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PRACTICING STUDENT EMPOWERMENT

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OVERVIEW OF TODAY'S PRESENTATION

- Overview of EF, and underpinnings that are relevant to parents, students, and staff that support student independence; note that interventions and strategies will be broadly referenced
- Review and discussion of staff questions relating to EF
- Emphasis on useable, real-life examples, and practical information for families
- **For starters, an important request and disclosure**
- For referrals or those who want to extend the conversation, we offer parents a free consultation to review services we offer, including EF Coaching
- All resources are available online at www.iepguardians.org under *Presentations*

DOMAINS OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

Executive Functioning Domains (in order of skill/brain development)

- **Inhibition**: the ability to stop a target behavior at the appropriate time
- **Working Memory**: the capacity to hold info in suspension for the purpose of completing a task
- **Emotional Control**: modulation of emotional responses by bringing rational thought and coping strategies to the situation
- **Shift**: moving from one activity to another and adapting to various classroom demands in a reasonable time
- **Self-monitoring**: self-examination and active monitoring of student's own progress
- **Initiation**: the ability to begin a task independently; generating ideas, responses, problem solving strategies
- **Planning/Organization**: the ability to manage current and future demands
- **Organization of Materials**: imposing order on school materials and storage spaces
- **Self-Awareness**: assisting a student with an accurate and functional picture of her strengths and needs as a student with a disability

