Charting *the* **Cs**
Cooperation . Communication . Collaboration
STATEWIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT THE WORKFORCE & LOW INCIDENCE DISABILITY AREAS

Fostering a Culture of Connection by Supporting Executive Functioning Skills – Part 1

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Session Handout

Charting *the* **Cs**
Cooperation . Communication . Collaboration

Statewide Professional Development to Support the Workforce & Low Incidence Disability Areas

bit.ly/EF-CCC

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About Me

Janet is an independent consultant specializing in Assistive Technology (AT) implementation, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and creating systems change through inclusive technology.

Who Are You?

Introduce Yourself in the Chat by typing your name and answering these questions:

1. What is the biggest executive function challenge you see your students struggle with?

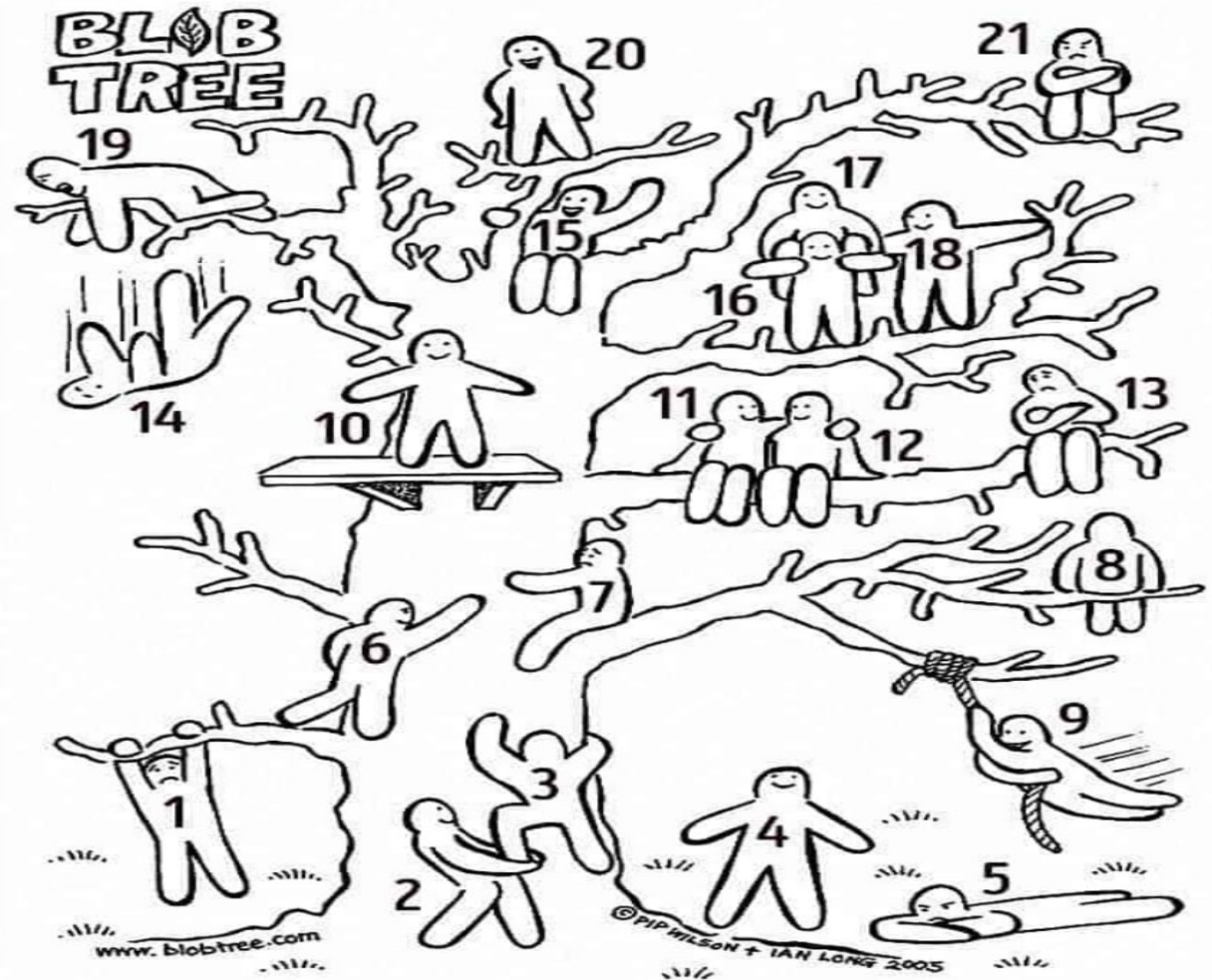2. What is 1 myth you have heard others say about executive function skills?

