

# Flexibility



Flexibility is the capacity to switch one's thinking based upon the demands of a situation. It incorporates the ability to adapt and improvise one's emotional and cognitive responses based upon changes and transitions in one's environment. When using flexibility, one must recognize the need to utilize different problem-solving strategies and to take reflective, careful approaches based on previous attempts.

Flexible thinking helps you learn from mistakes. Cognitive and emotional flexibility helps children to find effective problem-solving strategies and deal with uncertainty. Flexibility is important for a child to be able to transition from one activity to another and helps a child deal with new or different situations.

## Home and School Situations Requiring Flexibility

- Receiving constructive criticism
- Trying out new activities or tasks
- Shifting from playing with friends to going home for dinner or homework
- Handling frustrations while attempting to complete a task
- Losing a game or facing disappointment
- Transitioning from one classroom activity to another
- Adjusting to a change in routine, such as having a substitute teacher or babysitter

## Hints and Strategies to Improve Flexibility

- Practice trial-and-error learning. Do something with your child in which it is clear that there is no right or wrong answer. For example, rearrange the books on a bookshelf to see how they look best, work on a flower arrangement, or try variations in making a smoothie or ice cream shake.
- Play games that are strictly chance. These include flipping coins, playing "war" with a deck of cards, or playing any number of board games that do not rely upon skill, such as Candy Land or Chutes and Ladders.
- Ask your child to help you learn how to use a new cell-phone, a new game, or piece of software that you have just bought. Compliment your child's willingness to make errors, try new things, and learn from his mistakes when engaged in this type of activity. Engage in a discussion as to how this applies to many other things in his real world.
- Try new things. For example, have everyone in the family try something new at a restaurant, take a new route to school, or try a new routine at home. Discuss with your child the pros (e.g. broadening one's perspective, finding a better way) and cons (e.g. discomfort, fear) of new experiences.

- Turn your day upside-down. Have chicken, salad, rice, and vegetables for breakfast and cereal and milk for dinner. Wear pajamas during the day and sleep in jeans and a T-shirt, all the while laughing and being comfortable with this unusual routine.
- Encourage thinking about things differently. For example, see if you and your child can generate alternative uses for common household items. Discuss how many ways you could use a telephone book, such as a seat booster, a doorstop, a fire starter, or to look up phone numbers.
- Encourage video and board game play that requires flexibility of thinking. Many games, such as Risk or Blokus, involve strategies that require cognitive flexibility in response to changes on the board and the actions of one's opponents. Similarly, many single player video games change the skills needed from one level to another. For example, during the first level of a game, one may simply need to run and jump to get from one place to another, however, on subsequent levels this method may be inadequate and one will need to think of alternative strategies to be successful. Encourage your child to recognize the need for change in strategy in these games and discuss together how he can apply this sort of flexibility to his daily life.
- Ask your child for help while you play a video game that requires changing strategies. Many online video games, such as Diner Dash, require changing strategies as one moves along in the game. These are relatively simple games for many parents to get started on but they may struggle when coming up with solutions as the game progresses. Many of your children will be able to help you. The goal is to get your child not only to help you, but to explain how and why he shifted his thinking from one set to another. The focus is to help your child recognize the changing of thinking sets in game play and how this may help them in the real world.
- Model flexibility in your daily routine. Everyone experiences the common occurrences of running out of an ingredient for a recipe, having weather ruin plans, or being called to stay late at work for an emergency. These are all opportunities for displaying flexibility of thinking and approaches. When these circumstances arise, model your capacity to adapt and change. For example, while you adapt, talk about how you will make something different for dinner or how you will find something to be happy about when you change your plans from going to the beach to a movie.

#### Books and Articles on Flexibility

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House, 2008. [Chapter 12]

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Books [Chapter 4]

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

### Websites on Flexibility

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/flexibility.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of flexibility, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

National Middle School Association  
(<http://www.nmsa.org/publications/webexclusive/helpfulhints/tabid/649/default.aspx>): A compilation of tips for parents of children who are transitioning from elementary school to middle school.

Family Communications  
(<http://www.misterrogers.org/newsletter/hints.asp?newsletterid=3>): Helpful hints for parents to assist their children with the transition periods they face everyday.

Scholastic (<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3747078>): Author provides a variety of outdoor problem solving activities that can be used with children of different ages.

### Games and Activities That Can Practice Flexibility

- MadLibs Books  
This interactive game helps your child to both practice grammar and to recognize that sometimes nonsense and silliness are acceptable.
- Big Brain Academy  
Big Brain Academy offers your child the opportunity to test his “brain” abilities in five different categories by playing 15 mini-games, which allows him to practice adapting to varying routines.
- Bejeweled  
This puzzle game, commonly available on the Internet, allows your child to practice trial-and-error learning and problem-solving skills in order to perform well in the game.
- Chess and Checkers  
Traditional board games, such as chess and checkers, will allow your child to practice flexibility when he must react and adapt to his opponent’s moves
- Charades and Guesstures  
The traditional word guessing game and its modern-day equivalent, Guesstures, will allow your child to practice laughing at himself, use trial-and-error learning, and constantly adapt to the situation at hand.
- Cooking  
Cooking, especially when one does not follow a recipe, allows your child to practice problem-solving and trial-and-error learning as he creates a hopefully edible concoction.
- Construction around the house  
Like cooking, construction around the house, particularly when one does not have a kit or detailed set of instructions for a project, allows for your child to practice problem-solving and trial-and-error learning.
- Rearranging the furnishings in a room  
By rearranging the furnishings in a room in your home, your child will have the opportunity to try and adapt to new things.



# Goal-Directed Persistence



Goal-directed persistence, also known as stick-to-itiveness, is the ability to set a reachable goal and then display ongoing efforts and attention towards achieving this goal. Persistence is needed when a task becomes boring, when it is interrupted, and when one needs to change strategies in order to reach the goal. Persistence involves sequencing, willfulness, and the ability to learn from experience, and is particularly important when task demands are long-term. It is very important in maintaining effort with tasks that are boring or uninteresting.

## Home and School Situations Goal-Directed Persistence

- Completing a homework assignment
- Cleaning the dishes or other assorted chores
- Saving money over time to buy a video game or toy
- Creating a large project for school
- Reading a novel
- Completing a lengthy video game
- Playing on a sports team
- Developing an expertise in dance, art, or music

## Hints and Strategies to Improve Goal-Directed Persistence

- Encourage your child to develop schedules for long-term projects. Your child should be encouraged to identify home and school long-term projects, due dates, and the work that is required for their successful completion. Synchronize home and school calendars on a frequent basis to ensure consistency in expectations.
- As a parent, read the book *Mindset* by Carol Dweck. Seek out additional books and articles that can be used to help your child to embrace this perspective of a “growth mindset,” where individuals believe they are capable of improvement and accomplishment through persistence.
- Give your child the responsibility of caring for a family pet. Taking care of a family pet can be good training in task persistence. Help your child to see the need for daily care of a pet that includes feeding, brushing, walking, etc. Through taking on these jobs, she may develop responsibility and cultivate persistence on behalf of the creature’s well-being. Digital technologies such as “Nintendogs” (from Nintendo DS) or Tamagotchi (Virtual pets) or online games such as “Neopets” can help prepare your child to be the main provider of care for family pets.

