



Supporting and Developing Executive Functions

Classroom teachers can support weak executive function skills and encourage executive function skill development.

Classroom Supports

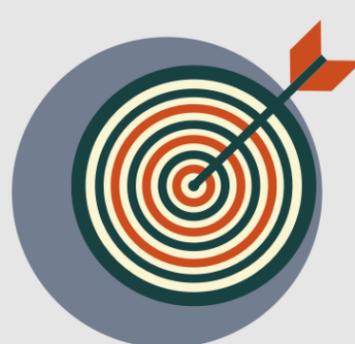
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Skill Development



REMOVE BARRIERS

Consider the potential mismatch between your students' neurodevelopmental stage and the demands you place on them. Give students processing time and visual supports for verbal directions, reduce distractions, keep the classroom well-organized, and provide assistance and time to practice when introducing new skills.



TEACH GOAL SETTING

Guide students through goal-setting activities at the start of new units, projects, or marking periods. Provide guides to setting measurable, attainable goals. Promote the discussion of goals within the classroom and reference student goals during learning activities.



PROVIDE ENVIRONMENTAL CUES

Posters that depict strategies, word walls with visual aids, task lists, procedural guides, and organizational charts that reference current content can all aid students as they learn to organize, prioritize, and use strategies with flexibility. Consider posters that guide student actions when they "get stuck."



TEACH SELF-MONITORING

Students can practice self-monitoring their progress toward their personal goals by tracking their improvements along the way with charts, graphs, or student log books. Students can also be guided to conduct regular affective check-ins. Teachers can provide strategies for self-calming such as deep breathing exercises, or provide movement breaks for students who feel sleepy.



PROVIDE TOOLS & RESOURCES

Students should be given access to tools and resources that will assist them in organizing, planning, prioritizing, and utilizing strategies. Make graphic organizers, task lists, and digital tools that support student executive functions available so that students can practice deciding when they need extra support and independently seek the appropriate aids.



TEACH STRATEGIES

Model strategies by "thinking aloud" for students. Instruct students in how to use active reading skills, provide and model the use of graphic organizers, and demonstrate switching strategies when needed. Ask students to teach each other about their own strategies for tackling difficult problems, organizing new information, or improving their reading comprehension.

Sources:

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