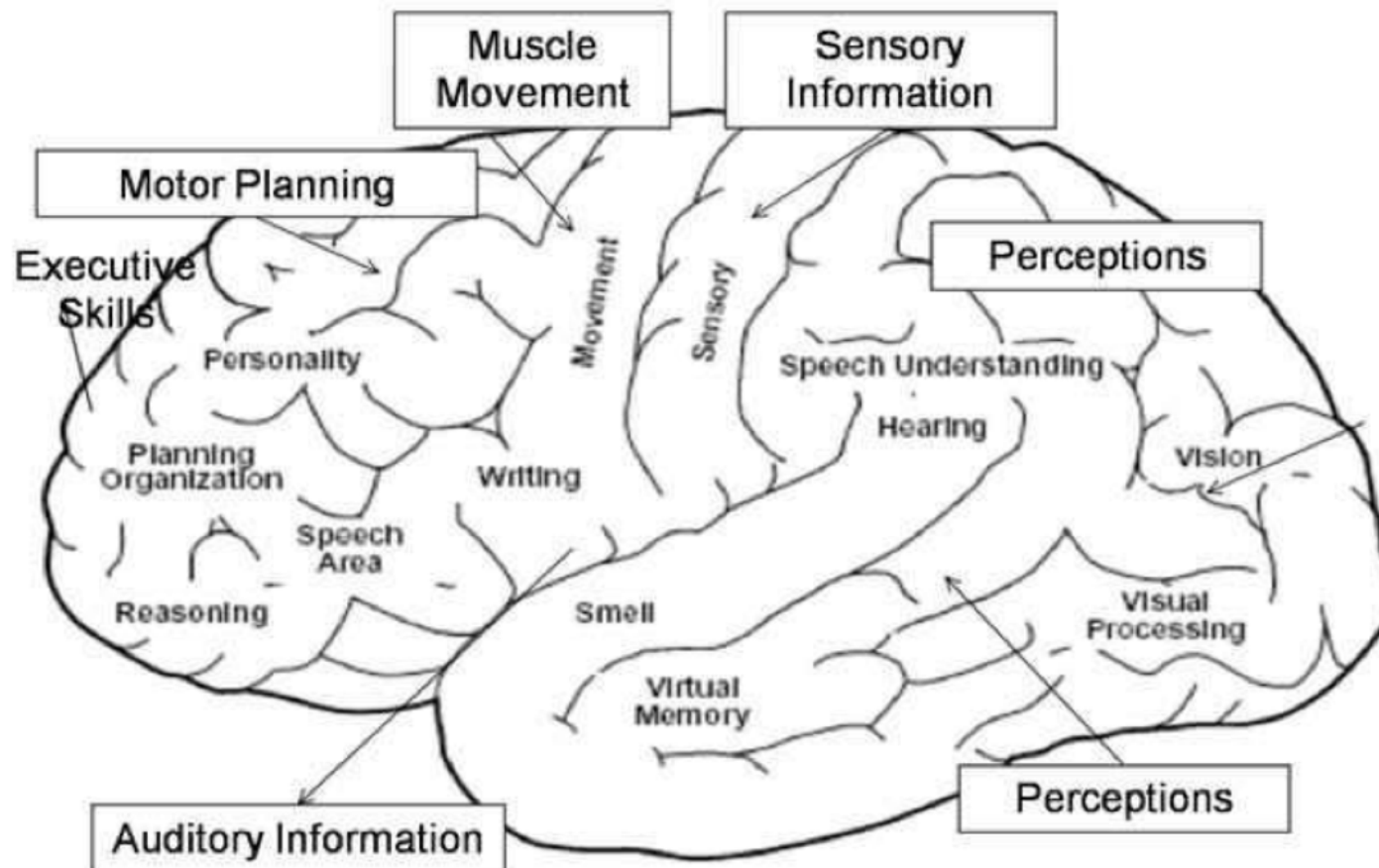
EXECUTIVE SKILLS: OVERVIEW

Students with EF difficulties demonstrate the following difficulties in school, home, workplace, and community:

- Planning activities
- Effectively managing time: knowing when to start and when to stop
- Monitoring multiple tasks simultaneously
- Application of previously mastered knowledge
- Changing pace, focus, or subject
- Accurately assessing when help is needed
- Holding back on impulses
- Accurately estimating how much time would be required for a task
- Memorizing and retrieving information
- Developing a plan of action or response to a conflict or problem