- Provide examples from literature about people who succeeded despite the odds. Your child may enjoy reading or being read books about people who persevered in response to difficult situations, such as *The Little Engine that Could*, *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, *Gorinda Takes Flight*, and *Al Capone Does My Shirts*. Biographies on J.K. Rowling (author of the Harry Potter series), Bill Clinton, and Oprah Winfrey may also be appropriate for more advanced readers.
- Reward stick-to-itiveness. When your child experiences the rewards of sticking with a difficult task and completing it, she will be more motivated to try the next time. Activities such as playing sports or a musical instrument can build up goal-directed persistence. Provide meaningful rewards (such as praise, an outing, or a desired game) for chores that are completed to her satisfaction. Offering treats, privileges, or simply verbal praise when chores are completed satisfactorily without any reminders can be very rewarding.
- Use movies or videos to model sustained effort. Watch movies that portray the positive impact of sustained effort, choosing films that include topics or individuals that interest your child. She might enjoy watching a movie such as "Finding Nemo," where the main character must persist through various obstacles in order to reach a final goal. Watching sports that portray the positive impact of stating a goal and sticking with it may also be useful. For example, the family might watch a video about Michael Jordan and discuss how many game-winning shots he missed as opposed to how many he made, pointing out that "sticking to it" and working hard made him a better player.
- Encourage your child to play video games that require extended effort in overcoming obstacles in order to succeed. While it is important to limit the amount of time your child plays these games, many of the best video games present these types of ongoing challenges. If you have a child who frequently gives up easily, encourage her to be persistent. This may be done by providing her with assistance from yourself, video game walk-throughs, or from a peer who can help. Over the long haul, this may help her to understand the value of sustained effort. Games from the Legend of Zelda series, such as *Spirit Tracks*, *Twilight Princess*, and *Phantom Hourglass*, are excellent examples of these types of games. Other similar games might include *Professor Layton's* and the *Final Fantasy* series.
- Use digital technologies to help your child see progress in the long-term. Oftentimes, children can struggle to recognize why and how it is important to stick to an individual task. However, by allowing your child to reflect on and recognize the individual steps she has taken, it may be possible for your child to come to terms with the rewarding nature of persistence. One example of this would be to take digital pictures of your child as she is doing a science project. The first pictures might include a layout of all of the materials, while the subsequent photo sets might show the child reading books, beginning to conduct an experiment, creating a poster, and then the completed final project. Other examples might be based more upon household projects such as building a shelving or entertainment unit in the home, creating a large Lego castle or ship, or transitioning from a very messy room to a very clean organized room. The use of the photographs will allow your child to recognize how far she has come and to recognize how rewarding persisting at a task can be.  
or skateboarding, writing his own stories about fantasy characters, or using art materials in an innovative and unusual fashion.
- Use daily experiences or stories that you hear to encourage persistence and sustained effort. The use of narrative stories to teach this skill can be very helpful for children. While keeping the story fairly short, it is often helpful to tell your child about a person you know who has overcome odds of illness or who grew up in poverty and became financially successful. Talking about local stories can be especially beneficial to your child. For example, sharing a story from which your child can learn about children not that different from themselves who became excellent athletes, or mentioning a teenage neighbor who works very hard at a job outside of school, or even telling a story from your own past when you worked very hard on a project, can demonstrate the benefits of being persistent.



## **Books on Goal-Directed Persistence**

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. [Chapter 20]

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

## **Websites and Articles on Goal-Directed Persistence**

LearningWorks For Kids ([http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/goal\\_directed.html](http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/goal_directed.html)): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of goal-directed persistence, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

Sutton-on-Sea Community Primary School (<http://www.sutton.lincs.sch.uk/pages/community/parentguides/ctrate.html>): This site offers tips for parents to help their children improve their concentration abilities and identifies factors that go into a child being able to concentrate.

Great Schools (<http://www.sutton.lincs.sch.uk/pages/community/parentguides/ctrate.html>): This site provides parents with tips for how to help a discouraged child work through a problematic situation.

Learning Disabilities Resource Community ([http://www.ldrc.ca/contents/view\\_article/213/](http://www.ldrc.ca/contents/view_article/213/)): This site offers an outline of the skill of concentration, as well as games which can help to develop your child's concentration skills.

## **Games and Activities That Can Practice Goal-Directed Persistence**

- The Sims  
This game is helpful for enhancing persistence because players must maintain a human's everyday life. In order for your child's character to progress, persistence is a necessity.
- Puzzles  
Have your child work on completing puzzles, either traditional or online ones, making sure she is increasingly challenging herself over time with puzzles that are more complex and time-consuming.
- Playing a new instrument or sport  
Learning a new instrument or sport can be very frustrating initially and requires your child to practice and remain persistent in her efforts in order to reach success.
- Monopoly and other lengthy board games  
Board games that require a player to commit an extended period of time in order to complete the game, such as Monopoly, allow your child to practice goal-directed persistence skills.
- Memory  
The card game of Memory requires players to pay constant attention to what is occurring during their own turns, as well as the turns of other players.







## Metacognition

Metacognition involves the processes of self-monitoring and observation. It is an opportunity for children to check on their efforts and assess their successes and failures. Simply put, metacognition is thinking about one's thinking. It is a particularly important function for helping children to gain some perspective on their decision-making and skill development. Metacognition facilitates reflecting on the impact of one's actions on others by checking on how one has done. It involves asking oneself questions that facilitate defining problems, developing solutions, and assessing successes.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Metacognition

- Understanding personal strengths and weaknesses in academic subjects, athletics, or other extracurricular activities
- Achieving an awareness of how one's behavior can impact others
- Being able to evaluate preparedness for a quiz or performance on a test
- Following household or classroom rules
- Articulating feelings when dealing with peers or siblings
- Checking homework or in-class assignments for mistakes
- Identifying the steps needed to successfully write a paper or complete a household chore
- Recognizing consequences for decisions in advance, such as misbehaving at recess or not finishing one's homework

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Metacognition

- Help your child to self-evaluate using checklists. Before your child begins a chore or task, discuss how you both will determine successful completion of the task and develop a checklist together to use to determine how effectively the task has been completed. For example, a checklist for evaluating a successfully cleaned bedroom might include items such as: I made my bed; I put my dirty clothes in the laundry basket; I put my toys in the bin; I put my papers in my desk drawer. You and your child should both complete this checklist after having finished the task and discuss why you each rated the items as you did. Be sure to praise your child for accurate self-evaluations and brainstorm ideas for improving accuracy in the future.
- Ask your child to try and predict the outcome of a situation. Teach her to think about the different factors and obstacles affecting successful completion of tasks, such as an upcoming science project, a soccer game, or a musical performance. Keep track of these predictions in a journal to serve as a direct reminder for your child and to be used for later comparisons. After the activity has been completed, discuss your child's predictions and identify possible reasons for any inaccuracies.

- Model self-verbalization skills by expressing your thoughts and problem-solving strategies aloud. This will allow your child to identify otherwise hidden metacognitive strategies. For example, verbalize statements such as, “This reminds me of the time when we tried to do this” or “I need to think about what worked and didn’t work the last time we did this.” Encourage your child to use similar self-instructional strategies to aid in problem-solving tasks, such as putting a puzzle together, solving a math problem, or brainstorming for an art project.
- Provide cues to help your child identify and acknowledge her own strengths and weaknesses. This can be done by making a list, collage, or voice recording of her strengths and weaknesses. It is important for your child to recognize that although she may have weaknesses in some areas, she has strengths in others. Being able to identify those strengths and weaknesses is important in developing accurate self-perceptions, as well as positive self-esteem.
- Have your child explain to you how to succeed at one of her favorite videogames or board games. This will allow your child the opportunity to practice reporting how she thinks about her step-by-step problem-solving strategies in a game. In many games it is important for players to be able to recognize their current score and how it reflects their performance and capacity within the game. When your child can identify errors of omission and commission in game play, this will allow her to practice identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- Use your child’s video game playing as an opportunity to help her reflect on her strategic thinking. A good opportunity would be when your child talks about having “beaten a level.” When this occurs, ask her to think about how she figured out what to do. Ask her to also identify the mistakes she previously made and to then reflect upon how she learned from them. The concept of metacognition revolves around an individual being able to step back and think about their thinking. Help your child to understand that this same type of stepping back and trying to find a new way to “beat a level” is something she can try in many situations at home and at school.
- Next time your child asks for something outrageous or asks to do something that is out of the ordinary, do not say “no.” Instead, say “Let’s think about that” and encourage your child to step back, consider what she is asking for, and point out the pros and cons of this activity or acquisition. If you determine this request to be unfeasible, encourage your child to formulate an understanding of what your thoughts are and how she might be able to otherwise accomplish what she is looking to do or have.

#### Books Metacognition

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepare: A Parents’ Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 16]

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Group. [Chapter 8]

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. [Chapter 21]

Larkin, Shirley. (2009). *Metacognition in Young Children*. London, England: Routledge.

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

#### Websites and Articles on Metacognition

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/metacognition.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of metacognition, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

U.S. Department of Education ([http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref\\_Dev\\_Metacognition/](http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Dev_Metacognition/)): A site which offers additional strategies for developing metacognition, tips for creating a metacognitive environment, and a list of additional resources to consult on this topic.

Purdue University ([http://education.calumet.purdue.edu/vockell/EdPsyBook/Edpsy7/edpsy7\\_meta.htm](http://education.calumet.purdue.edu/vockell/EdPsyBook/Edpsy7/edpsy7_meta.htm)): An excerpt from an educational psychology textbook which thoroughly explains the skill of metacognition and qualities of children who are well-developed in this skill.

