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Autism Agenda



Linn Benton Lincoln ESD-Cascade Regional Autism Program

Executive Functioning Deficit in Autism

By Lisa Jo Rudy Updated May 30, 2017

What Is Executive Functioning?

Imagine you're the executive in charge of a project team. Your job is to think about the overall goals of the project and the objectives required to achieve the goals. Then, you'll have to work with your team to put together a timeline and put your plans into action. It will be up to you to have all the supplies and personnel in place when you need them, so that the process will flow seamlessly -- meeting deadlines on time and on budget.

If something goes wrong (someone gets sick, a delivery is late, you need more of something than you anticipated, etc.), you'll need to manage the process of troubleshooting and remediation.

To meet your goals, you'll need to:

- Understand and articulate both the larger goals and the objectives required to meet the goals
- Anticipate and develop a timeline to implement all the steps along the way
- Manage the people and processes involved in meeting the goals
- Anticipate and plan for the unexpected
- Calmly and intelligently cope with setbacks and problems
- Flexibly change the process, people, or timeline so as to cope with the reality that you just have to expect the unexpected.



Incredibly, this is what we expect our children to do when we ask them to "work collaboratively on a school project that you'll be presenting in three weeks," or "work with the other kids to sell these cookies so you can raise enough money for your band trip."

Even more incredibly, most kids -- by the time they're in middle school -- are capable of managing such complex, multi-faceted, time-sensitive, collaborative projects. They may not be perfect, but they understand what's needed to be successful.

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EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING CONTINUED...

At a simpler level, younger children are capable of managing the complex process of "cleaning up the playroom and getting ready for dinner." They can respond to the big-picture goal by thinking through the steps required to straighten up the room, wash hands, dry hands, and help set the table -- and then by putting those steps into action.

They have developed (or are in the process of developing) the set of skills known as "executive functioning."

Why Is Executive Functioning So Tough for People with Autism?

Autism spectrum disorder is characterized by certain personal abilities and deficits. Most (though not all) people with autism:

- Are great at seeing details clearly, but have a hard time seeing a big picture and understanding which details are most relevant to that big picture.
- Are good at following schedules and routines, but have a difficult time flexibly changing those schedules or routines.
- Can understand and follow rules, but get upset when rules are broken or bent.
- May have difficulty in sustaining focus and motivation when engaged in something that isn't intrinsically interesting to them.
- Have a hard time switching from one activity to the next.
- Have a difficult time effectively communicating wants and needs to others.
- May not imitate others' behaviors without being directly instructed to do so (for example, unlikely to look around, notice that everyone else is getting ready to go, and do the same).
- Have challenges with "working memory" (the ability to conceptualize and manipulate multiple pieces of information and expectations at the same time).
- Can work with concrete objects and expectations more readily than with abstract ideas.
- Have difficulty with "theory of mind" (understanding that others' do not know, share, feel, or understand what's inside your own mind).



Looking at this list, you'll probably notice that most of these qualities are in direct conflict with the qualities required for good executive functioning. If you don't see the big picture, are not a flexible problem solver, and have poor "people skills," you're unlikely to be a good project manager. You'll also have a hard time planning for and executing multiple steps at the same time -- especially if those steps are abstract (thinking about time as opposed to building a model).

Building (and Working Around the Need for) Executive Functioning Skills

Some people with autism will never have good executive functioning skills. That said, however, it is possible to build and work around the need for such skills -- in some case making it possible to manage complex situations without much difficulty.

Building Executive Functioning Skills.

- Here are a few techniques that can help to increase and strengthen executive functioning:
- Direct Instruction: Certain aspects of executive function can be taught through ordinary instruction and drilling. For example, it is possible to teach the skills of thinking through the steps required for an outcome; to complete certain tasks before others; to use time management tools such as calendars; to complete the same tasks at the same time each day or week, etc. While most people seem to internalize these skills without direct instruction, there are plenty of people -- autistic or not -- who can benefit from ordinary time management instruction.
- Role Play: What should you do when presented with a multi-step challenge? By role playing and talking through such challenges, many autistic people can practice and become more skilled at planning and taking logical action.