EXECUTIVE SKILLS: OVERVIEW

Executive Skills and the Brain



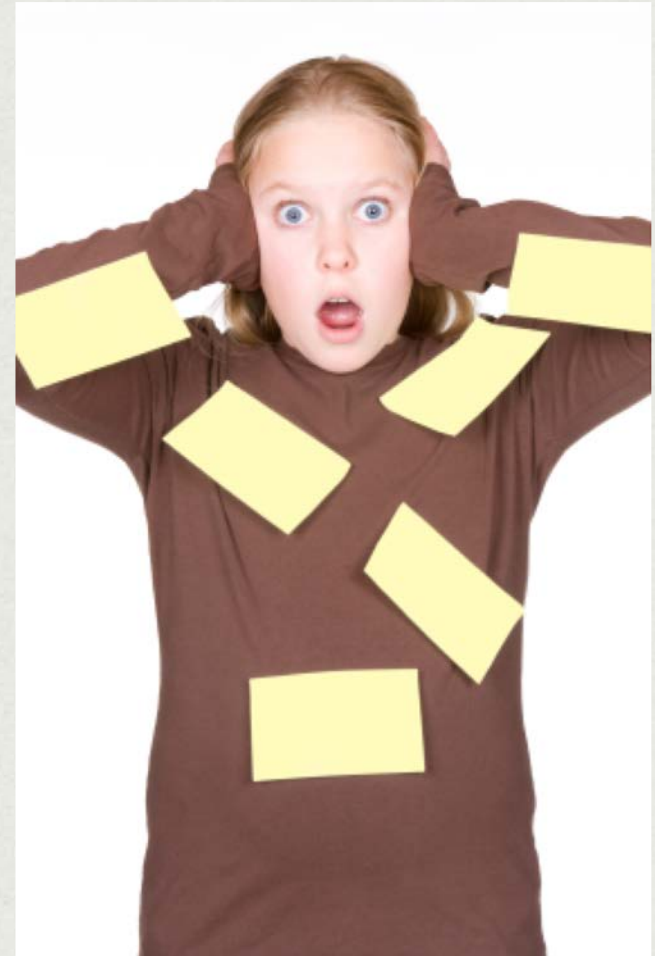
EXECUTIVE SKILLS: OVERVIEW

- Many parts of the brain impacted by executive functioning, but primarily involves frontal lobe (prefrontal cortex) functions that facilitate/impact “novel problem solving”
- Process or integrated processes that link present and past actions
- The prefrontal cortex is the brain’s “CEO” which makes judgements and delegates action
- EF is rarely “broken”, but inefficiencies exist for many individuals
- Qualitative/rating scales assessments across several settings/reporter is critical (Conners, CPT, Tower of London, Rey-Ostreich WCST, TOVA, TMT, BRIEF)
- Understanding a student’s relative strengths and weaknesses is critical to any plan

ACADEMIC DIFFICULTIES: FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Problems resulting from inefficient executive skills

- Procrastination and inefficient use of planning opportunities
- Difficulty in adhesion of disparate concepts in writing
- Easily diverted from task by stimuli
- Slow completion of tasks
- Poor modulation of emotional responses
- Impairments with social judgement
- Ineffective model of self-monitoring
- Difficulties in moving from one task to another



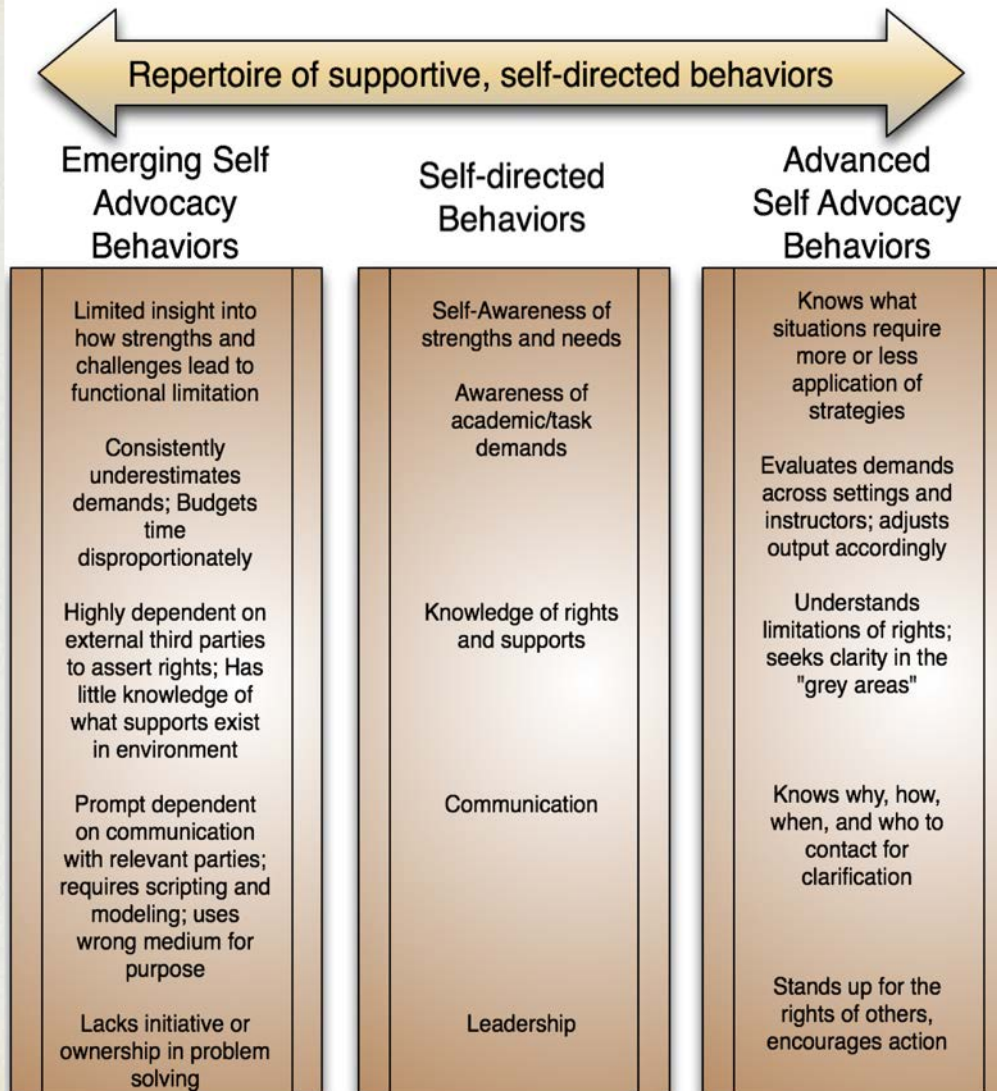
OUTCOMES IN EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING: HOW WE TARGET THE NEXT SETTING