University of Buffalo. (<http://www.gse.buffalo.edu/fas/shuell/CEP564/Metacog.htm>): A more technical overview of metacognition that addresses many areas of metacognitive research.

#### Games and Activities That Can Practice Metacognition

- Big Brain Academy and Brain Age  
These games offer your child the opportunity to test her "brain" abilities and calls for the player to make accurate self-assessments in order to succeed.
- Rock Band  
Games, such as Rock Band, which have distinct roles (i.e. drummer, guitarist, singer) will allow for your child to begin to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of themselves and others.
- Athletics  
Have your child predict how fast he can swim a lap of the pool, how high he can jump, or how far he can kick a soccer ball to practice achieving accurate predictions.
- Chess, Checkers, and Connect Four  
These types of strategy games allow for a discussion with your child which includes evaluating what kind of approaches were successful and what new approaches you might try when you next play this game.
- Programming a cell phone  
Have your child help you set different ring tones and/or pictures for people in your phonebook and discuss how this could be useful in identification of a caller.
- Observe people interacting at the grocery store or in the mall  
While observing strangers, have your child describe her perceptions of these people and then discuss how your child formed this impression (i.e. facial expressions, body language, verbal cues).





## Organization

Organization is the ability to arrange elements and develop systematic strategies to reach an ultimate goal. There are two types of organization: *organization of self* and *organization of materials*. Organization of self refers to one's ability to complete tasks and is a core component of the skill of planning. Organization of refers to the ability to access the necessary materials when needed. Through organization, one can take a step-by-step approach that will assist in achieving one's goals. Organization may involve both short and long term goals and requires a person to take all aspects of a situation into account.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Organization

- Recording and completing homework assignments
- Organizing one's backpack, desk, locker, and room
- Preparing and having needed items at school and sporting events
- Playing games at recess (picking players, establishing rules, setting up)
- Keeping track of and planning for events
- Completing tasks consisting of multiple steps
- Writing a paper
- Maintaining an email account
- Creating a play list on an iPod

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Organization

- Teach by doing. Discuss plans for the day or verbalize the steps of completing a series of tasks, such as errands. Use calendars, sticky notes, and other visual reminders for yourself to model these organizational skills to your child. Display regular routines (such as putting your keys, wallet, and cell-phone in a certain spot everyday) for your child to observe.
- Purchase a journal or assignment book. Have your child write in it everything that needs to be completed (e.g. homework and upcoming tests), as well as scheduling activities. This will help organize schoolwork and make keeping track of events easier.
- Help your child to develop methods for organizing her bedroom. One helpful way of doing so is by taping drawings or digital pictures to dresser or desk drawers to designate where the items in each picture go. Encourage your child to initiate the organization by taking pictures of items that she groups together.
- Use predictable schedules and routines and prepare in advance for any changes that might occur. Place a big clock in your child's bedroom as a reminder to keep to a time-schedule. Provide a regular place to put backpacks at the conclusion of the school day and schedule regular times to clean and organize the backpack.
- Develop a plan and a description of what constitutes a clean room, by taking photographs of what a clean room looks like. Schedule a weekly time for your child to clean her room and have designated containers for toys and other belongings. Regularly reinforce your child for her efforts and provide an appropriate allowance or meaningful privileges for successful completion of household tasks.

- Encourage a hobby requiring organization, such as collecting "Pokemon" or baseball cards, rocks, shells, American Girl dolls, or stamps. Help your child find some type of "organizer" (a shelf, tackle box, or card "sleeves") to systematize her materials.
- Practice organization with digital technologies. Many older children and teenagers enjoy and frequently use digital technologies such as cell-phones and iPods. These technologies present many opportunities for organization that you can encourage your child to take advantage of. For example, helping your child to create a play list of favorite songs on an iPod or to rearrange applications on an iPod Touch in a logical manner are two opportunities that your child can use to practice organization. Cell-phones can also be fun for organizing telephone numbers or photographs of one's family and friends. The best way to assist your child in practicing these skills on her iPod or cell-phone is to practice these techniques with her initially and point out the benefits of using these types of organization.
- Practice organizational skills with computer and internet-based technologies. Encourage your child to use the many internet-based technologies available in order to practice organization skills. For example, Google Docs is a great tool for word processing and later organizing documents by file type. Similarly, Picasa, a free Google application that can be used for organizing pictures, or applications such as Photobucket or Flickr, also provide your child with the opportunity to practice organization skills in a fun manner.
- Ask your child to select one area of her life in which she wishes to improve her organization. By doing this, you involve your child in setting a more specific goal for herself rather than simply "getting organized." For example, a child who struggles to find her athletic equipment every time she has practice might want to come up with a simple solution for this problem, such as placing an over-sized, open-topped container in a common space in which all of her sporting equipment can go into. This might be best done in a garage or mudroom in the home where your child will notice it, but it is not in the way of the rest of the household. Other areas that children might choose to focus their organization might be to keep better track of their homework, to have a special and consistent place to keep their iPod or cell-phone, or to identify and maintain a location for special toys (such as Legos, dolls, or smaller hand-held video games).

#### Books on Organization

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 15]

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. [Chapter 6]

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. [Chapter 17]

Goldberg, Donna. (2005). *The Organized Student*. New York, NY: Fireside.

Morgenstern, Julie and Jesse Morgenstern-Colon. (2002). *Organizing from the Inside Out for Teenagers: The Foolproof System for Organizing Your Room, Your Time, and Your Life*. New York, NY: Henry Holt, 2002.

Moss, Samantha, and Lesley Schwartz. (2007). *Where's My Stuff: The Ultimate Teen Organizing Guide*. San Francisco, CA: Zest Books.

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

#### Websites and Articles on Organization

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/organization.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of organization, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities (<http://www.ldonline.org/article/108>): A list of general tips to help children improve their daily organizational skills.

Scholastic (<http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/organizer.htm>): An interactive site on organization which offers tips from other students, a to-do list maker, a priority ranking tool, and dozens of other organization-related tools and tips.

National Association for Gifted Children (<http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=968>): This site focuses on academic organization and provides a list of links to other valuable organization-building sites.

#### Games and Activities That Can Practice Organization

- Collections (e.g. stickers, shells, rocks, baseball cards) - When your child has a collection of something, it offers her the opportunity to practice categorizing and organizing these materials.
- World of Warcraft - Massive multiplayer online games (MMOG), such as World of Warcraft, require players to be organized by collecting and acquiring various items in order to be successful in future levels.
- Puzzles - Puzzles allow your child to break down the larger task into smaller ones, such as focusing on a corner or part of the puzzle, and grouping together pieces with similar colors or pictures.
- Play Kitchens/Play Tool Workshops - The use of play kitchens or workshops offers your child a place to practice her bedroom organization skills on a smaller scale.
- Monopoly (when your child is given responsibility to be the banker) - Giving your child an important responsibility in a board game, such as the banker, will help her to recognize the importance of organization since the game cannot proceed without his role.
- Helping to put away groceries in their appropriate places, unloading the dishwasher, or putting away laundry - These household chores offer your child the opportunity to practice developing methods to do chores, categorize items, and break larger tasks into smaller ones.
- Solitaire - This popular game, available on most computers, allows your child to identify patterns and follow a method in order to succeed.
- Sim Computer Games (SimTower, SimCity, Sims) - The different Sim computer games require your child to use a variety of organization skills, such as managing money and keeping track of materials, in order to successfully build and maintain the desired tower, city, or person.







## Planning

Planning is the process of thinking about how to handle activities ahead of time in order to reach a desired goal or outcome. Planning can be thought of as developing a roadmap or a set of strategies using skills such as prioritization, sequencing, and foresight. A child must be able to estimate possible outcomes based on previous experience and, as a result, form an approach to reach the desired outcome. Responsiveness to the environment, recognition of social cues, and the estimation and anticipation of outcomes are especially important in planning.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Planning

- Completing projects and tests in an allotted time period
- Dressing appropriately (taking into consideration the event and the weather)
- Packing and bringing a lunch to school
- Preparing for and competing in a sporting event
- Organizing and cleaning one's room
- Leaving enough time to complete tasks, such as chores or homework
- Setting priorities in terms of importance
- Saving money to buy something (video games, toys, clothes, etc.)
- Bringing toys and activities for a long trip

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Planning

- Have your child identify a desired daytrip or outing. Then, assist your child in identifying what is needed to plan such a trip. For example, a child who enjoys nature and animals could benefit from planning a trip to a zoo, where he would be responsible for printing out a zoo map from the computer, finding out the entrance fee and park hours, and prioritizing what exhibits he would like to see.
- Prepare your child for transitions and changes. For example, provide your child with a 10-minute warning, and then with a 2-minute final warning as necessary, prior to sitting down to dinner or getting ready for bed. This will allow your child to practice planning transitions between activities. A kitchen timer or cell-phone alarm can also be helpful in keeping track of time.
- Schedule a specific homework time for each night. Making homework part of your family's regular routine through the establishment of a consistent schedule will allow your child to gain practice in planning what he hopes to accomplish during each homework block. If necessary, divide homework time into two blocks (one after school, one after dinner) and have your child plan what he hopes to complete during each block.

