

## Executive Function Skills

Skill	Description
Sustaining Attention	The ability to hold one's focus on a task long enough to complete it. A prerequisite skill for the other executive function skills.
Inhibiting Impulses	The ability to stop one's behavior at the appropriate time. The capacity to think before acting.
Self-Monitoring	The ability to self-evaluate, to check one's work, assess performance, and keep track of the effect of one's behavior.
Shifting Attention	The ability to make transitions; to move freely from one situation, activity, or aspect of a problem to another as needed. The ability to let go of ineffective strategies and to solve problems flexibly.
Emotional Control	The ability to manage emotions appropriately in order to achieve goals, direct behavior, or complete tasks.
Initiating Activity	The ability to begin a task or activity without undue procrastination. The ability to independently generate ideas. Motivation.
Working Memory	The ability to hold needed information in mind while completing a task. The ability to draw on past learning to apply to present situations.
Planning and Organizing	The ability to anticipate future, set goals, plan and carry out steps. The ability to prioritize. The ability to understand and communicate main ideas or key concepts.
Task-Monitoring	The ability to check work and assess performance during or after finishing a task to ensure attainment of a goal.
Organization of Materials	The ability to keep one's workspace, personal space, and materials orderly. The ability to determine what things are needed for a task and have them available.

**Recommended Reading:**

Cooper-Kahn, J. & Dietzel, L. (2008), Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning, Woodbine.

Dawson, P. & Guare, R. (2009), Smart But Scattered, Guilford Press.