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EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING CONTINUED....

- **Role Play:** What should you do when presented with a multi-step challenge? By role playing and talking through such challenges, many autistic people can practice and become more skilled at planning and taking logical action.
- **Setting Up Practice Challenges:** At home or in the classroom, it's possible to set up low-stress situations that require executive functioning skills. Ordinary tasks like washing, drying, folding, and putting away clothes require multi-step planning, time management, and tenacity.
- **Developing Social Stories for Flexibility:** What can I do if an unexpected problem arises while I'm attempting to complete a task (for example -- I run out of detergent, someone else is using the dryer, I forgot the laundry basket upstairs, etc.)? Social stories, particularly when written together, can provide answers to such questions so that anxiety doesn't interfere with getting the task done.

Workarounds.

While it's possible to build some executive functioning skills, chances are that people with autism will find such skills tough to master. For that, there are workarounds like these:

- Use apps to manage time. Alarms, visual timekeepers and other tools can keep autistic people on track, even when they are not thinking about time.
- Use visual reminders and schedules. What are the steps required to get that laundry done? A laminated photo-based step-by-step poster in the laundry room can keep you on task.
- Break it down. Instead of "get ready for school," consider breaking tasks into smaller chunks such as "brush teeth," "get dressed," and so forth.
- Try carrots rather than sticks. Failing to complete a task can result in intended or natural consequences: dirty or wet underwear, for example. But when the job is done right, no one notices. Consider offering small, tangible rewards for a job done well and completely.
- Use a buddy system. It can be hard to stay on track when you're easily distracted or not especially focused on the task. With a buddy -- especially one who is focused on the process -- you may be more successful.
- Simplify the process. Yes, you probably SHOULD separate before you wash, and fold after you dry -- but if you wash everything together and just keep your clean undies in the laundry basket, you can cut two steps out of the process and STILL arrive at the same goal (clean, dry undies).



<https://www.verywell.com/what-is-executive-functioning-deficit-in-autism-4017885>



2018 Summer Camps for Kids with Autism and Special Needs



The following camps target kids with special needs. Go to their websites or contact organizations directly for more detailed information. You can also contact your local Parks and Recreation Department or OSU's KidSpirit programs (<http://kidspirit.oregonstate.edu/programs-0>) for information about camps available to the general population. Additionally, check out the local Bricks for Kids program (<http://www.bricks4kidz.com/oregon-corvallis-albany/>) or Aerospace Camp (<https://www.cwunesspcamp.com/>) in central Washington, which revolve around Legos, engineering, science and other areas of interest to many kids with ASD.

Camp & Location	Description	Website/Contact Info	Ages/Population	Session Dates/Times	Registration Deadline
Camp Odakoda Falls City, OR and Sisters, OR	Overnight	http://www.asdoregon.org/	Ages 10 – 18 High-functioning ASD or similar disorder	August 13-17 June 21-25	ONGOING, but fills up quickly Financial assistance
Camp Attitude Foster, OR	Overnight	http://www.campattitude.com/	All ages/entire family. A "unique Christian camping experience."	Various week-long sessions	Registration currently CLOSED, but waiting list
B'Nai B'Rith Camp Lincoln City, OR	Overnight	http://bbcamp.org/summer-camp/	Grades 2-10 Based in Jewish values, but all welcome; have an inclusion coordinator	Sessions of various lengths – see website	ONGOING Cheaper before March 31 Financial assistance
Autism Rocks Friends & Family Camp Florence, OR	Overnight (provides other events year-round)	https://kindtree.org/calendar/camp/	All ages/entire family People with autism, parents, caregivers	August 23-26	June, 2018 Financial assistance
Easter Seals Upward Bound Lyons, OR	Overnight	http://www.easterseals.com/oregon/our-programs/camping-recreation/	Ages 7 and up All types of disabilities	July 8-12 (ages 7-24) July 15-19 (25 & up)	April 1 (for cheaper rate) Limited scholarships K Plan
Camp Yakety-Yak Lake Oswego, OR	Day camp	http://www.campyaketyyak.org/	Ages 5 – 15 High-functioning ASD or similar Siblings and peers welcome	5 week-long themed sessions 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM (Extended care available)	ONGOING Discounts and partial scholarships
Mt. Hood Kiwanis Mt. Hood, OR	Overnight	http://www.mhkc.org/camp/summer-programs.php	Ages 12 and up All types of disabilities	Various sessions See schedule on website	FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE Financial assistance
Blue Compass Camps Seattle, WA	Overnight	http://www.bluecompasscamps.com/	Ages 10 – adult Asperger's and high-functioning autism	Various sessions in Washington See schedule on website	ONGOING
Acceptance: A Transformational Place Centralia, WA	Overnight	https://www.findacceptance.be/visit	All ages with Asperger's/autism Under 18 accompanied by adult	Various sessions - family camping, Dungeons & Dragons	ONGOING