- Share a hobby with your child that requires planning. For example, work with your child on a hobby such as making jewelry, building models, gardening, or completing a full collection of stamps or coins. Both organization and planning skills are required to figure out what you need and then what to do. Gradually place your child in charge of determining what materials you will need to pursue your joint hobby.
- Initiate conversations about topics of interest that involve cause-and-effect relationships. This can help your child to focus on planning and persistence. Brainstorm topics such as global warming, the effects of exercise, and what makes a movie popular. Help your child to see the connection between planning, effort, and results. For example, explore how a popular movie (e.g. Harry Potter or Shrek) required years of planning, production, and the efforts of many people.
- Encourage your child to play video and internet games that require planning skills. Games such as Rollercoaster Tycoon, Sim City 3000, and Bejeweled are excellent opportunities for the development of planning skills. After your child has familiarized himself to the game, talk with him about how he used planning skills to help improve his performance in gameplay. You may even wish to ask him to show you some of the specific planning strategies that he used in gameplay.
- Plan a vacation with your child. This could range anywhere from a day trip to a full week vacation. First, brainstorm about what you would like to do on the vacation, things you will need to pack, supplies or clothing that you will need for the vacation, and what will need to be done at home in your absence. For an older child, encourage him to go on the internet and investigate activities that you might want to do on your vacation. Work with your child to generate an electronic list of your plans and what you want to bring. Update your plans as you get closer to the vacation and help your child to see how plans might change.

#### Books and Articles on Planning

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 15]

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Books [Chapter 6]

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Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

Roehlkepartain, Jolene L., and Nancy Leffert. (2000). *What Young Children Need to Succeed: Working Together to Build Assets from Birth to Age 11*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit.

#### Websites on Planning

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://learningworksforkids.com/EF/planning.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of planning, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

PBS ([http://www.pbs.org/parents/strugglingtolearn/supporting\\_practices.html](http://www.pbs.org/parents/strugglingtolearn/supporting_practices.html)): This site offers a short but informative list of techniques parents can use to help instill successful daily planning skills in their children.

Cozi (<http://www.cozi.com/>): The site provides the opportunity to create a free family calendar online, with different color tags for each family member, grocery lists, and a reminder function.

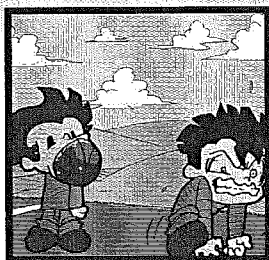
ADDitude (<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/4024.html>): This site offers organizational and planning tips that can be used to help children at both home and school.

### Games and Activities That Can Practice Planning

- The Sims  
This game enhances planning because it requires the player to take control of a human and to try and maintain and plan their daily and long-term aspects of life.
- Rollercoaster Tycoon, Zoo Tycoon, and Civilization  
These games allow your child to replay them many times, allowing him to set different goals each time and to recognize how changing these goals affects his strategies.
- Prepare a meal  
Work with your child to do all the planning for a family meal, including making a shopping list, going shopping, cooking the meal, setting the table, and cleaning up.
- Putting on a back-to-school fashion show  
Help your child select school-appropriate outfits under the guise of a "back-to-school fashion show." This will help him to recognize the benefits of planning and also allow him to recognize appropriate outfits when dressing during the school year.
- Chess, Checkers, and Connect Four  
You can use these strategy games to help your child practice identifying different techniques that produce successful outcomes.
- Play-date activities  
Have your child plan the activities he wants to do when a friend is coming over for a play-date and assist him in setting these activities up in advance. Remind him that this will allow him and his friend to use more of their play time actually playing, rather than deciding what to do or setting up.



# Regulation of Affect



Regulation of affect involves the ability to manage one's feelings effectively in order to make decisions, control behavior, and complete a task. One must be able to sustain one's effort in the face of frustrations and difficulties. Individuals who can effectively regulate their feelings display the capacity of self-control and can easily adapt to varied social situations. They are able to label and describe their feelings and can generally recognize what is behind or the cause of one's feelings.

## Home and School Situations Requiring Regulation of Affect

- Completing a lengthy or frustrating homework assignment or test
- Working with classmates on a group project
- Completing a difficult puzzle or riddle
- Playing and sharing with siblings or friends
- Completing a series of chores around the house
- Reacting appropriately to teacher or parental discipline
- Accepting an athletic team loss or perceived unfair situation

## Hints and Strategies to Improve Regulation of Affect

- Model effective strategies for dealing with anger and frustration. Your child can learn how to appropriately express her feelings by observing your behavior. Model appropriate "stopping" behavior or take a "time out." To properly model this, verbalize your strategy. For example, say, "The computer's not working, I'm going to walk away for a few minutes, then when I'm calm I'll come back and figure out how to fix it, or who to call for help. If I allowed myself to get upset about it, I'd probably take it out on somebody, regret that, and still have the computer problems."
- Have your child develop stories or narratives that explain her behaviors. By encouraging your child to talk about her feelings (for example, "I'm angry because my brothers always tease me when I lose"), she will often be able to better regulate her expression of feelings. Provide an example from your own experience, such as how you were upset when your boss gave you a large project to do on your way out the door from work, and describe how you handled your frustration. Role-play hypothetical scenarios and discuss various reactions.

- Don't sweat the small stuff. Regularly point out minor issues that could cause stress. For example, the school bus in front of you is stopping every 500 feet and you're in a hurry, or it is cloudy out when you've planned a beach trip. Use expressions such as, "Oh, well" or "Whatever," followed by a determination to move forward. This mentality is key to handling emotions and not getting stuck. Engage in discussions with your child to help her move concerns from the "big stuff" to the "small stuff" category.
- Work with your child to identify stressful situations ahead of time and encourage her to work towards practicing smaller, similar tasks. For example, if your child is extremely self-conscious, you can set gradual and age-appropriate goals to increase her ability to take on new challenges. These could include tasks such as calling friends and relatives on the phone, ordering food at a restaurant, or applying for a job.
- Use your child's video game play or introduction to a new digital technology as an opportunity to talk about frustration. Many children become visibly angry at their video games or video game consoles when they are sent back to the beginning of the game or cannot solve the problem. Similarly, they may experience some initial frustration when learning how to use a new cell-phone, setting up preferences on an iPod, or using a digital camera. Interestingly, the same children who may be more willing to go back and try to resolve these problems with video games and digital technologies may be rigid about doing the same with their homework. Use this as an opportunity to have a discussion with your child about the strategies, self thoughts, and approaches that she is using to overcome frustration with technologies and encourage her to redouble her efforts to overcome these obstacles.
- Do not be afraid to show your own frustrations; just be sure to not overdo it. Frustration and disappointment are a part of life and real-world modeling of this can be helpful. Use strategies such as self-talk, acceptance of situations that have not turned out how you would have liked them to, and "letting go." Demonstrating that you are upset but are coping effectively can be extremely valuable for children to observe. Talking about a previously frustrating and disappointing experience and how you were able to move on from it may be helpful as well.
- Watch home videos with your child of when they were much younger to illustrate how much they have matured. This is often an opportunity for children to engage in some reflection about interests, behaviors, and verbalizations that they would consider to be immature. Because the video is of your child when she was much younger, it is less threatening to discuss the need for improvement in her regulation of her feelings.

### **Books on Regulation of Affect**

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel, (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 11]

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. [Chapter 9]

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. [Chapter 13]

Goldberg, Pamela. (2003) *Become a Master of Self-Control: Meet Melly, Her Color is Mad*. Bloomington, IL: Camp Make Believe.



Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

Schwarzchild, Michael. (2000). *Helping Your Difficult Child Behave: A Guide to Improving Children's Self-Control Without Losing Your Own*. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.com.