How are YOU feeling today?

How are YOU feeling today?

Emotions affect executive functions and learning! Knowing our own moods, external stressors, and feelings can help us empathize with student struggles!

Source: Blob Tree bit.ly/EF-Blob

Session and Learning Objectives

Agenda

I. Conceptualizing Executive Function

II. EF and High Leverage Practices

III. EF and Universal Design for Learning

IV. Construct a EF Scaffolding Plan

V. Q & A

Objectives

• Participants will be able to describe what Executive Function is and how it is supported in the Universal Design for Learning and High Leverage Practice frameworks.

• Participants will construct a scaffold for student planning and learning development

• Participants will learn and apply self-reflection strategies that can be used with students to enhance capacity for progress monitoring.
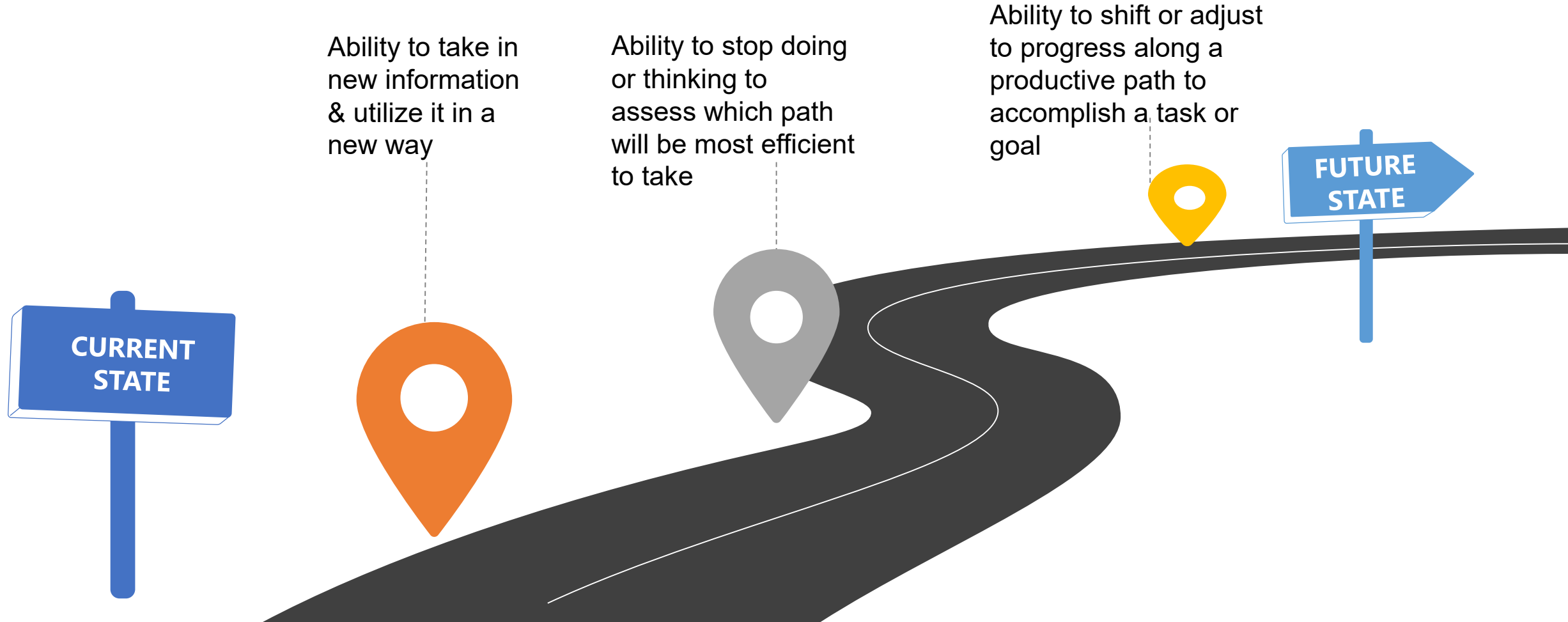
Conceptualizing Executive Function Skills

- What is Executive Function?

- What do EF skills it help us do?