- The diminishing frequency and intensity of parent, school, or third-party based interventions
- The increased application of self-advocacy skills and self-directed behaviors, in a variety of settings
- The extent to which current supports the student benefits from receives in current setting are available/accessible in the next setting
- Is it meaningful to the student?
- Is it sustainable?

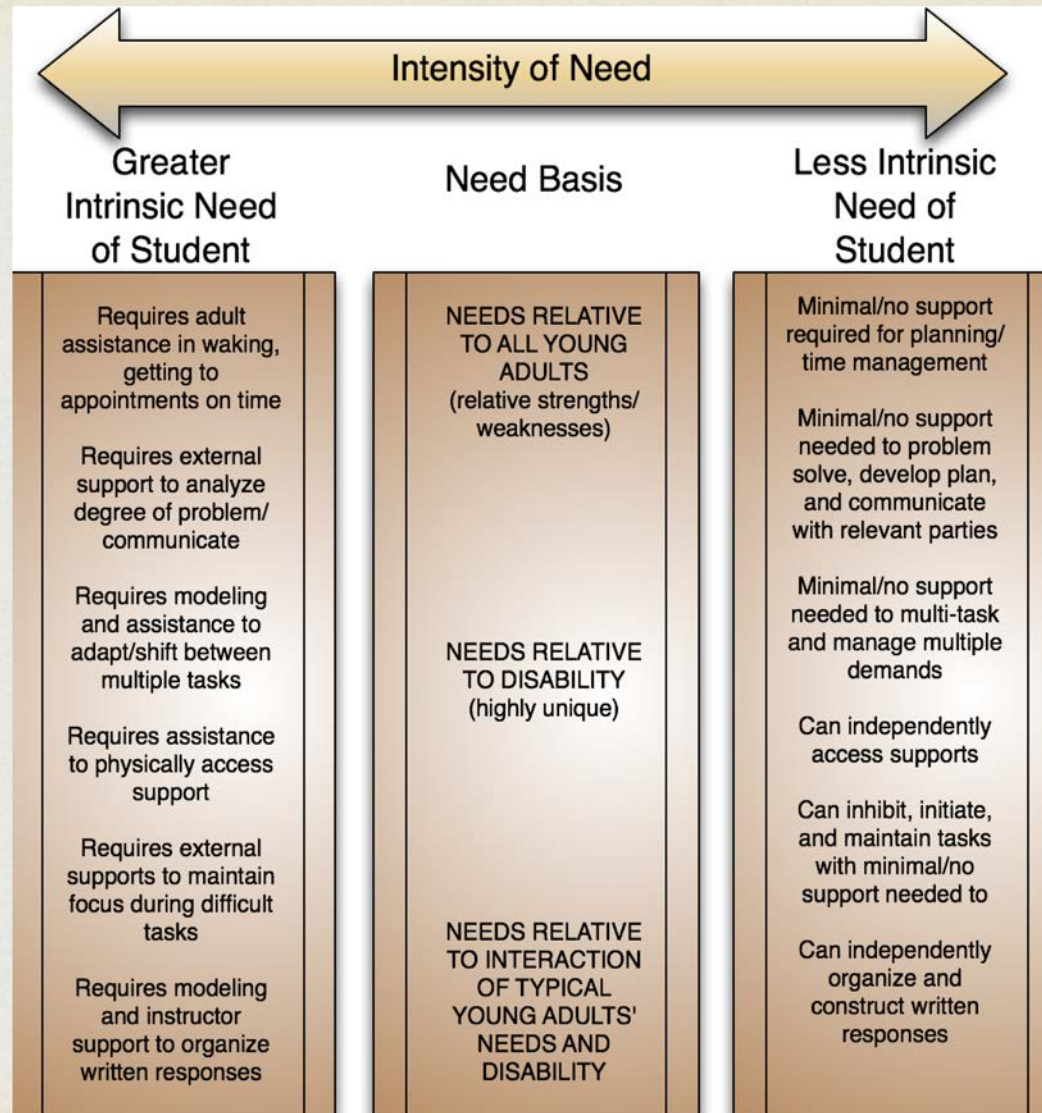
SELF DIRECTED BEHAVIORS

AXIS I: REPERTOIRE

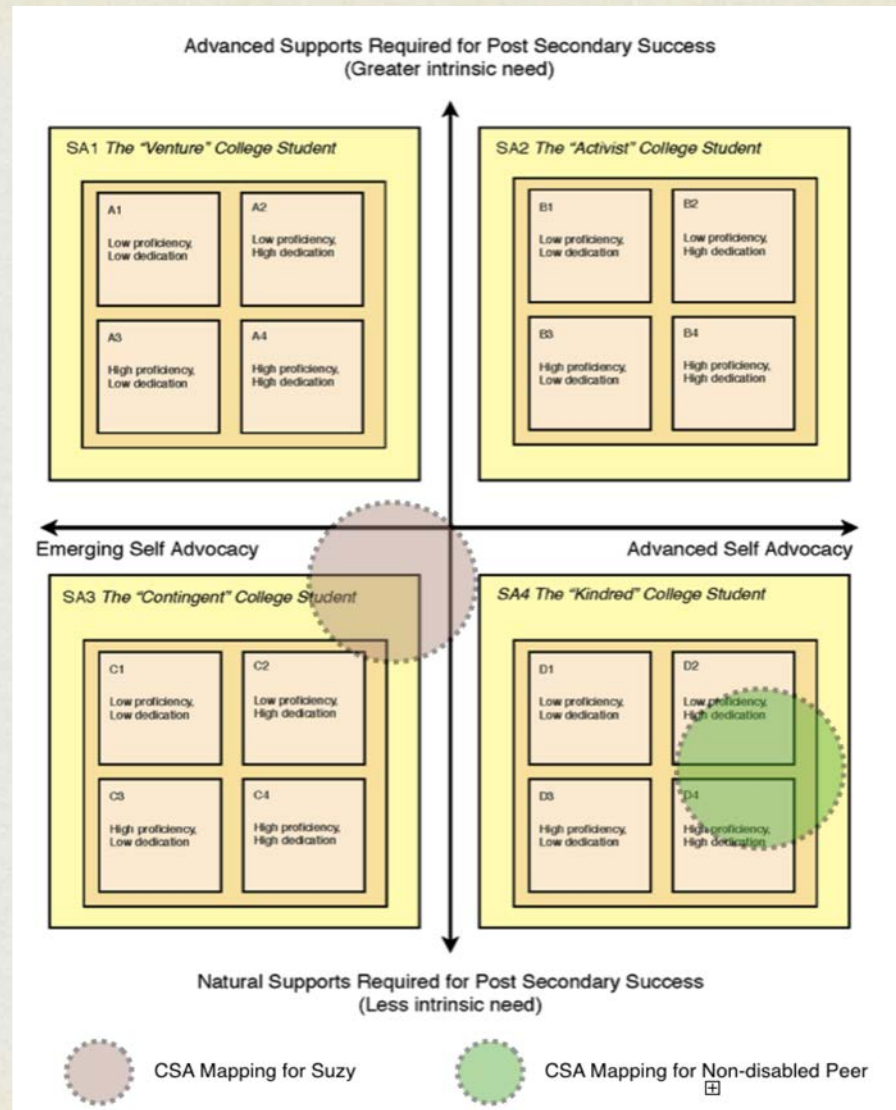


SELF DIRECTED BEHAVIORS

AXIS II: NEED



SUPPORT MATRIX: A TOOL FOR INTERVENTION



SOME OBSERVATIONS ON EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING



- Research shows that, neurotypically, EF skills take 25 years to fully develop, with biggest gap around middle school years
- Verbal ability strongly linked to typical EF development
- Brain development: from back to front
- Skill development tends to be progressive, with the last and most complex skill development time management and metacognition (learning how to learn)
- EF skill development predicated on fading external cues, and teaching internal, self-directed cues & strategies
- Vast divide between our (adult's) expectations and capability of children and executive skills difficulties
- Two basic approaches: impose instruction or teach the child compensatory strategies
- WE MUST INTERVENE WHERE CHILD IS, DEVELOPMENTALLY, NOT WHERE WE DESIRE THEM TO BE

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

- Developmentally appropriate need to distance support and reliance on parents: middle school years see a point of diminishing returns for parent based intervention