## **Websites and Articles on Regulation of Affect**

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/regulation.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of regulation of affect, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

American Psychological Association (<http://www.apa.org/monitor/jun97/signals.html>): An article which summarizes research on the relationship between children's emotional regulation and consistent parenting.

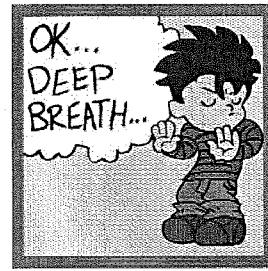
KidsHealth (<http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/index.html>): This site offers a wealth of articles and information on various emotionally-heavy situations that children might face.

The Parents Zone (<http://www.theparentszone.com/child-development/emotions-in-children-how-to-manage-them/>): This site provides a bulleted list of tips for parents to help them assist their children in managing emotions.

## **Games and Activities That Can Practice Regulation of Affect**

- Dance Dance Revolution (DDR) and Guitar Hero  
DDR enhances regulation of affect because it is a fast-paced dancing game and players must fight frustration in order to be successful. Like DDR, Guitar Hero is a fast-paced guitar simulation game that requires players to follow button combinations, which can be very frustrating.
- Charades and Cranium  
These games allow your child to work together with her team to achieve a goal. Having other team members model the appropriate behaviors for both success and failure will assist your child in practicing these responses.
- Team and Individual Sports  
Many sports, such as swimming, baseball, and lacrosse, can be frustrating to children initially, thus offering them the opportunity to practice dealing with their frustration. Also, similar to Charades and Cranium, team sports can allow your child to observe and imitate teammates' appropriate reactions to failures and successes.
- Learning to play an instrument  
Playing an instrument for the first time can be a frustrating experience and will require your child to exhibit regulation of emotions in order to successfully master the instrument.
- Jenga and Villa Paletti  
Games, such as Jenga and Villa Paletti, will challenge its players to keep a tower of some sort standing upright, while each player takes turns removing pieces. This type of game can allow your child to practice monitoring her emotions to her own play, as well as her reactions to the playing of others.





## Response Inhibition

Response inhibition is the ability to cease or delay an action and to be able to reflect rather than display impulsive behavior. Simply put, response inhibition helps individuals to stop and think before acting. It also helps one to ignore outside interference. This skill allows a child to plan and display appropriate behaviors. Response inhibition is imperative in tasks such as maintaining safety, problem solving efficiently, and behaving in a socially appropriate manner. This skill is also needed for focusing on the task at hand, rather than reacting to other situations in the environment.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Response Inhibition

- Raising one's hand before answering a question in class
- Waiting for one's turn to play in a game or to speak during a conversation
- Ignoring distractions while working on homework
- Putting a helmet on before getting on a bike
- Reading the directions before starting an assignment
- Dealing with a younger sibling who is annoying
- Completing a long, multi-step task
- Waiting in line at school or at a store
- Keeping oneself from falling back asleep in the morning
- Not talking back to one's parents when upset

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Response Inhibition

- Have your child think about his answer to a question a few seconds before he verbalizes his answer. Teach your child to count to 10 before acting. Practice this by counting together out loud before making a decision.
- Arrange for your child to play games with other children that require him to wait for his turn. A game that involves patience is Chutes and Ladders, while a game that involves both patience and concentration, when counting the number of spaces to move, is Trouble. Chess can also be helpful to improve concentration and patience because the game requires constantly thinking about the next move.
- Take a break. Let your child take a break from a situation that is upsetting to him. Doing so will keep your child motivated and from growing upset and irritable. Your child may tend to become angry or upset and possibly give up on a difficult assignment if he is forced to complete it all at once. For example, if your child has to write a lengthy paper, giving him a 10 minute break will allow him to remove himself from the stressful situation and begin with a fresh start on it again after the break. Model the same procedure by showing your child how you take a break to handle a difficult or frustrating experience. Display your own strategies by walking away but later returning to solve a problem.

- Model response inhibition for your child. Talk to your child about the strategies that you use to exhibit response inhibition and self-control and then model these strategies. For example, you could tell your child “I really would like to watch TV... but I know I have to clean the basement first.” This will help show your child how to develop a form of response inhibition and structure.
- Review homework assignment directions with your child so that he knows what to do before starting. Discuss what needs to be done and help show him how to follow the directions. If a teacher assigns a worksheet, then have your child read the instructions to you and discuss them, rather than allowing your child to dive right in without reading.
- Encourage your child to play puzzle-based video games, such as Bejeweled, Tetris, and Bubblicious, in which he can earn bonus points by delaying a first response. Many of these puzzle games will reward patience when the player is able to combine a number of shapes that match or create a larger pattern rather than simply pairing the first two that fit with each other. Most importantly, ask your child to describe to you how he can earn the maximum number of points and from there, engage in a discussion about how inhibiting or delaying an action results in a higher game score.
- Encourage high levels of activity during leisure time. Children who struggle with response inhibition often find themselves in trouble due to too much movement. Encouraging your child to exert himself when it is appropriate may help in getting him to sit still when necessary. Teach your child basic yoga, meditation, or breathing techniques. Learning one or more of these strategies can be very useful for children who act before thinking. Regular practice of one or two small techniques is something that can be used in a situation where the child tends to respond quickly and get into trouble. Teaching one or two yoga stretches may be particularly helpful for children with movement-based response inhibition difficulties. For example, learning the “mountain” and “sun salutation” poses (which essentially consists of standing with one’s hands extended above one’s head and breathing) can be very useful for delaying actions. Further information about a number of yoga poses can be found on <http://yoga.about.com>.

#### Books on Response Inhibition

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents’ Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 11]

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. [Chapter 9]

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. [Chapter 11]

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

Schwarzchild, Michael. (2000) *Helping Your Difficult Child Behave: A Guide to Improving Children’s Self-Control-Without Losing Your Own*. New York, NY: Authors Guild.

### Websites and Articles on Response Inhibition

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/response.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of response inhibition, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

Education.com ([http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref\\_About\\_Discipline/](http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_About_Discipline/)): This site offers examples and techniques for parents to use when helping their children to develop self-control.

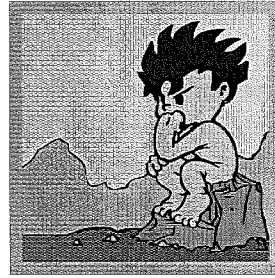
Illinois Early Learning Project  
(<http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tipsheets/impulsecontrol.htm>): This site provides tips for instilling impulse control in their children, as well as links to other informative sites on related topics.

National Association of School Psychologists  
(<http://www.nasponline.org/resources/handouts/revisedPDFs/selfcontrol.pdf>): This handout describes important step-by-step strategies and skills for parents and teachers who are hoping to teach self-control skills to children.

### Games and Activities That Can Practice Response Inhibition

- *Choose Your Own Adventure Books*  
Encourage your child to read any books in the *Choose Your Own Adventure* series, which will allow him to recognize how each decision made can lead to a distinct consequence.
- *Playing board games (e.g. Trouble, Chutes and Ladder, Candyland)*  
These board games, and ones similar to them, will allow your child to practice waiting for his turn patiently while other players count spaces or play out their own turns.
- *Dance Dance Revolution and Guitar Hero*  
Both of these games enhance response inhibition in that the player must really concentrate and think about which note to play or square to step on in order to achieve success.
- *Simon Says*  
The traditional game of Simon Says will allow your child to practice delaying an action until the appropriate cue is heard.
- *Freeze Tag*  
Playing freeze tag with your child or having him play this game with friends or siblings will encourage the stop-and-start action of appropriate behaviors as well as the delaying of impulsive action.
- *Reading with a partner*  
Read with your child, alternating turns, to allow for practice in waiting for one's turn and patience.