- What areas of the of the brain are critical to executive functioning?

Command Center for Your Executive Functions
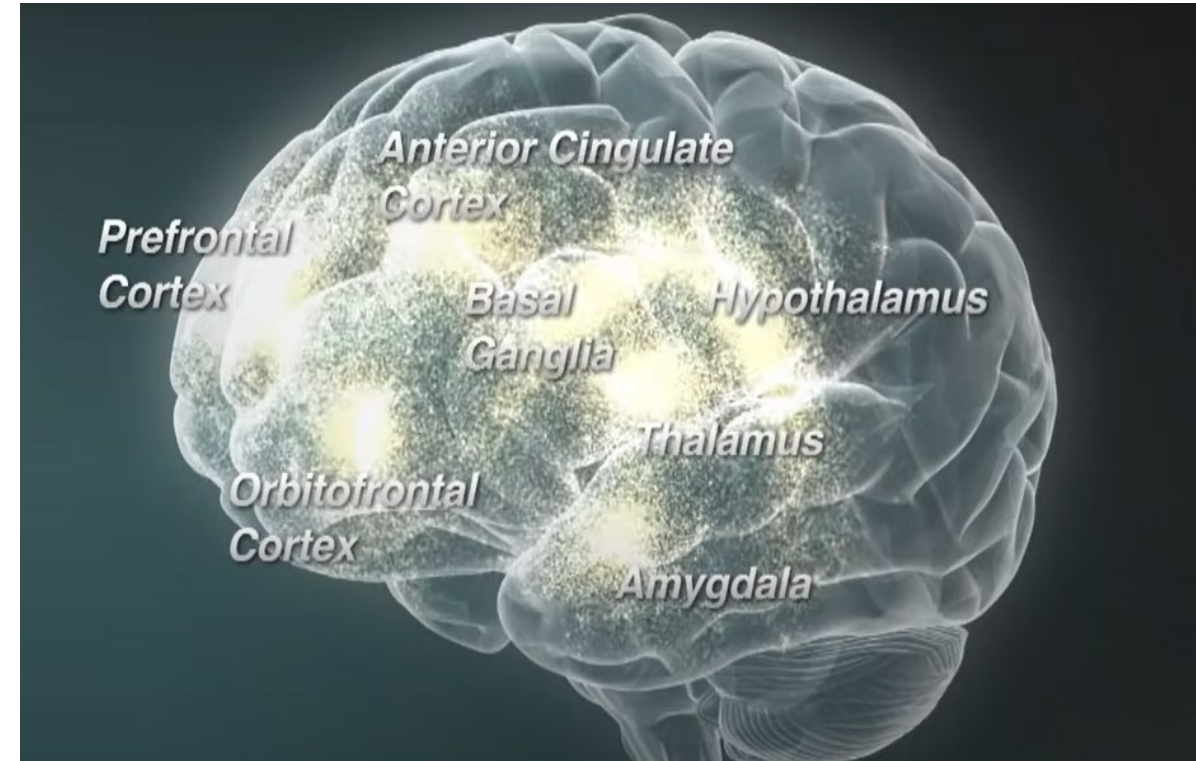
EF Skills Can Grow Over Time with Support

Source: *Dynamic mapping of human cortical development during childhood through early adulthood*

Ability to take in new information & utilize it in a new way

Ability to stop doing or thinking to assess which path will be most efficient to take

Ability to shift or adjust to progress along a productive path to accomplish a task or goal

CURRENT STATE

FUTURE STATE

Executive Function Challenges for Students

- Keeping track of important documents, papers, or items.
- Completing a task, but not submitting or turning in the work product.
- Creating a plan or schedule.
- Estimating and predicting time needed to complete a task.
- Initiating or starting a task.
- Making connections or categorizing/ prioritizing information across contexts
- Effectively communicating needs and desires.

