



Executive Functioning Skills

GIFTED ACADEMY FOR PARENTS
October 26, 2023



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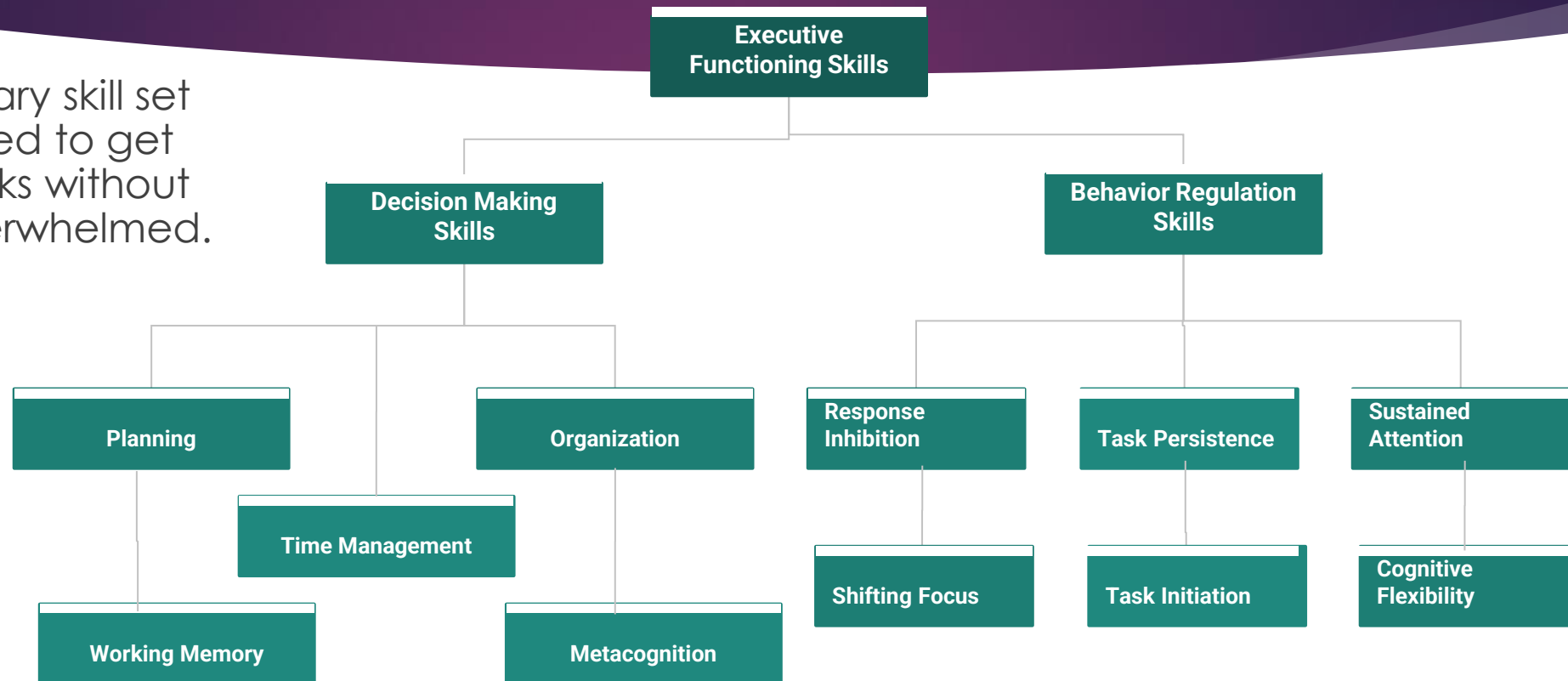


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Executive Functioning Skills:

The necessary skill set that we need to get through tasks without getting overwhelmed.



