

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What outcomes can be expected from EF skills instruction with a W&A Coach?***

Our goal is to provide a productive setting for student success. The outcomes all depend on realistic goals and interventions that are strategically developed on a firm foundation of best-practice. Our coaches are constantly working to support the generalization and application of these skills outside of the office and into the classroom, home, community, and workplace. Scaffolding is required to give students incremental steps to change their behavior and build skills that will help them compensate for their executive functioning deficits. This is a deliberate process that requires commitment on behalf of all stakeholders (parent, student, and coach). We understand that students often view this arrangement with reservation. As such, we work hard to build rapport in the initial stages of our work together, and to constantly foster that throughout the process.

### ***What is involved in establishing the EF partnership?***

For the initial consultation with parents, Dr. Wanzenberg typically meets with the potential client(s) for a free consultation to determine the student's needs and see if it is a right fit for all parties.

The prospective coach may be included at this appointment, depending on the nature of the case. Sometimes, Dr. Wanzenberg will meet with the family initially, then coordinate a secondary meeting for the potential client to meet with the recommended coach. We work hard to ensure there is a good match between coach and student.

### ***What ages are appropriate for EF coaching?***

We serve a wide range of ages in our instruction and partnership. However, we have found that middle school (including the year leading to that transition) is an effective period to initiate these services.

Most of our clients range in the upper high school (grade 11-12) and college age. However, we maintain a variety of coaches that specialize in age, disability, and learning profile.

## Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

### **How is the Executive Functioning Intervention Plan (EFIP) developed?**

When creating the EFIP, the coach, parent, and student can expect it to cover a span of 8-10 sessions. Although each case is unique, a typical EFIP follows this format:

Sessions 1-2: Intake and Relationship Building  
Session 3: Goal Setting and Prioritization  
Sessions 4-8: Instructional support for goals  
Sessions 9-10: Assessment/Evaluation

The coach draws upon available clinical information (i.e., neuropsychological information, therapeutic recommendations, etc.), current achievement, inventories completed by parent, student, and teachers, as well as observations of the students in session.

### **What types of disabilities or eligibilities are required to access EF services?**

We are proud to serve a wide range of learning needs and never require a clinical diagnosis to support their learning profile. However, most of our clients maintain diagnoses of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD; all types), learning disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorders, and/or affective disorders (like anxiety and depression). Most of our clients have average to above average IQ and a strong communicational basis for dialoging with their coach.

### **How do your services differ from other coaches?**

Above all, our efforts are hallmarked by a strong *relationship-based approach* that always puts the learner first. The coach-client relationship is characterized by unconditional support, honest feedback, hard work, strong communication, follow through, and —most importantly— humor. It is important to note that our style of EF coaching is a behavioral intervention, as we are trying to shape and replace behaviors that contribute to student efficiency and independence. However, shaping the behavior of students with histories of difficulty or highly entrenched behaviors requires far more than just prescription: these complex matters require an artful relationship that strikes a balance between the learner's strengths and needs, the talents of the coach, and the various barriers to the student's success.

# WANZENBERG

&

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## Educational Consultants

## **Executive Function Coaching Services:**

*What are they?*

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# PRACTICING STUDENT EMPOWERMENT...

Wanzenberg and Associates was founded, in part, to provide support for students who exhibit various and concomitant *executive skills dysfunction* or inefficiency:

**Initiation**: the ability to *begin* a task independently

**Inhibition**: the ability to *stop* a behavior at the appropriate time

**Maintenance**: sustaining attention *during* a task and developing task routines

**Flexibility**: moving from *one activity to another* and adapting to various academic demands

**Organization of Materials**: *imposing order* on school materials and storage spaces

**Forecasting**: the ability to *manage* current and future demands, including time and task management; includes *assessment and budgeting* of required resources

**Self-Directed Behavior**: the ability to *self-monitor* oneself, *maintain awareness* of one's own capabilities/limitations, and *functionally advocate* for one's own needs

**Working Memory**: the ability to *retain information in the moment* while solving multi-step problems

**Emotional Control**: *modulation of emotional responses* by bringing rational thought and coping strategies to the situation

**Executive Functioning Skills** are an entree of interrelated abilities that help us manage

- *Time oriented tasks, task monitoring, and effective budgeting of time*
- *Accurately assessing the demands of a task, along with an understanding of the variables that may impact these demands*
- *Initiation (starting), inhibition (stopping), and self-regulation (monitoring) of certain behaviors*
- *Maintenance of focus and development of resiliency during stressful tasks*
- *Accurate appraisal of strengths and needs and development of a sense of a learning profile*

The capable and caring staff at Wanzenberg and Associates provide assessment and researched-based instruction in support of these unique needs.

Our passion for executive functioning skills improvement arises from our experiences in a variety of educational and vocational settings. We often observe that these needs are often "accommodated away" without intervention and commonly marginalized as willful behavior by many school teams. We feel strongly that executive functioning deficits are often an important part of a *hidden curriculum* that many students need to be taught deliberately.

Dr. Wanzenberg has taught graduate level coursework to teachers and administrators in the planning and implementation of our executive functioning skills curricula.

Our coaches are peak performing, certified educators with a high degree of knowledge and experience in case management of students with learning differences. We work tirelessly to develop student-centered plans that tailor the strengths and needs of the student to the competencies and personality of the specific coach.

Typically, executive skills instruction is conducted 1-2 sessions a week at our office in Glen Ellyn. We have also made arrangements for service provision in a supervised home, study alcoves of your local public library, and other public spaces.

Each student's executive skills portfolio is developed with ample evaluative information, realistic timelines, and opportunities for ongoing support and feedback. We pride ourselves on a high degree of communication with the family.

The student and family always contribute to a set of goals statements that drive the intervention plan. Most intervention intervals occur within a 6 month period, although in some cases, is supported on an ongoing basis as academic demands increase and change.

While the model is designed to support the needs of a broad range of learners, our curriculums especially effective for students with Autism Spectrum Needs, Twice Exceptional Learners, and students with a variety of affective disorders.