



Executive Function Awareness Checklist

Resources in Partnership with
Bright Lights Psychology

What you might see in your child when they are struggling with Executive Function skills...

- My child's belongings are often messy and they lose everything
- My child leaves assignments and studying until the last minute
- My child comes home from school and falls apart
- My child is not engaging in school
- My child is having a hard time sitting still
- My child has a hard time breaking down large tasks into manageable steps, so they easily get overwhelmed
- My child just won't get started with their school work (home or school)
- My child can't recall the instructions just given to them
- My child's backpack is a mess, with many things squished in
- My child struggles to find their shoes (or mitts, or hat) to get out the door in the morning





Executive Function Practice Checklist

What you can do to help your child to work on their Executive Function skills...

- Talk about executive functions, what they are, and how they affect our lives (help them see the importance and influence of these skills across different aspects of their lives!)
- Show your child how to create checklists for tasks they need to complete
- Model how to break a bigger task into smaller components
- Make information external by using cards, symbols, sticky notes, and apps
- Use timers, alarms, and counters to help with time blindness. Have your child estimate how long each task will take.
- Add in accountability partners or point systems to help stay focused on the goal
- Help your child to set up and use their planner (and/or calendars) regularly
- Find apps that target some of the skill areas (ie. working memory) and gameify the tasks to make them more fun and engaging



Executive Function Practice Checklist

*What you can do to help your child to work on their
Executive Function skills...*

- Share different strategies for organization with them - graphic organizers, highlighting, models (such as the hamburger model for writing), colour coding, etc.
- Discuss tricks to help with working memory such as mnemonics, rhymes, songs and visualization
- Get your child into the habit of writing things down (think instructions from teachers, dates of appointments, important messages to pass on)
- Help your child to set up a workspace that they are comfortable in, and that is distraction-free (note: what each person finds distracting may be different for them!)
- Practice mindfulness and have your child come up with a list of calm down activities that work specifically for them
- Create systems for everyday tasks such as where to put homework coming back from school, where backpack, shoes, lunchbag etc. go, how to organize their backpack etc.
- Label everything that you can in big, bright, bold font to make it clear where things belong