Learners with EF Challenges May …

Physically tense up or freeze in the face of a challenge

Avoid the task with additional conversations, urges, or distractions

Experience anxiety that stifles their EF skills

Not sure how/where to start, how to make a plan, or what to do

Exhibit negative self talk

- "I don't know what to do"

- "I'm so dumb"
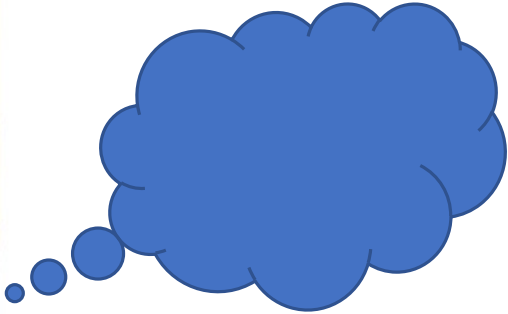
Experience a panic or anxiety attack

Loss of breath, focus, or may even faint

Become overwhelmed and refuse to engage in the task

Myths About Executive Function

Kyra
Student

Transcript

"My students aren't trying hard enough"

"She just doesn't care about school"

"I think he's just being lazy"

"Give them time, they'll outgrow being disorganized"

"The school planner should work for everyone, why do they need something special?"

Tips for Addressing Executive Function Challenges

- Give previews of what you are going to do or what is coming next

- Use feedback to describe observations in the moment

- Reflect on ways in which they took steps to regain focus and be available for the work. Note areas to improve in the future, while praising the positives.

- Acknowledge ways in which student is handling the situation well, when they use effective strategies, and when they ask good questions to seek support

- Talk through ways in which strategies have been helpful in similar situations in the past

- Give space and time with available positive support

Help Students Recognize What Is Needed!

"Awareness allows us to assess **Barriers**, build in **Positive Supports**, and determine potential **Points of Distraction** that affect performance"

- Alexis Reid, Educatonal Therapist

High Leverage Practices

View Video Next:
Welcome to our new series on High-Leverage Practices
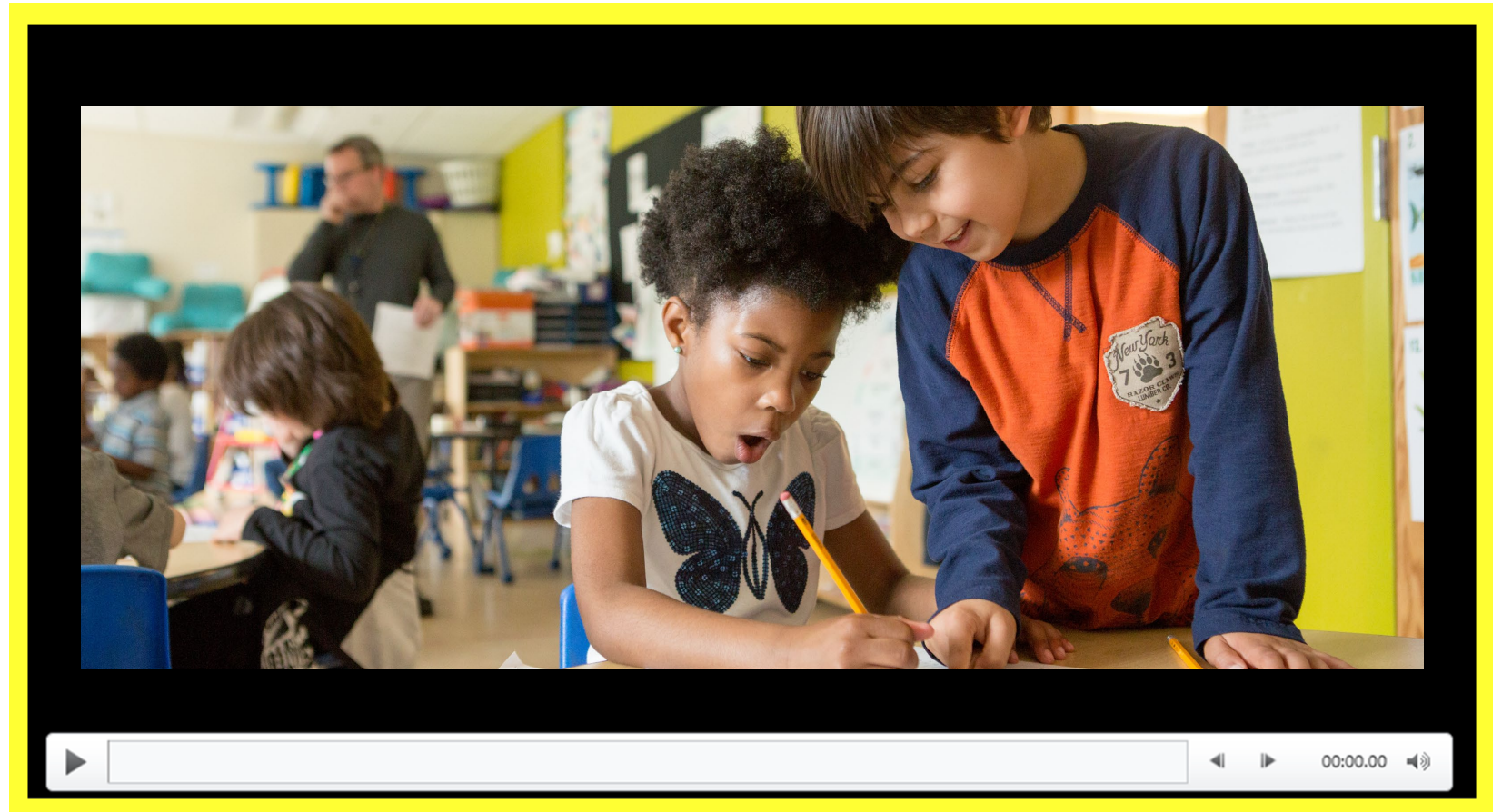
Executive Function Support with HLPs