SUMMER CAMPS & ACTIVITIES CONTINUED...

2018 Summer Activities and Programs for Kids with Autism and Special Needs



The following programs provide services all year round to children with specialized needs, but are well-suited for summer fun and learning. See websites for more information.

Program & Location	Description	Website/Contact Info	Ages/Population
Hand in Hand Farm Lebanon, OR	Faith-based organization providing caring mentors and farm-based activities	http://www.handinhandfarm.org/	All ages and needs
Bright Horizons Therapeutic Riding Center Siletz, OR	Therapeutic mounted horseback riding adapted to fit the needs of the rider	http://www.brighthorizonsriding.org/therapeutic-horseback-riding.htm	All ages and needs
OSU IMPACT (Individualized Movement and Physical Activity for Children Today)	Various physical activity opportunities (swimming, dancing, climbing, etc.) 9:30-11:00 Friday	http://health.oregonstate.edu/impact	6 months – 21 years
The ARC Benton County	Various community and recreational activities (bowling, Tai Chi, game night, etc.). See monthly calendar.	http://www.arcbenton.org/	Teens and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities - must have current profile with The ARC
Special Olympics - Summer Linn County	Golf Track and field Softball Oregon Team Wellness	http://www.soor.org/Sub-Page.aspx?Name=Linn-County&PID=107 Registration deadline in April. Contact Veronica Copple 541-570-7600.	Ages 8 through adult
Special Olympics – Summer Benton County	Golf Track and field Softball Bocce	http://www.soor.org/Sub-Page.aspx?Name=Benton-County&PID=89 Register Monday, April 2 at 6 PM Benton County Public Library or contact Laurie Eck 971-301-0799.	Ages 8 through adult
Special Olympics – Summer Lincoln County	Track and field Softball Bocce	http://www.soor.org/Sub-Page.aspx?Name=Lincoln-County&PID=106 Contact Nikki Holland 541-283-4088 asap. Season starts in April.	Ages 8 through adult

Executive Functioning and Theory of Mind

Individuals with Asperger Syndrome/HFA may often face challenges related to their ability to interpret certain social cues and skills. They may have difficulty processing large amounts of information and relating to others. Two core terms relating to these challenges are Executive Functioning and Theory of Mind. Executive Functioning includes skills such as organizing, planning, sustaining attention, and inhibiting inappropriate responses. Theory of Mind refers to one's ability to perceive how others think and feel, and how that relates to oneself. Both of these issues can impact the behavior of individuals with AS.

Difficulties in the area of Executive Functioning can manifest themselves in many different ways. Some individuals pay attention to minor details, but fail to see how these details fit into a bigger picture. Others have difficulty with complex thinking that requires holding more than one train of thought simultaneously. Others have difficulty maintaining their attention, or organizing their thoughts and actions. Executive Functioning difficulties can also be associated with poor impulse control. Temple Grandin once said: "I cannot hold one piece of information in my mind while I manipulate the next step in the sequence." Individuals with AS often lack the ability to use skills related to executive functioning like planning, sequencing and self-regulation.

