*Charting the Cs: Cooperation, Communication and Collaboration.*

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

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

## Presented by

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## Session Handout

bit.ly/EF-CCC

Screen shot of the handout

Bitly link to the handout [bit.ly/EF-CCC](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vXClaURaLOC1K8xYBARC3NUIfXlvGhxI0o3Csusj27s/edit)

## 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.

Janet Peters

## 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?

Who Are You?

## 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](https://bit.ly/EF-Blob)

Blob Tree Mood Meter : 1 – discouraged, 2 – helpful, 3 – supported, 4 – grounded, 5 – angry, 6 – loving, 7- scared, 8 – contemplative, 9 – enthusiastic, 10 – lively, 11 – included, 12- friendly, 13- lonely, 14 – shocked, 15 – cheerful, 16 – blissful, 17 – proud, 18 – inspired, 19 – frightened, 20 – thrilled, 21 – envious

## Session and Learning Objectives

### Agenda

1. Conceptualizing ExecutiveFunction
2. EF and High Leverage Practices
3. EF and Universal Design forLearning
4. Construct a EF Scaffolding Plan
5. 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?

Focus and Attention, Emotional Control, Working Memory, Planning Skills, Organization, Emotional Control, Working Memory, Planning Skills, Organization, Focus and Attention

## Command Center for Your Executive Functions

prefrontal Cortex

prefrontal cortex, anterior cortex, cingulate, basal ganglia, hypothalamus, orbitofrontal cortex, amygdala

## EF Skills Can Grow Over Time with Support

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

A sign at the beginning of a road with the words Current State and a sign ahead of a road with the words “Future State”

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

Pointing arrow indicating the beginning of a road.

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

Pointing arrow indicating the middle distance of a road.

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

Pointing arrow indicating the distance ahead of a road.

## 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.

folders and papers

student at a messy desk

## 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, a student

Call out cloud for kyra audio

“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 thework. Note areas to improve in the future, while praising the positives.
* Acknowledge ways in which student is handling the situation well, when they useeffective strategies, and when they ask good questions to seek support
* Talk through ways in which strategies have been helpful in similar situations in thepast
* 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

Play YouTube video: new series on High-Leverage Practices

## Executive Function Support with HLPs

### Executive Function

Focus and Attention

Emotional Control

Working Memory

Planning Skills

Organization

### HLP Support

HLP 7:Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment.

HLP 9:Teach social behaviors.

HLP 13:Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals.

HLP 14:Teach cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support

learning and independence.

HLP 19:Use assistive and instructional technologies.

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

## Universal Design for Learning

Students working in a classroom with computers

* 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

### Key Concepts from Universal Design for Learning.

Affective networks: How learners get engaged and stay motivated. How they are challenged, excited, or interested. These are affective Dimentions. Key: provide multiple ways to stimulate interested and motivation for learning.

Recognition Networks: How we gather facts and categorize what we see hear, ad read, identifying letters, words, or an author's style are recognition tasks. Key: Provide information and content in multiple ways.

Strategic Networks: 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.

## Executive Function Support with UDL Guidelines

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

### Executive Function

Focus and Attention

Emotional Control

Working Memory

Planning Skills

Organization

## UDL Guideline

Checkpoint 7.38Minimize threats and distractions

Checkpoint9.2Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies

Checkpoint 5.3Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance

Checkpoint 6.2Support planning and strategy development

Checkpoint 6.3Facilitate managing information and resources

## Explore How HLPs and UDL Support Executive Function

Link to the Padlet image of padlet activity

* Review the HLPs and UDL checkpoints that support executive function.
* Select one EF area:
  + Focus & Attention
  + Emotional Control
  + Working Memory
  + Planning Skills
  + Organization
* •Add an idea or strategies you learned about that might be supportive for that EF area.

## Share Out

A young boy, thinking with a chalkboard in the background

## 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

Supportive Poster from a Classroom

## Scaffolding for EF Through Planning

[Link to Scaffolding Executive Function Planning Template Google Docs](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qL9pU4mEEQsDQljJBObvkWSZOT1ukyvpHrcphNuykNM/edit?usp=sharing)

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

A young boy, thinking with a chalkboard in the background

## Questions?

Thank you for your attention!

## Keep in touch!

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Question mark