

The Missing Link for Student Success: Executive Function Skills

Professional Development Presentation by Marydee Sklar

Ninety-Minute Presentation - Questions and Discussion Additional Thirty Minutes

Overview:

This presentation provides knowledge about the processes in the brain that are associated with time management, planning and organization—key executive functions of the brain. With this foundation established, participants will be provided specific strategies and tools to support their student's time management.

Goal #1: Build knowledge of the executive function skills of the brain.

Objectives:

1. Participants will evaluate the executive functioning strengths and weaknesses of their own brain and that of a selected student using the model of executive functions based on the work of Peg Dawson and Richard Guare.
2. Participants will evaluate which executive functions are required to independently complete seatwork and homework.
3. Participants will analyze the developmental levels of the executive functions of their students based on age
4. Participants will practice an activity to calm a brain that is under stress, which is useful to facilitate learning and test taking.

Goal #2: Learn to use tools to support effective student time management.

Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to explain the importance of having analog clocks and watches in the environment to support time awareness.
2. Participants will implement the use of multiple monthly calendars, kept in view, to support the development of future thinking in their students, which will support the completion of assignments to meet deadlines.
3. Participants will be able to explain and model three ways to use timers to support the development of time awareness.
4. Participants will be able to explain how the dopamine reward system of the brain can be harnessed to help students find the motivation to begin and complete assignments.