Theory of Mind can be summed up as a person's inability to understand and identify the thoughts, feelings and intentions of others. Individuals with Asperger Syndrome/HFA can encounter have difficulty recognizing and processing the feelings of others, which is sometimes referred to as "mind-blindness". As a result of this mind-blindness, people with AS may not realize if another person's behaviors are intentional or unintentional. This challenge often leads others to believe that the individual with AS does not show empathy or understand them, which can create great difficulty in social situations.

Theory of Mind deficits can oftentimes have a large impact on individuals with AS. In the book *Asperger Syndrome and Difficult Moments* by Brenda Smith Myles and Jack Southwick, the authors illustrate social deficits caused by theory of mind:

1. *Difficulty explaining ones behaviors*
2. *Difficulty understanding emotions*
3. *Difficulty predicting the behavior or emotional state of others*
4. *Problems understanding the perspectives of others*
5. *Problems inferring the intentions of others*
6. *Lack of understanding that behavior impacts how others think and/or feel*
7. *Problems with joint attention and other social conventions*
8. *Problems differentiating fiction from fact*



EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING AND THEORY OF MIND CONTINUED.....

Ozonoff, Dawson, and McPartland, in their book *A Parent's Guide to Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism*, offer several suggestions for helping children with AS/HFA succeed in the classroom. To address challenges in the area of Executive Functioning, they offer the following suggestions:

- Use a weekly homework log that is sent from school to home and back, keeping all parties informed of work due and progress.
- Assignment checklists can be used to break large, often overwhelming tasks into manageable units.
- Day planners, including PDAs, can help organize your child.
- A posted classroom schedule.
- Allocation of sufficient time for instructions, repetition of instructions, and individual student assistance.
- Preferential desk placement near teacher and away from distractions



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https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/documents/as-hfa/ef_tm_as-hfa_tool_kit.pdf

APPLE WATCH

Autism, Executive Functioning Skills and Apple Watch

"....My own interest in the accessibility of Apple Watch has been focused on its utilization for individuals on the autism spectrum. Before its release I considered that one of the key areas of need for individuals on the spectrum, the needs associated with executive functioning (those skills associated with planning, organizing, remembering, paying attention, staying on task, and problem solving), could find great benefit in the way that Apple Watch operates. In this blog post, I want to highlight some of the apps I have been exploring that I can see benefits towards meeting executive functioning needs in high school, higher education and work settings for individuals on the autism spectrum.

Some of the Apps that are highlighted in the article are;

*Clock Face

*Evernote

*Photos

*Timetable Pro+

*Calendar

*Stop Watch & Timer

*Realifex

*Subjects

*Things

*Activity

*Eidetic

*Schoolonator



...I hope the above summary of some of the initial Apple Watch apps that meet executive functioning needs are helpful for you to consider in support of students and young people on the autism spectrum. As I continue to explore Apple Watch in autism education I will be covering further related subjects. I am constantly surprised at some of the daily applications of Apple Watch that help me organize myself - only this past weekend I was trying to remember a breakfast order for my family at a local café when my wife quickly e-mailed me our preferences as I waited in line, quickly opening it on my Apple Watch and reading it out to the wait staff. I'd love to hear how you're finding similar functional benefits in your own life."

(This is just a snapshot of this article. Please go to <http://www.autismpedagogy.com/blog/2015/5/19/autism-accessibility-and-apple-watch> to read the full blog post.)

3 AREAS OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

3 Areas of Executive Function

Not all experts look at executive function (EF) in the same way. But many view it as a group of three skills that allow kids to manage their thoughts, actions and emotions in order to get things done. They also enable kids to plan, manage time and organize.

Kids with ADHD struggle with executive function. That's because the three main EF skills are responsible for attention and self-regulation.

1. Working Memory

Being able to keep information in mind and then use it in some way. A child might use this skill to read a passage on an English test, hold on to the information, and use it to answer questions.

2. Cognitive Flexibility (also known as flexible thinking)

Being able to think about something in more than one way. A child might use this skill to answer a math problem in two ways or to find relationships between different concepts.

3. Inhibitory Control (includes self-control)

Being able to ignore distractions and resist temptation. A child might use this skill to keep from blurting out an answer in class. It helps kids regulate their emotions, and keep from acting impulsively.



