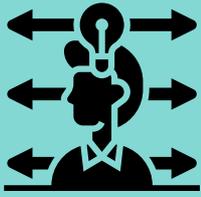


## FLEXIBLE THINKING



ADJUSTING  
BEHAVIOUR TO  
UNEXPECTED  
CHANGES

## IMPULSE CONTROL

THINKING  
BEFORE DOING



## EMOTIONAL CONTROL



REGULATING EMOTIONS  
EFFECTIVELY

## WORKING MEMORY



KEEPING  
INFORMATION  
IN MIND WHILE  
USING IT



## SELF MONITORING

SELF AWARENESS OF HOW  
ONE IS GOING IN THE  
MOMENT

## ORGANISATION

KEEPING TRACK  
OF THINGS,  
PHYSICALLY &  
MENTALLY



## PLANNING & PRIORITISING

TO HELP SET GOALS



## TASK INITIATION

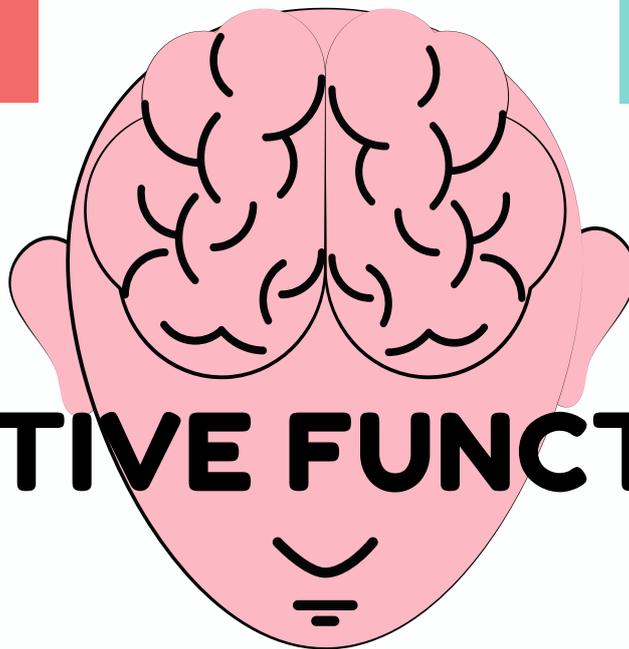


TAKING ACTION TO  
COMMENCE TASKS

## MOTIVATION

## ATTENTION

# EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING



Some people describe executive functions as the "CEO" or "management system of the brain." That's because executive functions are a set of neurological processes that involve mental control and self-regulation. Different executive skills (see above) are involved in the planning, initiation, and completion of any given task. Combined, these abilities allow us to think of what we have to do, make a plan for how we will get it done, and complete the task in the most efficient way. They allow us to have the foresight to anticipate problems while also allowing us to respond to the problems that we didn't anticipate. Executive functioning skills do not all develop at once, but rather in a sequence — one skill building atop the next. All of the executive functions interact with each other, and impact how individuals regulate their cognitions and behaviour.



# STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

People who have difficulties executive functioning with executive functioning may find it challenging to organise materials, stay focused, sustain motivation, and regulate their emotions and behaviour. They may also lack organisational and time management skills. Strategies can be implemented to support the development of executive functioning and help those with executive function deficits (i.e., those diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

## USE VISUALS

Providing picture schedules, written instructions among many other visual supports can help children break down and understand tasks. Compared to auditory information, the permanence of visuals can serve as a reminder for what needs to be completed. This can help children to stay focused, increasing the likelihood of full task completion.

## EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION

Break down tasks into small achievable steps and keep instructions short and simple.

Children with executive functioning deficits often have poorer working memory and therefore can have difficulty retaining information in active attention. Providing short and explicit instruction reduces the amount of mental filtering and effort required to understand how to initiate and complete a task.

## EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Some children who have difficulties with executive functioning lack intrinsic motivation to complete a task.

Providing positive reinforcement for task completion can help increase a child's motivation to engage and complete a task.



## ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORTS

Organisational supports such as calendars and to do lists can support a child to plan and prioritise tasks. It can also inform children for upcoming events/tasks, helping them to mentally and emotionally prepare for them.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

- <https://childmind.org/article/helping-kids-who-struggle-with-executive-functions/>
- <https://www.additudemag.com/executive-function-treatment/>
- <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/executive-function/>

