



Office of Related Services  
**OT/PT PROGRAM**  
**TIP SHEET**  
**EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING**

Emotional Control

- Tune into student stressors—what are their signs? (yellow zone—Zones of Regulation)
- Identify/troubleshoot stressors prior to starting task
- Teach coping strategies, visual supports, SEL techniques

Inhibitory Control

- Reduce distractions (headphones, music)
- Use reinforcers/incentives
- Clear expectations
- Visual supports
- Individualize private signal for student
- Provide breaks/fidgets

Goal Setting/Planning

- Use reinforcers/incentives
- Chart progress
- First/then to help predict workload
- Check in daily to monitor progress

Organization

- Break tasks into sub components
- Walk students through routines with visual supports
- Provide study guides
- Help student organize assignment book with “to do” side and “turn in” side
- Supervise when writing down homework assignments
- Organize subjects/notebooks by color in trapper
- Send notes/emails home daily for progress and homework
- Provide extra set of books for home

Initiate

- Worst-first or First-Then
- Break task down into chunks or steps; pre-teach
- Use topics of interest to increase motivation
- Use visuals
- Use of technology-computer, ipad, voice to text
- Electronic reminders (email, text, alarm etc.)
- Timers
- Consistent routine/location/prompts for turning in homework

*Continued...*

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**EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING** *(continued)*

Working Memory

- Reduce distractions
- chunk, pause, repeat (especially for new routines)
- Consistent routines
- Study guides
- Use of Mnemonics
- Integrate sensory experiences into instruction
- Highlight teacher notes/power point
- Self talk
- Use of technology

Shift

- Prompt/teach transitions
- Visuals to assist shift mentally and emotionally
- Strategies to reduce distractions
- Clearly defined end of task to avoid tangents
- Study buddies
- Set up homework routine
- Timers/Brain breaks
- Social stories/Comic Strip conversations

Self Monitor

- Students self-evaluate and match teacher expectations
- Cultivate student ownership of EF (Executive Functioning) strategies
- Use of 5 point scales to rate emotions, effort, organization.
- Create to-do list/study guide
- Pre-determined cues to keep student on track
- Individualize expectations/accountability for group projects
- Timelines
- Rubric with clear expectations