

at home

activities that build up executive function



planning & organizing

Keep a family calendar:

- teach your child to follow it themselves

Make checklists for daily tasks/routines:

- show the amount of time for each item

Help your child keep their own space tidy:

- label where items belong

Keep visual reminders in common areas about school items or appointments

Ask your child to help plan an outing:

- ask them to think of where, when
- what to bring
- how much time will be needed



self regulation

Teach your child self-regulation strategies:

- model calm behaviour
- offer choices
- take deep breaths
- go for a walk
- ask for help
- go to a quiet place

- Acknowledge when your child is struggling or upset. Help them learn the words to talk about their feelings and patiently help them calm down.
- When your child is calm, talk to them about how they felt.
- Use visuals, create a plan to use the coping strategies and practice them.



board games

Many board games practice executive functioning skills:

- Chess, Concentration, Checkers
- Uno, Go Fish, Exploding Kittens
- Scrabble, Ticket to Ride, Pictionary



Working Memory, Response Inhibition, Emotional Control, Sustained Attention, Flexibility, Metacognition

- Remembering other players moves
- Taking time to think before making a move
- Winning/losing well
- Staying focused on the game
- Adjusting to who plays and which game is picked
- Reflecting on what went well and didn't



chores

Start with simple tasks first to build skills:

- give visual reminders and checklists
- assist as needed
- offer lots of praise for their work



Task Initiation, Emotional Control, Planning/Prioritizing, Persistence, Time Management

- Getting started without being asked
- Not reacting negatively to a chore
- Deciding when to do a chore
- Finishing the task even when its hard
- Finishing with enough time to play



working memory

Visualizing is an important part of working memory:

- use paper, pencil, markers, clay, anything creative!
- ask your child to do a task but have them draw it out first
- think of a memory of the day and ask your child to draw it

- Call out different coloured shapes have your child match, paint or draw them.
- Read out a descriptive sentence or story and ask your child to describe or draw it.