Brain Development



Pre-frontal cortex fully developed around age 25



Largest growth spurt between ages 0-3 and then again in pre-adolescence



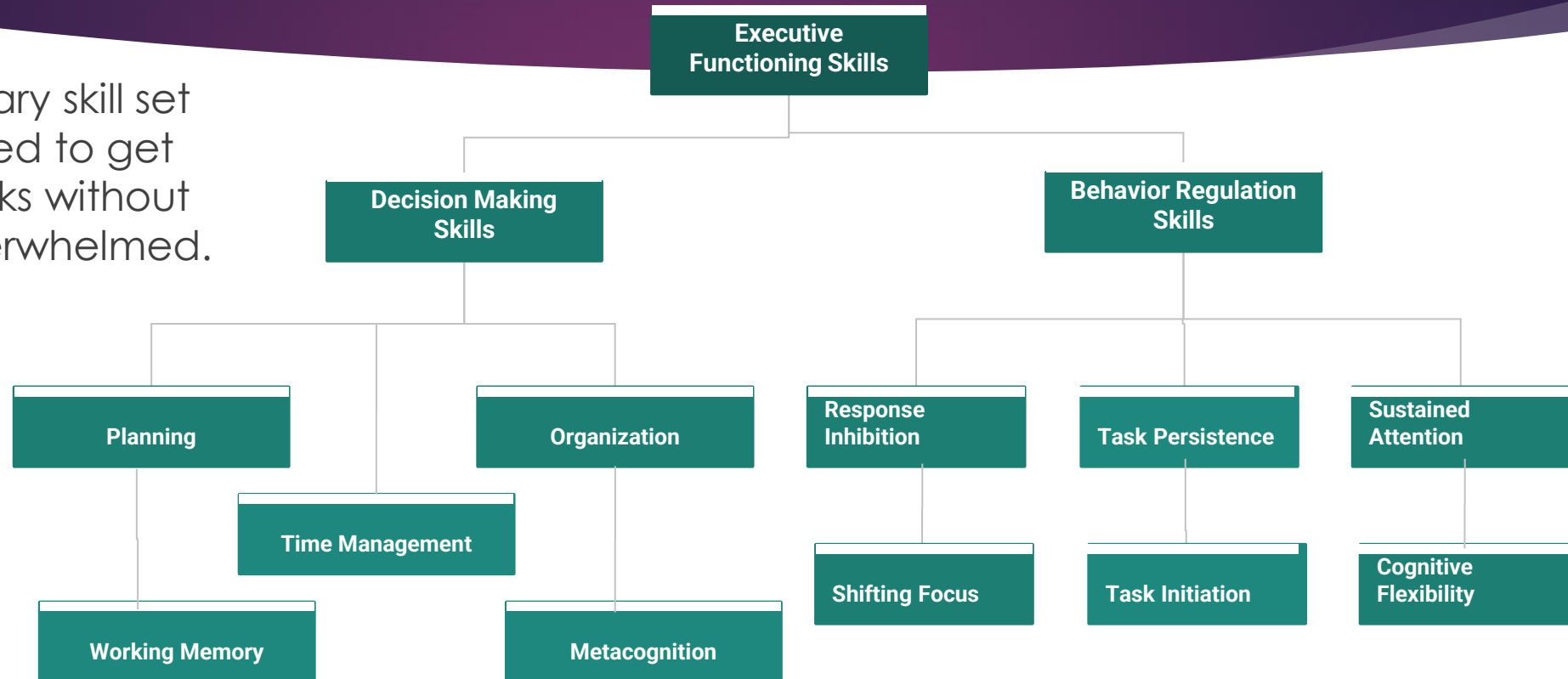
Pre-frontal cortex is the conductor – organizes other parts of the brain working together

WHAT IS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION?



Executive Functioning Skills:

The necessary skill set that we need to get through tasks without getting overwhelmed.



Planning

Explanation

Figuring out all the steps that must happen and in what order, as well as estimating how long it might take.

Examples

- ▶ Difficulty identifying multiple steps necessary to complete a task or project.
- ▶ Trouble remembering to bring home all components needed to complete a project at home.

Working Memory

Explanation

The ability to hold information in your mind and recall it when needed.

Examples

- ▶ Difficulty holding on to information needed to work on a bigger project, like a presentation or a report.
- ▶ Trouble following a series of directions without reminders or visual prompts.
- ▶ Struggling to complete multi-step problems

Organization

Explanation

Developing a system to maintain routine, belongings, and ideas.

Examples

- ▶ Struggling to maintain materials in a systematic way.
- ▶ Difficulty accessing materials quickly and easily.
- ▶ Trouble distinguishing items that are needed from items that can be thrown away.

Metacognition

Explanation

The ability to reflect on your own thinking as it relates to goal-setting. Identifying areas that need adjusting.

Examples

- ▶ Difficulty evaluating problem-solving strategies for effectiveness
- ▶ Struggling with self-monitoring and self-checking for both short and long-term assignments or projects.

Time Management

Explanation

Accurately estimating how long certain tasks will take and using the time available as efficiently as possible. Understanding the importance of deadlines and prioritizing tasks.

Examples

- ▶ Difficulty estimating the amount of time a task will take.
- ▶ Trouble allocating enough time to complete a task or series of tasks.