## Social Thinking

Social thinking is the ability to label and describe one's own and other's feelings and realize the causes of emotional experiences. This skill helps an individual to recognize the needs of others and is very important in seeing things from another's perspective. This skill is also essential for cooperation in social settings. Social thinking requires the ability to read non-verbal cues, understand social conventions, and show care and concern for others.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Social Thinking

- Completing group assignments or projects
- Understanding why a sibling or peer is upset
- Modulating one's attitude to be appropriate for the setting
- Helping a parent to clean or do chores
- Letting another child borrow a possession, such as a toy or pencil
- Helping a teacher with classroom chores
- Being a member of a sports team or club

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Social Thinking

- Help your child set up a play date with a friend. Prior to the friend's arrival, try to anticipate some of the friend's needs and interests. Have your child prepare activities that her friend is expected to enjoy. Additionally, have her help you in preparing for other house guests, such as grandparents, cousins, or family friends, with a similar theme in mind.
- Use a digital camera or digital video camera to record a range of social interactions. Later, review the pictures or video with your child, while asking her to describe her observations of these social and emotional cues. Provide your child with hints and specific observations, such as facial expressions, physical gestures, tone of voice, eye contact, or movements that may have predictive value.
- Watch DVDs or a television show without the sound to discuss nonverbal cues. Help your child to create a "script" to what she is seeing as practice for understanding social situations. For example, asking your child to predict what will happen next in a particular scene can be very useful.



- Find opportunities to discuss what others might be thinking. For example, discuss how another child might be feeling before giving a speech in front of the school, putting on a performance at a dance recital, or staying home alone for the first time. Find other opportunities to discuss how people are feeling while they are watching a sporting event on television, learning about a death or an accident, or while observing someone earning an award for an accomplishment. Initially model and verbalize your experience or feelings while engaged in a joint activity and then ask your child to briefly describe her thoughts or feelings.
- Practice complimenting others and being positive. This is an important skill that can help your child to get along with others because it is encouraging to others and often increases one's likeability. Model this behavior and praise your child when she makes an effort to compliment someone.
- Have a Family Game Night. This can be done using either traditional board games or interactive movement-based games that can be used on a Nintendo Wii. Traditional board games such as Monopoly and Boggle, are available electronically, as well as new family games such as Rock Band and Guitar Hero, World Tour. All have multi-player modes in which cooperation and encouragement are necessary. These games also offer great opportunities for your child to praise others who are on her team, demonstrate how to use the electronics so others can understand them, or learn how to give advice or suggestions in a helpful fashion.
- Require participation in at least one after school group activity per week. Many children who struggle with social thinking skills do not have opportunities to practice these skills due to avoidance of social situations or difficulties they have experienced in the past. It is best for them to be involved in an after school activity in which they have a distinct interest and some expertise. Practice and training prior to involvement in the after school program will help your child to have some type of expertise to offer peers and will also serve to enhance her self-esteem. For example, a child who joins a computer club should be given opportunities to use computers at home, and directed to learn about computer-based activities in which peers are likely to share an interest.
- Find after school activities that are welcoming to children who have experienced some difficulties in social thinking skills. One such activity is cross-country teams, particularly at the elementary and middle school levels in which a child's individual performance is highly unlikely to have an impact on the overall team performance. This is a good example of an activity in which all children receive encouragement from their peers. Involvement in theater activities often requires stage crews, lighting, and technical support that are done behind-the-scenes which would be appropriate for children who have difficulties in areas of social thinking. Volunteer activities which provide community service are also opportunities to improve self-esteem and social skills in a non-competitive fashion.

### Books on Social Thinking

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 16]

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Csoti, Marianna. (2001). *Social Awareness Skills for Children*. Philadelphia, PA: Taylor & Francis Group.

Plummer, Deborah M. (2008). *Social Skills Games for Children*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley.

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

### Websites and Articles on Social Thinking

LearningWorks for Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/social.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of social thinking, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

Everyday Health Network (<http://www.everydayhealth.com/adhd/living-with/tips/adhd-children-improving-social-skills.aspx>): Author provides five tips to help children, specifically those with ADD/ADHD, successfully develop their social skills.

National Network for Child Care ([http://www.nncc.org/Guidance/sac32\\_wo.friends4.html](http://www.nncc.org/Guidance/sac32_wo.friends4.html)): This site offers step-by-step recommendations for improving social skills, in the form of a "coaching session."

### Games and Activities That Can Practice Social Thinking

- **Wii Games (e.g. Wii Play, Sports, etc.)**  
Playing Wii games with a friend or sibling allows your child to practice taking turns, making conversation, sharing techniques, and accepting defeat in a face-to-face setting.
- **The Sims**  
In creating Sims characters, your child has the opportunity to initiate and observe characters interacting socially with one another. The Sims also offers a variety of ways for characters to socialize with one another, including networking, acting friendly, and using ice breakers, which allows your child to experiment with different social mechanisms.

- **Rollercoaster Tycoon**  
Customers of your child's rollercoaster park will report their likes and dislikes, forcing your child to make appropriate changes based on this feedback in order to maintain the park successfully.
- **Webkinz**  
This site allows your child to chat and interact safely with other pet owners online.
- **Joining a sports team or club (e.g. Little League, Scouts)**  
Joining an organization, such as a sports team or club, provides your child with the opportunity to interact with a diversity of peers, offering an outlet to practice introductions, perfect social skills, and plan play-dates.
- **Apples to Apples**  
This game allows your child to interact with friends and family members in a face-to-face setting and emphasizes trying to predict what other players will like, allowing your child the opportunity to practice recognizing what others are thinking.
- **Guess Who?**  
This classic guessing game offers your child the opportunity to interact with a peer, while recognizing facial expressions and physical features on the cards and reinforcing effective verbal and conversation skills.
- **Visiting or volunteering in an unfamiliar environment**  
The unfamiliarity will help your child to gain practice in making conclusions based on her own observations and also to practice introducing herself and interacting with any strangers encountered in these settings.
- **Taking on different roles during make-believe play**  
Role-playing will allow your child to learn to take on the roles of others during imaginary play, hopefully allowing her to extend this skill to real-life settings.



## Sustained Attention

Sustained attention involves the ability to maintain one's focus and attention in the presence of distractions and other activities. It involves the ability to return to an activity when interrupted and to persist in attending to a tedious or boring task. It may also involve the process of attending to multiple sources of information and being able to selectively choose what is most important to attend to. Sustained attention is developmental, as older children may need to be able to attend for longer periods to complete more complex tasks. Displays of sustained attention are typically increased for children when they find a task to be particularly interesting or varied.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Sustained Attention

- Sitting down to complete homework in a timely fashion
- Maintaining focus in conversations and discussions with others
- Continuing to work on tasks that may be boring or dull, such as a chore
- Sitting still through a short ceremony such as a wedding, graduation, or confirmation
- Completing one play activity or homework assignment before starting another
- Ignoring surrounding noise and activities to concentrate on the task at hand
- Sitting through an entire lunch or dinner
- Watching a complete television show or movie
- Sitting or listening to an entire story or reading

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Sustained Attention

- Allow interesting and stimulating tasks to follow boring and mundane tasks. It may be difficult for your child to sustain his attention to tasks that he finds to be uninteresting or not to his liking. He may be more inclined to pay attention to and complete such tasks when he can look forward to doing something he enjoys once the task is completed, such as going outside to play after he has finished his homework or having dessert after he has eaten his dinner. Model this strategy to help your child take on greater responsibility and reduce conflicts. For example, discuss how you sometimes complete an uninteresting chore prior to an enjoyable activity (such as doing the dishes prior to relaxing).
- Be clear and concise when giving directions. Do not overload your child with too many words or directions and ask him to paraphrase what he has heard when new directions are provided. This can help him to process and reflect on new or important information. Rather than lecture about the need to wear a hat and put on sunscreen during the summer to prevent damage from the sun, provide key words, such as "hat" and "sunscreen."