Executive Function	HLP Support
Focus and Attention	HLP 7: Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment.
Emotional Control	HLP 9: Teach social behaviors.
Working Memory	HLP 13: Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals.
Planning Skills	HLP 14: Teach cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence.
Organization	HLP 19: Use assistive and instructional technologies.

HLP 15: Provide scaffolded supports (in all EF areas)

Universal Design for Learning

- High Expectations for All Students
- Learner Variability
- Barrier is in the Environment and Not The Student
- Firm Goals and Flexible Means
- "Expert Learners" that self-reflect is the aim of UDL

Universal Design for Learning in Practice

How learners get engaged and stay motivated. How they are challenged, excited, or interested. These are affective dimensions.

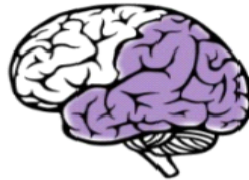KEY: Provide multiple ways to stimulate interest and motivation for learning

How we gather facts and categorize what we see, hear, and read. Identifying letters, words, or an author's style are recognition tasks.

KEY: Provide information and content in multiple ways.

Planning and performing tasks. How we organize and express our ideas. Writing an essay or solving a math problem are strategic tasks.

KEY: Provide multiple ways students can express what they know.

AFFECTIVE

RECOGNITION

STRATEGIC

Executive Function Support with UDL Guidelines

Executive Function	UDL Guideline
Focus and Attention	Checkpoint 7.3 Minimize threats and distractions
Emotional Control	Checkpoint 9.2 Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies
Working Memory	Checkpoint 5.3 Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance
Planning Skills	Checkpoint 6.2 Support planning and strategy development
Organization	Checkpoint 6.3 Facilitate managing information and resources

Checkpoint 9.3 Develop self-assessment and reflection (in all EF areas)

Explore How HLPs and UDL Support Executive Function

[Link to the Padlet](#)

- Review the HLPs and UDL checkpoints that support executive function.

- Select one EF area:

  o   Focus & Attention

  o   Emotional Control

  o   Working Memory

  o   Planning Skills

  o   Organization

- Add an idea or strategies you learned about that might be supportive for that EF area.