Executive function is responsible for these five skills:



- Paying attention
- Organizing and planning
- Initiating tasks and staying focused on them
- Regulating emotions
- Self-monitoring (keeping track of what you're doing)

Skills Related to Executive Function



Hot Executive Function

This skill comes into play in situations that aren't emotionally "neutral." It helps kids manage their emotional reactions so they can use their executive skills to perform a task. A child might rely on hot executive function during a spelling bee to keep his excitement or anxiety in check. Kids also use it to resist temptation in order to get a larger reward.



Reflection

Reflection is a process that allows kids to notice challenges, pause, think about their options and put things into context before they respond. This skill is central to solving problems, and kids can build it. The more they practice reflection, the easier and faster the process becomes.



Processing Speed

Kids need to go through the reflection process quickly and efficiently to solve problems on time. That's where processing speed comes in. Some experts view this skill as the engine that drives how well kids can use their executive skills to solve problems and achieve goals.

Homework: A Guide for Parents

By Peg Dawson, EdD, NCSP

Seacoast Mental Health Center, Portsmouth, NH

HOMework HELP



Homework has been around as long as public schools have, and over the years considerable research has been conducted regarding the efficacy of homework practices. While the results are not uniform, most experts on the topic have drawn some common conclusions.

Background

Harris Cooper, a leading homework researcher, examined more than 100 studies on the effects of homework and concluded that there is little evidence that homework at the elementary school level has an impact on school achievement. Studies at the junior high school level have found some modest benefits of homework, but studies of homework at the high school level have found that it has clear benefits.

Despite mixed research on homework effects, many teachers believe that assigning homework offers other benefits besides contributing to school achievement. Homework teaches children how to take responsibility for tasks and how to work independently. That is, homework helps children develop *habits of mind* that will serve them well as they proceed through school and, indeed, through life. Specifically, homework helps children learn how to plan and organize tasks, manage time, make choices, and problem solve, all skills that contribute to effective functioning in the adult world of work and families.

Reasonable Homework Expectations

It is generally agreed that the younger the child, the less time the child should be expected to devote to homework. A general rule of thumb is that children do 10 minutes of homework for each grade level. Therefore, first graders should be expected to do about 10 minutes of homework, second graders 20 minutes, third graders 30 minutes, and so on. If your child is spending more than 10 minutes per grade level on work at night, then you may want to talk with your child's teacher about adjusting the workload.

Strategies to Make Homework Go More Smoothly

There are two key strategies parents can draw on to reduce homework hassles. The first is to establish clear routines around homework, including when and where homework gets done and setting up daily schedules for homework. The second is to build in rewards or incentives to use with children for whom "good grades" is not a sufficient reward for doing homework.

Homework Routines

Tasks are easiest to accomplish when tied to specific routines. By establishing daily routines for homework completion, you will not only make homework go more smoothly, but you will also be fostering a sense of order your child can apply to later life, including college and work.

Step 1. Find a location in the house where homework will be done. The right location will depend on your child and the culture of your family. Some children do best at a desk in their bedroom. It is a quiet location, away from the hubbub of family noise. Other children become too distracted by the things they keep in their bedroom and do better at a place removed from those distractions, like the dining room table. Some children need to work by themselves. Others need to have parents nearby to help keep them

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HOMWORK HELP CONTINUED....

on task and to answer questions when problems arise. Ask your child where the best place is to work. Both you and your child need to discuss pros and cons of different settings to arrive at a mutually agreed upon location.

Step 2. Set up a homework center. Once you and your child have identified a location, fix it up as a home office/homework center. Make sure there is a clear workspace large enough to set out all the materials necessary for completing assignments. Outfit the homework center with the kinds of supplies your child is most likely to need, such as pencils, pens, colored markers, rulers, scissors, a dictionary and thesaurus, graph paper, construction paper, glue and cellophane tape, lined paper, a calculator, spell checker, and, depending on the age and needs of your child, a computer or laptop. If the homework center is a place that will be used for other things (such as the dining room table), then your child can keep the supplies in a portable crate or bin. If possible, the homework center should include a bulletin board that can hold a monthly calendar on which your child can keep track of longterm assignments. Allowing children some leeway in decorating the homework center can help them feel at home there, but you should be careful that it does not become too cluttered with distracting materials.