Response Inhibition

Explanation

The ability to master thoughts and impulses so as to resist temptations, distractions, and habits, and to pause and think before acting.

Samples

- ▶ Speaking before being called on or talking out in class.
- ▶ Grabbing something out of a peer's hands.
- ▶ Fidgeting or other impulsive actions.
- ▶ Pulling discussions off track with unrelated comments.

Shifting Focus

Explanation

The ability to switch focus from one task to another.

Examples

- ▶ Hyperfocus
- ▶ Trouble wrapping up a task
- ▶ Resistance putting work aside that isn't complete
- ▶ Unaware that it is time to transition
- ▶ Difficulty transitioning from one assignment to another

Task Persistence

Explanation

Once a task has been initiated, having the ability to persist until it is complete.

Examples

- ▶ Completing an assignment or project and resist being pulled away by other interests.
- ▶ Maintaining interest in a topic without wanting to move on to the next thing.

Task Initiation

Explanation

The struggle to start an assignment or project.

Examples

- ▶ Sitting and staring at work without starting.
- ▶ Engaging in other activities other than the task at hand.
- ▶ Procrastination

Sustained Attention

Explanation

Being able to focus on a task and maintain the attention for an extended time.

Examples

- ▶ Difficulty completing tasks in the expected amount of time.
- ▶ Trouble maintaining focus during passive learning.
- ▶ Struggling to complete a single task from start to end without distraction.