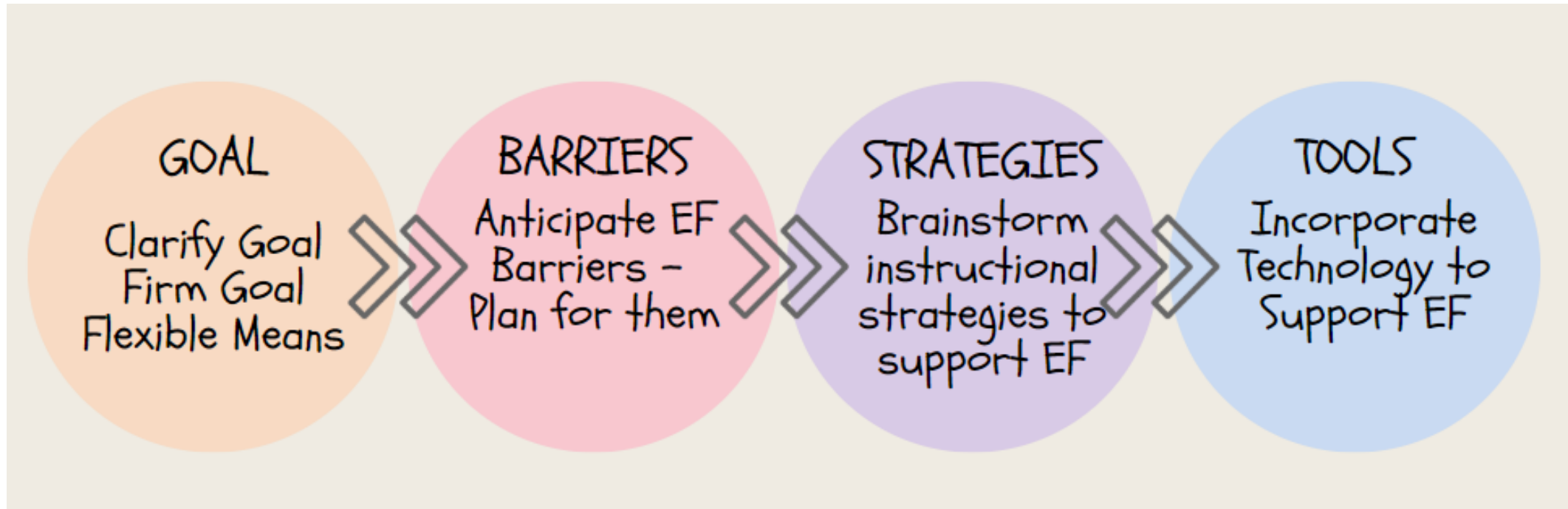# Share Out

Educators and Students Map A Plan

- Define goal and clarify goal

- Plan and create multiple pathways to reach that goal

- Determine technology and resources needed to support EF

- Allow for cognitive flexibility and shifting when needed

- Make time for student self-reflection
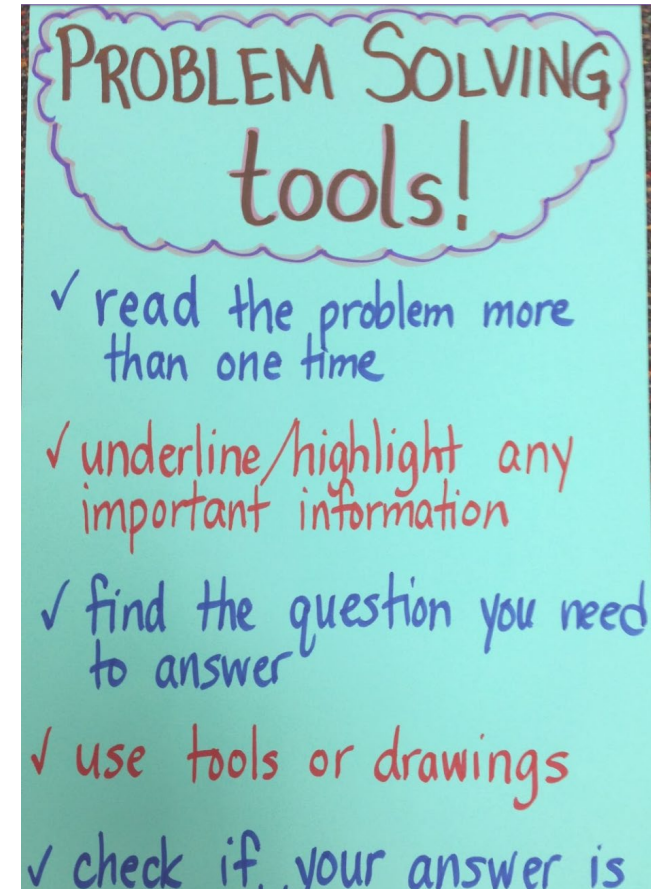
Poster from a classroom

Scaffolding for EF Through Planning

Link to Scaffolding Executive Function Planning Template

GOAL
Clarify Goal
Firm Goal
Flexible Means

BARRIERS
Anticipate EF
Barriers –
Plan for them

STRATEGIES
Brainstorm
instructional
strategies to
support EF

TOOLS
Incorporate
Technology to
Support EF

1. First take a UDL Approach – Consider the barriers is in the environment
2. If students are still struggling with executive function, create a student specific plan

Share Out EF Planning

Questions?

Thank you for your attention!

Keep in touch! My contact information:
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