Step 3. Establish a homework time. Your child should get in the habit of doing homework at the same time every day. The time may vary depending on the individual child. Some children need a break right after school to get some exercise and have a snack. Others need to start homework while they are still in a school mode (i.e., right after school when there is still some momentum left from getting through the day). In general, it may be best to get homework done either before dinner or as early in the evening as the child can tolerate. The later it gets, the more tired the child becomes and the more slowly the homework gets done.

Step 4. Establish a daily homework schedule. In general, at least into middle school, the homework session should begin with your sitting down with your child and drawing up a homework schedule. You should review all the assignments and make sure your child understands them and has all the necessary materials. Ask your child to estimate how long it will take to complete each assignment. Then ask when each assignment will get started. If your child needs help with any assignment, then this should be determined at the beginning so that the start times can take into account parent availability. A Daily Homework Planner is included at the end of this handout and contains a place for identifying when breaks may be taken and what rewards may be earned.

Incentive Systems

Many children who are not motivated by the enjoyment of doing homework are motivated by the high grade they hope to earn as a result of doing a quality job. Thus, the grade is an incentive, motivating the child to do homework with care and in a timely manner. For children who are not motivated by grades, parents will need to look for other rewards to help them get through their nightly chores. Incentive systems fall into two categories: simple and elaborate.

Simple incentive systems. The simplest incentive system is reminding the child of a *fun activity to do when homework is done*. It may be a favorite television show, a chance to spend some time with a video or computer game, talking on the telephone or instant messaging, or playing a game with a parent. This system of withholding fun things until the drudgery is over is sometimes called Grandma's Law because grandmothers often use it quite effectively ("First take out the trash, then you can have chocolate chip cookies."). Having something to look forward to can be a powerful incentive to get the hard work done. When parents remind children of this as they sit down at their desks they may be able to spark the engine that drives the child to stick with the work until it is done.

Elaborate incentive systems. These involve more planning and more work on the part of parents but in some cases are necessary to address more significant homework problems. More complex incentives

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HOMework HELP CONTINUED....

systems might include a structure for earning points that could be used to "purchase" privileges or rewards or a system that provides greater reward for accomplishing more difficult homework tasks. These systems work best when parents and children together develop them. Giving children input gives them a sense of control and ownership, making the system more likely to succeed. We have found that children are generally realistic in setting goals and deciding on rewards and penalties when they are involved in the decision-making process.

Building in breaks. These are good for the child who cannot quite make it to the end without a small reward en route. When creating the daily homework schedule, it may be useful with these children to identify when they will take their breaks. Some children prefer to take breaks at specific time intervals (every 15 minutes), while others do better when the breaks occur after they finish an activity. If you use this approach, you should discuss with your child how long the breaks will last and what will be done during the breaks (get a snack, call a friend, play one level on a video game). The Daily Homework Planner includes sections where breaks and end-of-homework rewards can be identified.

Building in choice. This can be an effective strategy for parents to use with children who resist homework. Choice can be incorporated into both the order in which the child agrees to complete assignments and the schedule they will follow to get the work done. Building in choice not only helps motivate children but can also reduce power struggles between parents and children.

Developing Incentive Systems

Step 1. Describe the problem behaviors. Parents and children decide which behaviors are causing problems at homework time. For some children putting homework off to the last minute is the problem; for others, it is forgetting materials or neglecting to write down assignments. Still others rush through their work and make careless mistakes, while others dawdle over assignments, taking hours to complete what should take only a few minutes. It is important to be as specific as possible when describing the problem behaviors. The problem behavior should be described as behaviors that can be seen or heard; for instance, *complains about homework* or *rushes through homework, making many mistakes* are better descriptors than *has a bad attitude* or *is lazy*.

