

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION IN DAILY LIFE

Listed below are the ways executive difficulties can impact daily life and some starting strategies to assist:

	SKILL	DEFINTION	SIGNS OF DIFFICULTY	STARTING STRATEGIES
BEHAVIOURAL REGULATION	Impulse Control	Thinking before acting and stopping own actions appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tendency to interrupt & disrupt group activities • Generally doesn't look before leaping • Gets in trouble if not supervised by an adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop-Think-Do • Sensory strategies • Play games that naturally encourage controlling impulses regularly e.g. Snap • Model in play & in daily routine yourself
	Self-Monitoring	Being able to attend to the impact of their behaviour on others and adjust their actions according to need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaware of how their behaviour affects or bothers others • Unwittingly "pushes buttons" of others • Often confused about why people are upset with them or why they are laughing • Difficulty making and/or maintaining friendships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop-Think-Do • Modelling desired behaviours • Assist child to notice how others are reacting to situations/interactions
	Attention	Sustaining focus and appropriately shifting focus as needed for task completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distractibility and/or daydreaming • Difficulty sitting still • Loses place in text, misses important verbal or visual information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify the visual environment • Reduce noise • Decrease distractions

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EMOTIONAL REGULATION	Flexible Thinking	Being able to “go with the flow” and adjust thinking or approach when a plan doesn’t work out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resists/has trouble accepting a different way to solve a problem, persists with same failing approach over & over again • Disturbed by/resists changes of: teacher, class, routine, foods or places • Inability to drop certain topics of interest • Can be demanding and “bossy” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Try Another way” • “I Wonder what would happen if...” • Model trying different approaches. • Model trying new things – be overt with your language
	Emotional Control	Being able to respond appropriately no matter the situation without losing control of their feelings and actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-reacts to small problems and/or has outbursts for little reason • Has explosive, angry outbursts • Becomes tearful easily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model coping behaviour when things go wrong • Mindfulness strategies e.g Alert Program • Breathing strategies • Sensory strategies for calming • Positive touch and loving, caring words reflecting you understand

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COGNITIVE REGULATION	Working Memory	Holding information in mind to solve problems, understand text/ conversations, and follow through.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty remembering information • Losing track of what they are doing • Has good ideas but can't get them on paper • Easily distracted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Schedules • Short instructions • Allow processing time • Be prepared to repeat and reframe, patiently
	Planning & Organisation	Being able to develop plans, prioritise needs and organise self and materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haphazard approach to tasks • Focuses on details, misses the big picture • Overwhelmed by large assignments • Underestimates the time needed to complete tasks • Leaves mess behind for others to clean up • Loses belongings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Schedule • Mind mapping • "Put a picture in my head" – seek child to use words to name or describe objects and/actions – be specific • Older children – lists and diaries
	Task Monitoring	Being able to monitor their own progress with any task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't check work for mistakes, makes careless errors • Has poor handwriting, work is sloppy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop-Think-Do • "Did that work for you?" & "What could you do differently?" • Task monitoring visuals/structures
	Task Initiation	Being able to start something they have or want to do in a timely fashion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procrastinates • Has trouble coming up with ideas for what to do in play or free time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictable structure for tasks • Be sure to get into the "just right" state • Checklist/visual for feedback re progress • Teach how to chunk tasks – do together