- Involve your child in activities requiring social interaction and assisting others. Volunteer activities are not only self-rewarding, they also engage your child's attention. Hands-on volunteer activities such as taking care of animals at an animal shelter, Scout groups, or environmental clean-ups can be very positive experiences for starting, sustaining, and maintaining attention. Encourage your child to talk about the components of activities, such as those that keep him engaged, and use these as guides for the selection of later activities and part-time jobs.
- Encourage your child to participate in activities that require his full attention. For example, in baseball, have him play catcher, pitcher, or first-base. These positions will require him to sustain his attention more than in the outfield. In music, he could be encouraged to play instruments that are a regular part of the band or orchestra, rather than something such as cymbals, which are rarely used. Helping your child to recognize the differences in attention and involving him in activities requiring higher levels of attention could improve his choices as he matures.
- Use competition to sustain attention. Challenge your child to see who fully completes a task first. For instance, have a "race" to see if he can complete a portion of his homework prior to your completion of a task, such as putting the food away after grocery shopping. Competition often serves to help children sustain their focus. Children with a competitive nature could be encouraged to come up with their own strategies for competing against themselves or others. Attempt to engage siblings, friends, or other caregivers in these friendly "competitions."
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- Actively search for technologies in which your child can sustain his attention for extended periods of time. As you determine which technologies help your child sustain attention, see if you can find methods to use these to sustain his academic development and enhance his sense of being a learner. It is very important for your child to be able to demonstrate that his knowledge of digital technologies may simply become an appropriate strategy for teaching.
- Try out a range of technologies that can sustain attention to learning, such as listening to audio books, watching a DVD about a book being read in school, using a calculator for doing math homework, or getting an i-Phone/iPod Touch with an application that teaches a foreign language. Help your child to articulate what about the technology helps him to attend for extended periods of time and encourage him to think about ways that he can use this knowledge to help learn other materials.
- Use physical activity to enhance the brain chemistry that supports sustained attention. Emerging neuroscience research indicates that children can pay attention better and for longer periods of time after vigorous physical exercise. You may wish to encourage your child to engage in physical exercise prior to doing homework or studying for a test. Help your child chart, or at least, monitor the impact of vigorous exercise on his academic attention and performance.
- Encourage your child to identify activities and content that sustains his own attention. While many children with attention difficulties have a very limited number of things that keep them focused, such as video games, computer, television, Legos, or high-risk activities, there may be associated areas that will peak their interest on a regular basis. Work with your child to expand his interests so that perhaps he begins reading about video games or skateboarding, writing his own stories about fantasy characters, or using art materials in an innovative and unusual fashion.

### Books on Sustained Attention

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 13]

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. [Chapter 5]

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. [Chapter 14]

Faber, Adele and Elaine Mazlish. (1999). *How to Talk so Kids will Listen and How to Listen so Kids Will Talk*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

### Websites and Articles on Sustained Attention

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://learningworksforkids.com/EF/sustained.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of sustained attention, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

Great Schools (<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.aspx?r=1054>): This site offers specific tips on how to help a discouraged child.

Sutton School (<http://www.sutton.lincs.sch.uk/pages/community/parentguides/ctrate.html>): The site provides a summary of what influences a child's ability to concentrate, as well as tips for parents to assist their children in improving their concentration.

### Games and Activities That Can Practice Sustained Attention

- Guitar Hero and Dance Dance Revolution  
Games, such as Guitar Hero and DDR, in which regular repetition of tasks is required for successful game play, will help your child to improve sustained attention skills.
- Memory and other card games  
Card games that require one to observe and remember what has been discarded or held in someone's hand can be very good practice for sustained attention and working memory.
- Simon Says and Guess Who?  
Activities that require repetition or description are helpful in practicing sustained attention.

- Games such as “Find the Difference,” in which two similar but slightly different pictures are provided  
These games can be helpful in allowing your child to practice using a systematic strategy for visual searches and maintaining focus or attention during the challenge.
- Puzzles  
Increasing the difficulty of a puzzle (from 100 to 200 to eventually 1000 pieces) can allow your child to practice extending his sustained attention.
- Where’s Waldo?, I Spy, and Other Search and Find Books  
These books require sustained and organized attention and can be used by children and parents cooperatively.





## Task Initiation

Task initiation refers to the ability to efficiently begin a task or activity and to then independently generate ideas, responses, and problem-solving strategies. Successful application of this ability allows one to initiate a task without procrastination. This skill is demonstrated when one starts directly on a task, such as doing homework or completing chores. Getting started involves having an understanding of what is expected, the wherewithal to ask appropriate questions if there are misunderstandings, and the skills to redirect one's attention from a previous involvement.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Task Initiation

- Getting started on homework or an assignment
- Taking a test
- Preparing for the school day
- Writing a paper or book report
- Completing chores around the home
- Prioritizing the importance of different tasks
- Contacting peers for homework help or to make social plans
- Starting a puzzle, Lego model, or art project

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Task Initiation

- Provide external supports for your child when she starts doing homework, chores, and other activities, and then allow these supports to taper off over time. This could be coaching her through the first few homework problems or prompting her to start a chore at home. Support could also be provided by helping her to formulate a list of what smaller tasks each larger task entails and then to assist her in identifying which of these tasks should be worked on first.
- Use your child's hands-on, experimental approach to new digital technologies as an opportunity to discuss getting started on tasks. Many parents want to read the directions for a new gadget before they start using it. Digital children however, recognize that a good gadget teaches you how to use it as you try things out. Parents can learn from their child how "playing" with a gadget can be an important part of the learning process. Use this as an opportunity to let your child to teach you a new approach to getting started on tasks, but also discuss how other activities, such as studying for a test, learning how to do complicated mathematics, or preparing a science project, may require that one knows where and how to start rather than the "let's try it out" approach.

- Model getting started on a project for your child. Verbalize what it is you want to do, demonstrate the process of brainstorming what you will need to do, and then organize your brainstorming ideas. When you are done with this process, be sure to make statements such as "Okay, this is what I need to do to get started" and then proceed to do so immediately.
- Provide your child with structure, such as time limits, for designated tasks. Use a visible kitchen timer or alarm clock to remind your child when to start a task, to remain aware of the time she has remaining, and alert her as to when it is time to cease working on the task. Promoting the awareness of time is helpful for a child who struggles to get started.
- Encourage your child to work with peers or in small groups. This will hopefully allow the child to observe the appropriate cues of when to start a task and the value of working through a complete task.
- Encourage your child to use self-talk to initiate tasks. If your child can use self-talk during tedious steps of a project, then she will be less apt to get bored or irritated during the process.
- Make starting a task fun! By making finishing a task a competition or game, your child may be more motivated to accomplish it. For example, challenge your child to finish cleaning her room before a timer goes off or race to complete a household chore.

#### Books on Task Initiation

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 13]

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007). *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. [Chapter 3]

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. [Chapter 15]

Emmett, Rita. (2002). *The Procrastinating Child: A Handbook for Adults to Help Children Stop Putting Things Off*. New York, NY: Walker and Company.

Espeland, Pamela and Elizabeth Verdick. (2008). *See You Later, Procrastinator!* Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

### Websites and Articles on Task Initiation

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/task.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of task initiation, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

CollegeBoard (<http://www.collegeboard.com/parents/plan/hs-steps/21274.html>): A compilation of tips on how to build and maintain children's positive study habits.

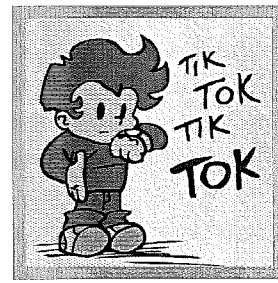
Family Education (<http://life.familyeducation.com/behavioral-problems/responsibilities/36530.html>): Author provides descriptions of the different types of procrastination that children can use and tips for parents dealing with each of these types of procrastinators.

PBS (<http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/school/time/article2.html>): An interactive site that allows children to learn techniques to assess and improve their time management skills.

### Games and Activities That Can Practice Task Initiation

- *Rayman: Raving Rabbids, & The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess*  
Having your child engage in games which require following directions and learning the basics will allow her to learn the importance of beginning a task. Questioning your child about what needs to be done to move onto the next level, or having your child teach you the basics of the game can also be beneficial.
- Make unpleasant tasks (e.g. cleaning room, doing chores) into a game or competition.  
Embedding a task into the format of a game or competition may provide your child with the motivation to accomplish the undesirable task.
- Use a "token economy" where your child receives tokens that can be redeemed for rewards for completing chores or homework.  
A token economy can be an effective means of reinforcing the child's task initiation behaviors when there is a reward (token) incentive for starting and completing a task.
- Give your child the responsibility for setting up a game or activity that they want to do (e.g. arts and crafts, sport, board game).  
Ensuring that your child is given the responsibility of preparing for a desired game or activity will force your child to initiate the steps. The reward for setting up the game is that your child is now able to play it.
- Play games which use a timer (e.g. Boggle, Taboo).  
The use of a timer will prepare your child for situations where timing and structure are important and allows her to practice working within a time limit.