Step 2. Set a goal. Usually the goal relates directly to the problem behavior. For instance, if not writing down assignments is the problem, the goal might be: "Joe will write down his assignments in his assignment book for every class."

Step 3. Decide on possible rewards and penalties. Homework incentive systems work best when children have a menu of rewards to choose from, since no single reward will be attractive for long. We recommend a point system in which points can be earned for the goal behaviors and traded in for the reward the child wants to earn. The bigger the reward, the more points the child will need to earn it. The menu should include both larger, more expensive rewards that may take a week or a month to earn and smaller, inexpensive rewards that can be earned daily. It may also be necessary to build penalties into the system. This is usually the loss of a privilege (such as the chance to watch a favorite TV show or the chance to talk on the telephone to a friend).

Once the system is up and running, and if you find your child is earning more penalties than rewards, then the program needs to be revised so that your child can be more successful. Usually when this kind of system fails, we think of it as a design failure rather than the failure of the child to respond to rewards. It may be a good idea if you are having difficulty designing a system that works to consult a specialist, such as a school psychologist or counselor, for assistance.

Step 4. Write a homework contract. The contract should say exactly what the child agrees to do and exactly what the parents' roles and responsibilities will be. When the contract is in place, it should

Continued on page 12.

HOMework HELP CONTINUED....

reduce some of the tension parents and kids often experience around homework. For instance, if part of the contract is that the child will earn a point for not complaining about homework, then if the child *does* complain, this should not be cause for a battle between parent and child: the child simply does not earn that point. Parents should also be sure to praise their children for following the contract. It will be important for parents to agree to a contract they can live with; that is, avoiding penalties they are either unable or unwilling to impose (e.g., if both parents work and are not at home, they cannot monitor whether a child is beginning homework right after school, so an alternative contract may need to be written).

We have found that it is a rare incentive system that works the first time. Parents should expect to try it out and redesign it to work the kinks out. Eventually, once the child is used to doing the behaviors specified in the contract, the contract can be rewritten to work on another problem behavior. Your child over time may be willing to drop the use of an incentive system altogether. This is often a long-term goal, however, and you should be ready to write a new contract if your child slips back to bad habits once a system is dropped.

Involving Siblings

Parents often ask how they can develop one kind of system for one child in the family and not for all children, since it may seem to be "rewarding" children with problems while neglecting those without. Most siblings understand this process if it is explained to them carefully. If there are problems, however, parents have several choices: (a) Set up a similar system for other children with appropriate goals (*every* child has *something* they could be working to improve), (b) make a more informal arrangement by promising to do something special from time to time with the other children in the family so they do not feel left out, or (c) have the child earn rewards that benefit the whole family (e.g., eating out at a favorite restaurant).

Adaptations and Further Support

Suggestions provided in this handout will need to be adapted to the particular age of your child. Greater supervision and involvement on the part of parents is the norm with children during the elementary school years, while, by high school, most parents find they can pull back and let their children take more control over homework schedules. Middle school is often the turning point, and parents will need to make decisions about how involved to be in homework based on the developmental level of their children. If problems arise that seem intractable at any age, consult your child's teacher or a school psychologist.

Resources

Canter, L. (1993). *Homework without tears*. New York: HarperPerennial. ISBN: 0062731327.

Dawson, P. (2001). *Homework problems and solutions*. Unpublished manual. For information on obtaining a copy, contact Peg Dawson at her e-mail address (Please be aware that e-mail addresses may change): pegdawson@comcast.net

Dawson, P., & Guare, R. (2003). *Executive skills in children and adolescents: A practical guide to assessment and interventions*. New York: Guilford. ISBN: 1572309288.

Romain, T., & Verdick, E. (1997). *How to do homework without throwing up*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing. ISBN: 1575420112.

