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## Executive Functioning Skills

Executive Functioning (EF) Skills are the processes and actions our brain takes to get us through everyday tasks. Sometimes it's easier to think of your brain like a computer and the EF skills are the software programming that came with the computer. Most people are able to go about their day and not really think about using these skills, but when someone has difficulty with executive functioning skills it's like some of that software wasn't quite finished. Executive functioning skills can still be learned successfully implemented, but explicit teaching is required to "reprogram" and "update" how the brain approaches tasks involving EF skills.

### PRACTICING EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING SKILLS AT HOME:

	<p><b>Attention</b> – ability to focus on a task or person for a time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Make a list of distractions and ways to avoid or reduce them.</li> <li>* Have a conversation and try to maintain it for a length of time without interruption.</li> <li>* Try movement breaks to "recharge" before a lengthy task or a calming break, if needed.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Planning</b> – ability to make a strategy/plan for a task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Plan a meal or write out weekly meal plan.</li> <li>* Fill out a monthly calendar listing every activity you can think of (sports, tests, playdates).</li> <li>* Use a daily checklist with all the things you need to do for the day and check off once completed.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Organization</b> – ability to maintain order and neatness for finding things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sort laundry to wash or to fold and put away; then discuss why it's sorted that way</li> <li>* Do an organization project like organizing a room, play area, or work area with a group.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Initiation (Task)</b> – ability to start a task without procrastinating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Break down a task into pieces like a checklist to help with knowing what comes next.</li> <li>* Using a token board or reward to earn once a task is completed can help with initiation.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Metacognition</b> – ability to think about what we know what we do and don't know (helps with studying)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Pick a book or movie to discuss and list everything you know about the topic, then read or watch and discuss what you've learned (non-fiction is best for this area).</li> <li>* Sit with a group of peers and have each person state one thing they know about a prechosen topic. Keep going until everyone has run out of things to talk about.</li> </ul>