- EF coaching ultimately informs an understanding of a student's ideal level of independence
- Strengthened ability to anticipate the next environment, and effectively generalize the skill to that environment
- EF coaching must be **HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED**
- Force maximizing EF instruction through partnership with parents, teachers, and therapists
- Logistics and scheduling



SOME OBSERVATIONS ON EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING



- The process “requires wrinkles, but hopefully reveals no tears...”
- Assessment and reliance on self-report
- Students who protect coping strategies (efficient and inefficient alike) that have sustained them in the past
- Avoiding superimposing schemas that work for us on kids
- Understanding that EF needs globally impact functioning, not just academics
- Post secondary success: “the least destructive assumption”
- Our Mantra: PLAN-EXECUTE-REPAIR
- Identifying the gray areas, and willingness to delve in and clarify

EF Coaching: How Does Our Model Work?

- Highly relationship-based
- Executive Function Intervention Plan (EFIP): Development of at least three goals (ie, parent, student, coach)
- Exercises vs. Strategies
- Min: Weekly, 1 hour sessions for minimum of 3 months
- Instructional component as needed (ex: SIM, Learning Strategies, rehabilitative exercises)
- Summer: great for skill instruction, but less to organize (best to teach while demands are authentic and support is meaningful)
- Distance and commuting are critical (online coaching is sometimes an option once relationship is built)
- Data driven
- Ideally addresses both skill development and management of workload
- Maintenance: case management

