

2025 FCPS Family Summit

Executive Functioning Strategies & Technology Supports

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*Breakout sessions are provided by presenters who have volunteered to share their knowledge and experience with us today at the 2025 Family Summit.

Please remember that the information and experiences shared are understandings and perspectives of the presenters.





Universal Design for Learning: An educational framework based on research in the learning sciences that guides the development of flexible methods, materials, and environments that embrace variability, minimize barriers, and develop expert learning for all.

Overview of Executive Functioning

- Executive functioning includes skills related to organization, time management, task initiation, impulse control, emotional regulation, and working memory.
- Students with deficits in these areas may struggle with completing tasks, maintaining focus, and managing their emotions.

1. Organization of Tasks / Personal Space: The ability to keep materials, tasks, and information in order. This includes managing physical space (e.g., keeping a tidy desk) and structuring tasks (e.g., using planners and checklists).

Strategies at home:

-  Create a consistent routine for homework and daily tasks.
-  Use visual aids like checklists, calendars, or color-coded folders.
-  Declutter and organize study spaces to minimize distractions.
-  Encourage the use of assignment trackers (digital or paper-based).





Continuum of Supports:

- Paper planners, folders, and visual schedules.
- Desk organizers and labeled storage bins.
- [Google Keep](#): a simple but powerful digital note-taking app that helps students and educators organize tasks, ideas, and assignments with checklists, color-coding, and reminders.
- [Google Tasks](#): A free task management tool from Google that allows users to create, organize, and track to-do lists. It is a simple and easy-to-use platform designed for managing daily tasks, setting deadlines, and staying organized.

- [Google Calendar](#): a scheduling tool that helps students plan tasks, manage time, and stay on top of deadlines.

2. Time Management: The ability to estimate how long tasks will take, plan ahead, and prioritize work. This includes setting deadlines, following schedules, and using time wisely to complete assignments efficiently.

Strategies at Home:





-  Help your child prioritize tasks by breaking large assignments into smaller steps.
-  Use timers (like the [Pomodoro technique](#)) to manage study sessions.
-  Create a weekly schedule together that includes schoolwork, chores, and free time.
-  Model planning behavior by sharing how you organize your day.

Continuum of Supports:

- Visual timers, sand timers, wall clocks.
- Written schedules and time-blocking charts.
- [Pomodoro technique](#): A time management method that helps improve focus and productivity by breaking work into short, timed intervals (called "Pomodoros"), followed by brief breaks.

3. Task Initiation and Completion: The ability to start a task without procrastination. Students with challenges in this area may struggle to begin work, feel overwhelmed, or need external prompts to get started.

Strategies at Home:

-  Provide a clear starting point by breaking tasks into manageable steps.
-  Use visual reminders like sticky notes or digital prompts.
-  Offer gentle prompts (e.g., "Let's start with step one together").
-  Celebrate small wins to build motivation and confidence.




Continuum of Supports:

- Task checklists and sticky notes.
- Breaking tasks into smaller steps with visuals.
- [The ConnectABILITY Visuals Engine](#): A tool designed to help parents and educators create customized visual supports to assist individuals in understanding and managing daily tasks and routines.

4. Impulse Control: The ability to think before acting, avoiding distractions, and staying focused on a task. This skill helps students follow rules, resist interruptions, and control immediate reactions in social and academic settings.

Strategies at Home:

-  Encourage pause and reflect techniques (e.g., "Take a breath before acting").





-  Use reward systems to reinforce positive behaviors.
-  Model self-control through your actions and talk about your decision-making process.
-  Provide structured choices to give a sense of control while maintaining boundaries.

Continuum of Supports:

- Behavior charts and visual cues.
- Stress balls, fidget tools, and sensory breaks.
- [Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame](#): An interactive app that teaches problem-solving and impulse control strategies through engaging stories.ase energy, refocus, and regulate emotions through short guided activities.

5. Emotional Self-Regulation: The ability to manage emotions appropriately in different situations. This includes coping with frustration, handling stress, and responding to challenges in a calm and productive way.

Strategies at Home:





-  Teach labeling emotions (e.g., "I see you're feeling frustrated").
-  Practice mindfulness exercises using apps like Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame.
-  Model healthy coping strategies like deep breathing or journaling.
-  Encourage movement breaks (e.g., GoNoodle) to reset when overwhelmed.

Continuum of Supports:

- Emotion charts and reflection journals.
- Visual calming strategies (deep breathing posters).
- [GoNoodle](#): An interactive movement and mindfulness platform that helps students release energy, refocus, and regulate emotions through short guided activities.

6. Working Memory: The ability to hold and manipulate information in the mind for short periods. This skill is essential for following multi-step directions, solving problems, and remembering key information while completing tasks.

Strategies at Home:

-  Use repetition and review strategies to reinforce new information.
-  Support multisensory learning (e.g., combining visuals, audio, and text using manipulatives, flashcards, and screen readers) to enhance learning.
-  Encourage the use of mnemonics or visual aids for complex concepts.
-  Break down multi-step instructions and repeat them as needed.

Continuum of Supports:

- Flashcards and memory notebooks.
- Sticky note reminders and step-by-step charts.

- [Quizlet](#): A study tool that helps students strengthen working memory through flashcards, quizzes, and adaptive learning.
- [Chromebook Select to Speak](#): Feature that allows students to highlight text and have it read aloud, supporting memory recall and verbal reinforcement.

Conclusions and Next Steps:

- **Consistency is Key** – Regular use of tools and strategies helps children develop habits and routines that strengthen executive functioning skills over time.
- **Personalization Matters** – Tailor tools and strategies to match your child’s strengths, challenges, and learning preferences. What works for one child may not work for another.
- **Progress Over Perfection** – Celebrate small wins and incremental improvements. Building executive functioning skills is a gradual process that requires patience and encouragement.
- **Model and Practice** – Demonstrate organizational habits, time management, and self-regulation in everyday life. Children learn by observing and practicing with guidance.
- **Open Communication** – Foster an open dialogue with your child about their struggles and successes. Regular check-ins help you refine strategies as their needs evolve.
- **Collaboration with Educators** – Partner with teachers and school staff to align home strategies with classroom supports, ensuring a consistent approach across environments.

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