



EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

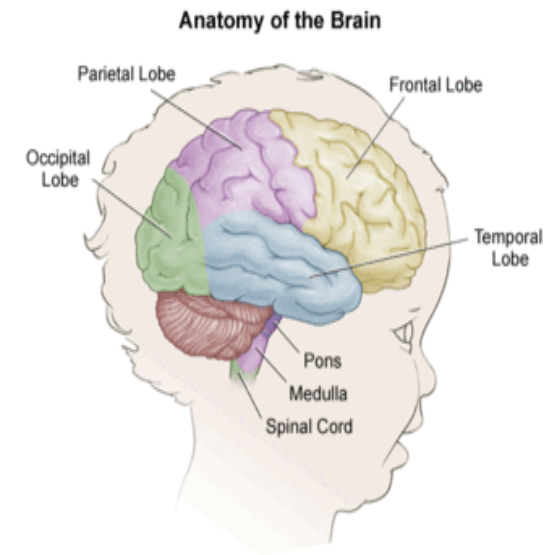
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WHAT IS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION AND SELF REGULATION?

The brain's ability to make it possible to have focused attention, navigate and juggle multiple tasks, remember instructions, and to plan.

Three areas of brain functioning

1. working memory
2. mental flexibility
3. self control/inhibitory control



Frontal Lobe: the “traffic controller” of Executive Functioning

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3 GOALS OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

Working Memory: Following directions, tracking, holding the memory and recalling information, applying

Cognitive Flexibility: Changing gears, being flexible with shifting perspectives, appropriate behavior in a variety of contexts

Inhibitory Control: Ignoring distractions, patience, conscious thought vs impulsive, waiting for your turn



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IMPORTANCE OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

Skills are building blocks

Sets children up for success

Ability to manage and regulate emotions

Healthy peer relationships

Foundation for learning and life experiences



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MINDFULNESS WITH CHILDREN

“Mindfulness means paying attention in particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non judgmentally.” Kabat-Zin (1994)

- Helping children develop mindfulness and relaxation
 - Stuffed animal on belly while breathing
 - “body scan” technique

Carlson, S.M., & Zelazo, P.D. (2014). *Minnesota Executive Function Scale: Test Manual*. Reflection Sciences, Inc. St. Paul, MN.