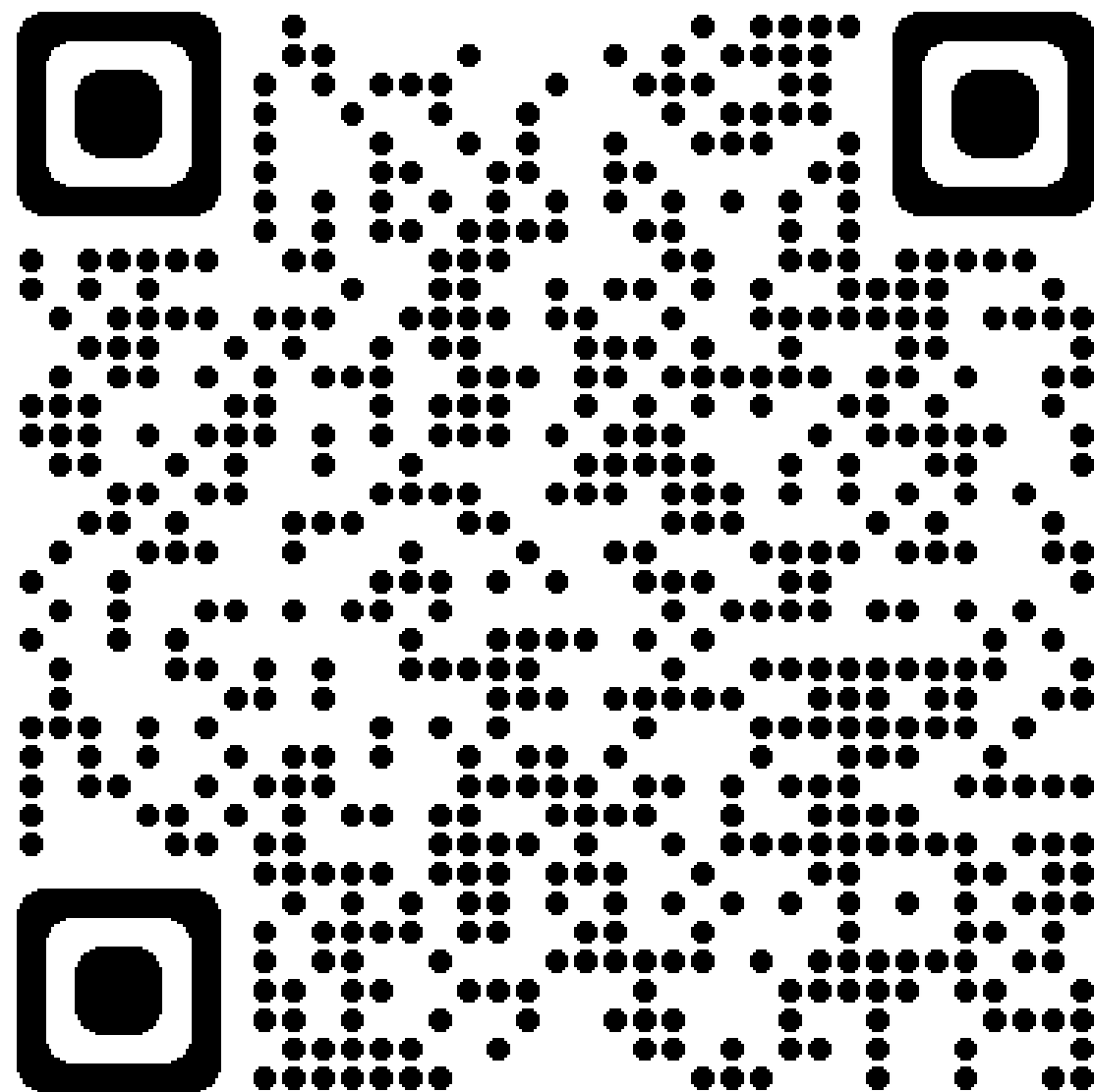
Cognitive Flexibility

Explanation

The capacity to switch gears and adjust to changing demands, priorities, or perspectives.

Examples

- ▶ A student might use this skill when they need to solve a math problem two ways, or find a relationship between different concepts.
- ▶ Collaborating in groups when peers must agree
- ▶ Answering ambiguous writing prompts or questions that don't have a "right" answer.



Turn & Talk

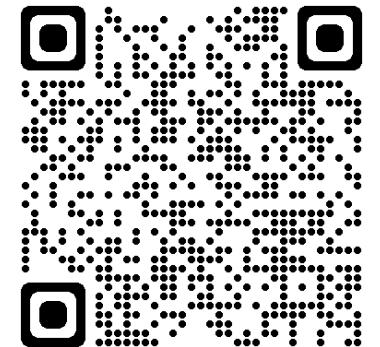
What is one skill your child does well with?
What is one skill that is challenging for your child?

Decision Making Skills

- ▶ Planning
- ▶ Working Memory
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Metacognition
- ▶ Time Management

Behavior Regulation Skills

- ▶ Response Inhibition
- ▶ Shifting Focus
- ▶ Task Persistence
- ▶ Task Initiation
- ▶ Sustained Attention
- ▶ Cognitive Flexibility



How can you practice at home?

**Choose a skill that you want to help your child improve.
Visit that table and review the suggestions.
Discuss strategies together.**

Decision Making Skills

- ▶ Planning
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- ▶ Time Management

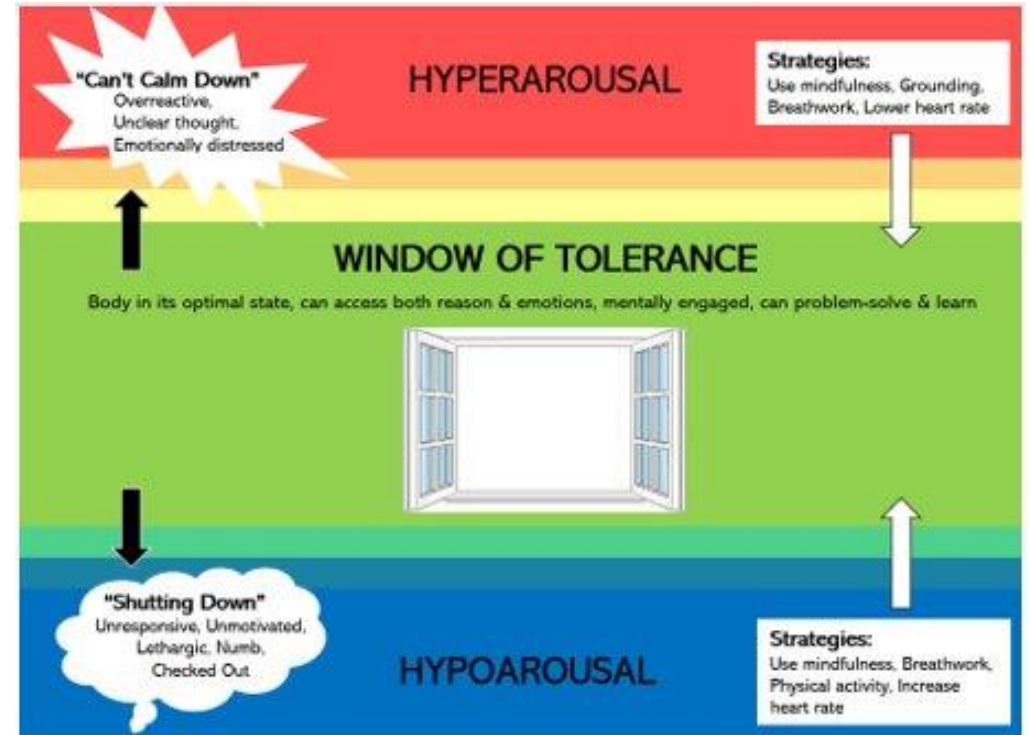
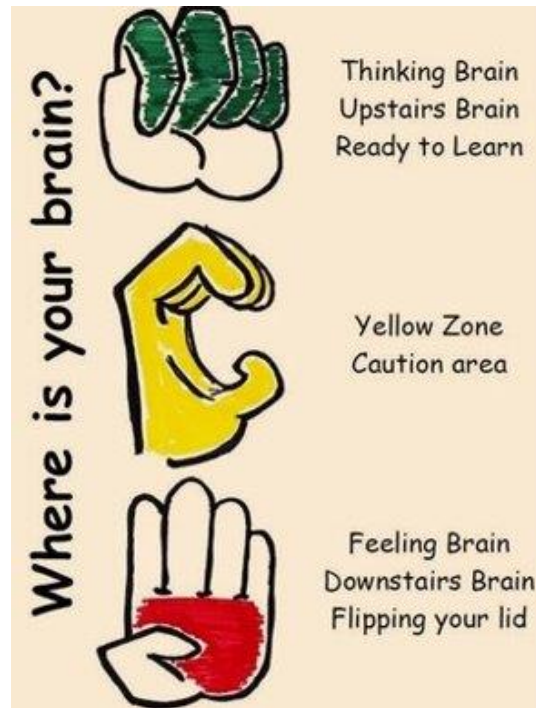
Behavior Regulation Skills