A TYPICAL W&A EF LESSON

[Client Name]
[Date]
Executive Functioning Skills
Coaching Session

<i>Evaluate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Evaluate goals from the week.
<i>Forecast</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Examine needs, routines, or tasks that need to be addressed (e.g. list from assignment notebook).
<i>Prioritize</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Prioritize current initiatives to meet goals (e.g. prioritize that list by placing a number of importance next to each).
<i>Budget</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● By order of importance, input assignments or tasks on calendar or planner, with the allotted time budgeted/estimated for each task. (Have client also track actual time.)
<i>Initiate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Summarize action items; have client verbally review steps.
<i>Evaluate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Looking ahead, discuss how will assess successful achievement of the next week's goals.

EF Coaching: How Does Our Model Work?

EFIP

- 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

YOUR QUESTIONS



EF Resources

- www.iepguardians.org

- www.iepguardians.org/STUFF/W&A%20Brochure_EF%20v3.0.pdf
- www.smartbutscatteredkids.com
- www.efinthe classroom.net
- www.efs2therescue.ca
- www.developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/executive-function/
- www.learningworksforkids.com

- <http://www.gvlibraries.org/common-core-learning-standards/7-m4a-your-brain-plugged>
- www.toolsofthemind.com
- www.gonoodle.com
- www.brainfacts.org
- www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/



IN CLOSING...