# Building Better Brains

## Executive Functioning is…

A set of cognitive skills that helps a person

- Organize and plan activities
- Problem solve and achieve goals
- Self-Monitor and self-regulate behavior

Signs your child may be struggling….

- Distracted starting a task
- Unorganized or forgetful
- Difficulty following multi-step instructions
- Trouble managing time effectively
- Impulsive/turn-taking

## Strategies and Tips

### Organize and plan activities

- Teach and use a checklist
  - Add a picture of your child after completing the checklist to give them a visual of what "done" looks like
- Use a family calendar
  - Include school and personal activities
- Break tasks into smaller steps
- Use timers
- Use Color coding
  - Each subject has a different colored folder
  - Each activity has a separate backpack/bag (i.e. school, P.E., sport)
- Follow routines and utilize the same locations for materials
  - Practice the routine until it becomes second nature

### Problem solve and achieve goals

- Define the problem clearly
- Brainstorm possible solutions

    - Use “What if” Questions
- Evaluate pros and cons
    - Make a t-list
- Set realistic goals and deadlines
    - Write everything down

## Self-monitor and self-regulate behavior

- Teach awareness of feelings and actions
    - Take ten breaths
- Use brain breaks
    - Play games/movement activities
- Set timer for breaks and transitions
- Use a behavior chart
    - Teach your child to track their own behavior
- Give warnings before transitions
    - Verbal 10, 5, 1-minute warnings
- Ask for help when needed

Reminders:

You have to:

- Teach
- Model
- Practice
- Reinforce
- Be patient

Celebrate Success…even the small wins!!

## For more information contact:

FDLRS Reach

754-321-3466 or

Visit: https://reach.fdlrs.org/

Developed in collaboration with the Exceptional Student Education Department, Broward County Public Schools

resources:

https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resource-guides/guide-executive-function/

https://lifeskillsadvocate.com/blog/25-board-games-that-promote-executive-functioning-skills/

https://www.understood.org/en/articles/2-minute-tutorial-how-to-color-code-your-childs-school-supplies

https://www.understood.org/en/articles/understanding-executive-functioning-issues-in-your-child

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