## Time Management

Time management involves the ability to respond to things in a timely fashion, estimate the time necessary to complete tasks, and to make and follow a schedule. It often involves monitoring one's effort and actions, having an appropriate sense of urgency to complete tasks, and having the ability to follow a step-by-step procedure. In order to demonstrate good time management, one must be able to efficiently budget time and accurately estimate how long it should take to complete something.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Time Management

- Working well under pressure
- Completing in-class and homework assignments on time
- Working on homework for at least 15 minutes consecutively
- Prioritizing important things, such as school, over leisure
- Arriving at or leaving places on time
- Leaving oneself enough time to complete tasks
- Waking up on time
- Getting ready in time to catch the school bus

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Time Management

- Help your child to estimate the time needed for tasks. Knowing how long tasks might take is helpful in prioritizing them. Encourage your child to create a list of things he needs to accomplish and to jot down an estimate of how long he thinks it will take to complete each of the items. After doing the tasks, he could check how long activities actually took and compare that to his original estimations. Doing this on a routine basis can help him to become more accurate in time estimation and lead to improvements in his overall time management.
- Maintain a daily to-do list with your child. Post a dry-erase board in a prominent area in the home that states "To Do" on the top, followed by the date. Create two columns, one for you and the other for your child. Develop a regular morning (or evening-before) routine of listing two to four priorities for the coming day. As he gets better at doing this, it may be possible to increase the number of postings per day. Generating a longer list of items and using the process of erasing them to prioritize what might be reasonable to do on a given day, would show a willingness to move tasks around to help set realistic goals.

- Reward time management. If your child can budget his time to finish schoolwork after school, then perhaps allow him watch a favorite movie or program later that night. If your child finishes a project for school on time, then take him out to his favorite restaurant. By rewarding these behaviors, your child will become more apt to complete things on time and maintain good prioritization.
- Help your child break down bigger tasks into smaller ones. In order to successfully budget time, large tasks should be broken down into certain days and times. For example, if your child has a science fair project due in a month, then help by breaking down the task into weeks and require that certain parts of the project be done by the end of each week.
- Make certain tasks into a friendly competition. For example, to get some tasks done by a certain time, such as household chores, you could say "Let's see if you can beat the timer." By doing this, your child will have a form of motivation to get the task at hand done.
- Use interesting technologies to help manage time and set deadlines. Many children, even younger ones, love to have cell-phones for communicating with friends. Cell-phones can be particularly useful for remembering homework, setting alarms and deadlines, and providing reminders for activities. If you are paying for your child's cell-phone plan, (which in all likelihood you are doing) require that he use his cell-phone for these types of time management technologies.
- If you struggle with time management yourself, acknowledge it and work on making small but identifiable improvements. Many children who struggle with time management have parents who experience similar problems. View improving your own time management skills as your responsibility for teaching your child better skills. Rather than attempting to make yourself the most efficient of individuals, set small realistic goals that you articulate in front of your child. For example, you might choose to make school lunches the evening before school rather than in the morning so that you have a bit more time for getting everyone up and ready to go to school. Other small changes such as using paper plates to reduce the amount of clean up after dinner or purchasing and posting an extra large calendar in a public area, display how you are working to improve your own time management skills and will assist your child in applying these same skills to themselves.

#### Books on Time Management

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

Cox, Adam J., Ph.D. (2007) *No Mind Left Behind: Understanding and Fostering Executive Control--The Eight Essential Brain Skills Every Child Needs to Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. [Chapter 6]

Dawson, Peg, Ed.D. and Richard Guare, Ph.D. (2009). *Smart but Scattered*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. [Chapter 18]

Espeland, Pamela, and Elizabeth Verdick. (2005). *Smart Ways to Spend Your Time: The Constructive Use of Time Assets*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit.

Morgenstern, Julie, and Jessie Morgenstern-Colon. (2002). *Organizing From the Inside Out for Teenagers: the Foolproof System for Organizing Your Room, Your Time, and Your Life*. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company.

Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

### Websites and Articles on Time Management

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/time.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of time management, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

University of Florida (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/HE795>): This site provides comprehensive tips for helping your child to develop positive time management skills, from waking up in the morning, to after school activities, to a bedtime routine.

ADDitude (<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/991.html>): This article focuses on how to instill time management skills in children with ADHD in the classroom, however many of the same techniques can be applied within the home.

Activity Village ([http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/time\\_management\\_skills.htm](http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/time_management_skills.htm)): This site provides an overview of time management, as well as supports that can be implemented to instill time management skills in children at both the primary and secondary levels.

### Games and Activities That Can Practice Time Management

- Boggle, Catch Phrase, and other board games that use a timer
  - Games which require the use of some sort of timer allow players to practice using an allotted amount of time appropriately.
- Preparing dinner
  - Have your child help prepare dinner and plan how to time all menu items so they will be complete around the same time.
- Video games where working quickly produces gains
  - Games such as Super Mario Bros, Nintendogs, and Tony Hawk, reward players for performing tasks quickly which can help your child to practice efficiency and time management.
- Dance Dance Revolution, Guitar Hero, and Rock Band
  - Limit the amount of time your child can play one of these games and challenge them to reach a particular level by that end time to allow them to practice working under pressure.







## Working Memory

Working memory is the ability to keep things in mind while performing an activity. It helps one to remember while you are in the process of learning. It involves the maintenance of information in mind so that an individual can use it for planning, learning, reasoning, and producing a result. Working memory helps to hold a thought or long-term memory in mind so you can act more efficiently in the present moment. For example, working memory might involve shutting off a television and remembering to gather one's coat and backpack before leaving a friend's house.

### Home and School Situations Requiring Working Memory

- Taking notes in class
- Recalling plans made or an assignment due date
- Remembering the rules to a game or sport while playing
- Following multi-step directions at both school and at home
- Doing math computations in one's head
- Recalling answers to reading comprehension questions
- Remembering a list of chores, items, or tasks

### Hints and Strategies to Improve Working Memory

- Simplify directions as much as possible. Your child will be more likely to recall short, simple, and direct instructions. For example, saying, "When you have finished those two math worksheets, you may watch one episode of the *The Simpsons*," is much more direct and simple than saying "When you finish your homework you can watch some TV."
- Encourage your child to seek assistance from others. Emphasize to your child that it is acceptable to ask the teacher to repeat instructions or to ask a classmate to borrow his notes. Role-play these scenarios at home so that your child will feel comfortable when the situation arises.
- Find a mode of technology that is helpful to your child. For example, use a tape recorder to record notes or directions, or a cell-phone to program in reminders and scheduling changes. Digital picture frames can show a sequence of activities that are easily forgotten, such as eating breakfast, putting dishes away, and washing up.
- Practice verbal memory skills, such as rehearsal, chunking, or mnemonic devices. Help your child to rehearse by whispering directions or lists to himself. Also, practice chunking devices that can help your child to whittle down two-step instructions to one, such as brushing her teeth and washing her face together. Mnemonic devices can be especially helpful, such as how ROY G BIV is often used to recall the colors of the rainbow in order.

- Practice reading comprehension. Read the same material as your child and then have a brief discussion about it. This may help to increase your child's focus and stretch his memory as an active component of working memory skills.
- Showcase your own working memory difficulties by dramatizing your strategies to compensate for them. Many adults report difficulties with working memory in simple tasks such as remembering what they meant to do when they went into the kitchen or leaving the house without forgetting something important. Rather than simply giving in to the fact that working memory diminishes once adults approach their thirties, use compensatory strategies such as making notes, using Post-its, asking someone else to give a reminder, or doing something immediately when it comes to mind. Exaggerating and dramatizing your strategies for compensating your own working memory difficulties may be helpful for a child who has similar difficulties.
- Select video games for your child that require the use of working memory skills. Brain training games, such as Mind Quiz and Brain Age 2, require the use of working memory skills and visual memory tasks. Other longer narrative games, such as the Legend of Zelda series, require that one is able to keep in mind incidents and objects from earlier in the game in order to be successful in one's strategies on later levels. Most importantly, try and get your child to recognize how memory skills can help in games and encourage your child to try out different strategies, such as visualizing what he needs to remember, over-learning math facts so that they become automatic, and repeating things out loud. These strategies may help your child in a number of memory tasks.

#### Books on Working Memory

Cooper-Kahn, Joyce, Ph.D. and Laurie C. Dietzel. (2008). *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. [Chapter 14]

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Richard, Gail J. and Jill K. Fahy. (2005). *The Source for Development of Executive Functions*. East Moline, IL: Lingua Systems.

#### Websites and Articles on Working Memory

LearningWorks For Kids (<http://www.learningworksforkids.com/EF/working.html>): The premier resource for executive function information, offering a detailed explanation of working memory, tips for parents, and activities to improve this skill.

U.S. News and World Report (<http://health.usnews.com/articles/health/healthday/2009/03/26/working-memory-fluctuates-in-kids-with-adhd.html>): This article discusses the inconsistency of working memory in children with ADHD.