Linn Benton Lincoln Education Service District and the Cascade Regional Autism Staff
present our Third Annual Autism Resource Event



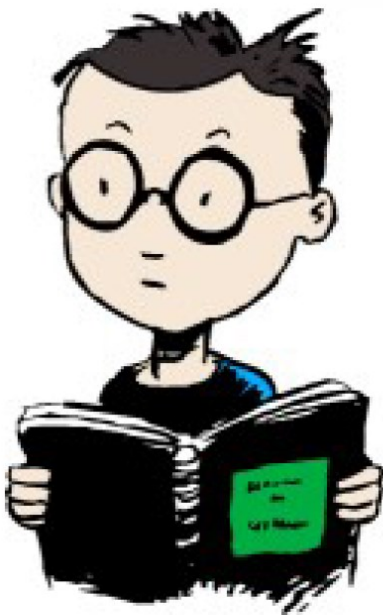
“Knowledge Builds Hope”

April 12, 2018

4:00-7:00PM

5pm Guest Speakers Dawn and Russ McUne
“Autism - A Family Perspective”

Philomath Elementary School Gym
239 S. 16th Street
Philomath, OR 97370



This event will offer you an opportunity to see what community resources are available to support individuals with autism.

Here is a sample of who will be available to meet and visit with you:

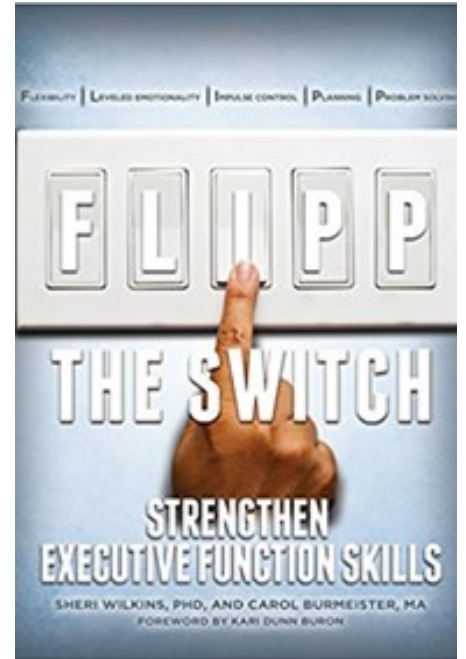
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| * FACT | * Resource Connections of Oregon | * Support Groups |
| * Dental Hygienist | * Developmental Disabilities | * Social Groups |
| * OFSN | * Vocational Rehabilitation | * Physical Therapy |

If you have any questions, please contact: Michelle Neilson 541-812-2678 or michelle.neilson@lblestd.k12.or.us

FLIPP the Switch: Strengthen Executive Function Skills

by Sheri Wilkins and Carol Burmeister

FLIPP stands for Flexibility, Leveled emotionality, Impulse control, Planning and Problem solving – five key areas of executive function. Readers will learn about executive function (EF) and how EF skills contribute to success in school, at home, and in work environments. Most importantly, readers will receive specific instructions, templates, ready-to-use visuals, and how-to scenarios for 25 strategies - five strategies for each of the five FLIPP components. This book is indispensable for both parents and teachers who want to minimize conflict, maximize on-task behavior, and support positive social-emotional development in a child with challenging behavior.



Solving Executive Function Challenges: Simple Ways to Get Kids with Autism Unstuck and On Target



by Lauren Kenworthy, Laura Gutermuth Anthony, and others

This practical guide shows how to embed executive function instruction in dozens of everyday scenarios, from morning routines to getting homework done. It includes practical materials such as "Goal, Plan, Do, Check" scripts, worksheets that break down tasks, key words and phrases that help kids stay on target, reproducible visual aids, and sample IEP goals. These practical materials help children with EF challenges compromise, turn "big deals" into "little deals," move on to Plan B, make plans and carry them out, handle disappointments, be a good friend, and much more. Designed for therapists, teachers, and parents, these highly effective techniques give children the skills they need to navigate each day, reach their goals, and succeed inside and outside the classroom.



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VISUALS

HERE IS WHAT TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE STARTING A NEW TASK:

1. **STOP**
 • Stop what I am doing.
2. **THINK**
 • What do I need to do?
• Do I have a checklist that I can use?
3. **PLAN**
 • Plan the steps needed to finish the task.
• Fill out the checklist that I can use.
4. **DO**
 • Sit down and start working!