Higher-Order Skills

Monitoring, including goals
Self-regulation
Reflection and self-evaluation
Strategic thinking & acting, socially and cognitively
Problem solving

The Frontal Lobes (Conductors of the Orchestra)

Your brain has the ability to change and rewire

Fastest Grow of the Brain is 0-8 years old, which moves quickly. By one year old, the brain switches to experience dependent.

Brain Development

Maturation occurs from back to front of the brain

Recent research indicates that frontal lobes may continue developing during 20s and 30s
70s & 80s experience peak which is why we sometimes hear age of wisdom

Disparity in Development of Limbic Systems and Frontal Lobes

Limbic System fully developed at puberty 10-14 (same time as puberty)

- Impulsive Behavior
- Taking Risks
- Pleasure Seeking

Frontal Lobes Fully Developed between ages 26 & 32

- Impulse Control
- Planning Ahead
- Self-regulation

Current Research in Adolescent Motivation

Adolescents today don't respond well to "Do this now and it will pay off later" 21st century students seek immediate reward. They translate this advice to "You don't matter in the present day."

Adolescents are very sensitive to being treated fairly

Adolescents seek two main results from interactions
Respect and Recognition Status

Adolescents are hyper-active to feelings they view as humiliating and degrading. They respond best

Educational Impact of Teaching Executive Function Skills

Middle and High School Research

Mastery of Executive Function is a better predictor of success in school than IQ.

Early Childhood Research

More strongly correlates with reading and math proficiency than IQ, due to working memory and ability to inhibit unfocused behavior

Theme #2 The Role of Stress in Learning

When does stress stimulate learning and when does stress activate fight or flight?

Messing backpack or locker may seem less stressed at home, but when they can't find something it will be very stressful. Never butt heads when a teen tries to tell you it does not stress them out. Plant seeds to help them figure out on their own. We all need scaffolding to learn

21st Century Brains: American teenagers (13-18) average about nine hours of media use per day, we are all addicted to electronics.

The Rate of Technology Changes; over 50% of high school kids will say they are addicted to their cellphones and they don't like it. Music, video games, social media, and they think they can do homework at the same time.

Trend seems to be showing homework is online, which makes it hard to balance. Kids' brains are still developing. And kids end up doing divided learning and shallow learning because instruction isn't as deep and online promotes skimming and scanning and it's hard to work around it.

With so much media time

What's getting short changed?

Play= problem-solving skills, creatively

Movement, physical activity

Social Emotional learning, social skills

Speech and language development (no need for preschoolers to have any screens, they can't process)

Family time and communication (average time together is 35 minutes WITH screens)

Mindset Beliefs that guide teaching and parenting.

Growth mindset

Intelligence can be developed

Reinforced through a recognition of effort

Growth Mindsets tend to move to fix mindset with peer pressure.

What should schools and families do?

Teach kids how brains work

Teach executive function skills

Manage technology

Use technology wisely to promote in-depth learning
Communication and Community

Set a timer for kids to stay focused on their time management skills and when the timer goes off have them do jumping jacks to learn their need for technology

Study Environment should be structured. Students do better with a change of setting after finishing a subject.

Material Systems:

Separate folder in different colors, Student planner (binders for each subject with perforated notebook).

This helps students from feeling stressed because they know where things are located and makes less stress in their lives

Filing by Unit. Teachers need to give time to the students to file their work. When they get home, you should help them file papers that might be needed later to prepare for tests, finals or projects.

Motivational Interview- ask your kid if they think their backpack is (1-10). 1 is the worst in the world. Have them rate it BUT DO NOT ORGANIZE IT FOR THEM. Consistent routine is the goal. Have the child to tell you something that is working. Have them tell you when they remember and when they don't.

Theme #3: Scaffolding Makes Learning Stick

Assist with Time Management

Filling Out the Planner

“What do you use your assignment notebook or agenda for?”

To Write Down Homework Assignments.

Which is Why I don't need it, because....

I can remember my assignments in my head

I can get the assignments online

I can call/text a friend to get the assignments

Call the resources the Planner because your brain processes much better when you write with your hand.

Make sure all the planner is filled out including whether they don't have homework.

Make sure the kids take the time to write it down (even if they have to look up online then have them write it in the planner). Planners also help us prioritize what they have to do (have them

label what they need to do). Have them start with the ones that are due first (not what they like to do first).

3 D's:

- 1) Due Date
- 2) Difficulty
- 3) Desire

Planning for Long-Term Projects

Think about the project by thinking of a time-line by tasks and where you are in completing them. Think about a chart and start thinking of how you're going to get the tasks completed.

Project Recycle: Comparing Written and Hidden Steps (think of it like a scavenger hunt)

Break it Down: Put Key Steps on Flags

Put key words on the steps and write them on the flags and then put them in their planner.

Communication requires you to organize your thoughts and prioritize them.