- ▶ Response Inhibition
- ▶ Shifting Focus
- ▶ Task Persistence
- ▶ Task Initiation
- ▶ Sustained Attention
- ▶ Cognitive Flexibility

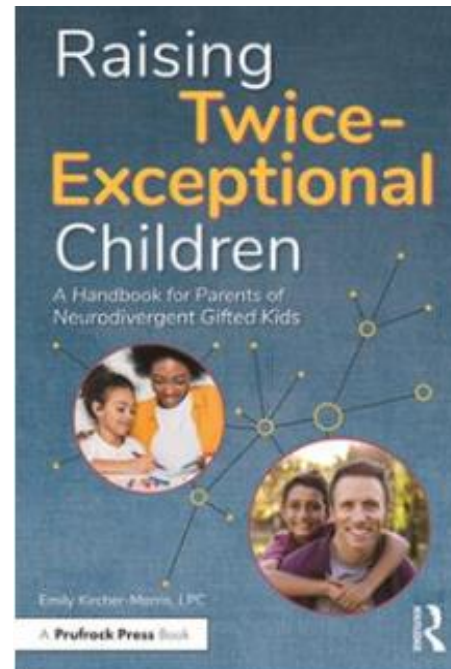
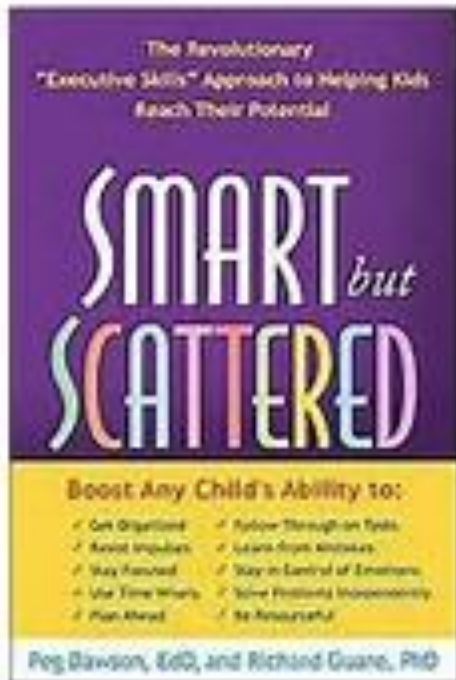


Reminders

- ▶ Repetition
- ▶ "Do overs"
- ▶ Regulation is key before problem-solving



Resources



Please join us
for our next
session

Nurturing Critical Thinkers & Problem Solvers

- ▶ **Date**: Thursday, December 14, 2023
- ▶ **Time**: 6:00pm - 7:00pm
- ▶ **Location**: Jacobson Elementary School
1515 NW Jacaranda Pkwy., Chandler
- ▶ Critical thinking and problem-solving opportunities don't just happen at school. What are some practical approaches for positive communication with children? What are some ways we can promote thinking and problem solving at home?