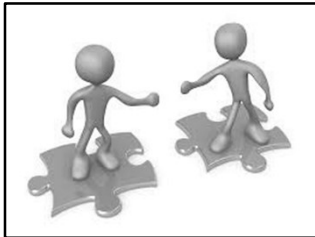


**Paraprofessional Team
and
Skill-Building Webinar**

Sheri Wilkins, Ph.D
Carol Burmeister, M.A.

1


Introductions



2

Housekeeping

- o Handout
 - o <https://fliptheswitch.org/resources/>
 - o Scroll down to "Additional Resources"
- o Questions
- o Activities



3

Outcomes

- ✓ Understand the role of executive functions as a foundation for succeeding in the home, classroom, and community settings
- ✓ Learn specific strategies for supporting individuals with executive function deficits in all environments
- ✓ Build a sense of team and lay the groundwork for May 7


4

In Your Breakout Rooms . . .

o Discuss the following:

o What executive function skills do children need in order to succeed at your specific ages/grade levels?

6



Components of EF

FLIPP

Based on material from:
Wilkins, Sheri & Burmeister, Carol. *FLIPP the Switch: Strengthen Executive Function Skills*. © 2015, AAPC Publishing.

7

p. 7

Flexibility
• The ability to change your mind and make changes to your plans as needed

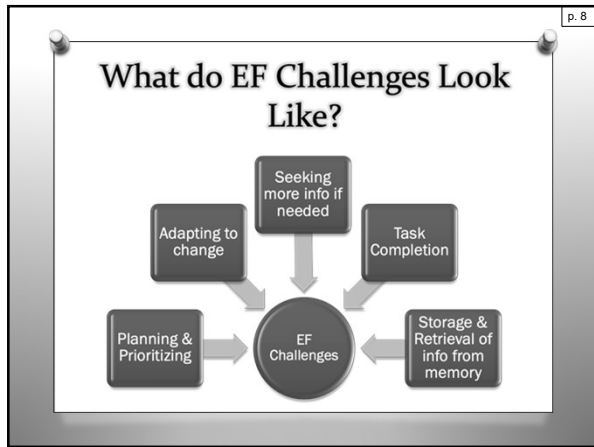
Leveled Emotionality
• The ability to emotionally self-regulate and avoid drastic mood swings

Impulse Control
• The ability to control your impulses, such as waiting to speak until called upon

Planning
• The ability to make plans and keep track of time so that work is finished on time

Problem Solving
• The ability to know when there is a problem that needs to be solved, generate solutions, select one, and evaluate the outcome

8



9

p. 10

How are EF Challenges Manifested?

Flexibility

- ✓ Resistant to change in routine
- ✓ Difficulty making transitions
- ✓ Difficulty shifting topic/activity
- ✓ Concrete thought processes
- ✓ Ability to see only one solution to a problem
- ✓ Difficulty coping with unseen events

10

p. 10

How are EF Challenges Manifested?

Leveled Emotionality

- ✓ Extreme reactions to seemingly minor events
- ✓ Struggle with managing frustration and modulating emotions
- ✓ Behavioral outbursts
- ✓ Poor coping strategies
- ✓ Difficulty tolerating mistakes

11

p. 10

How are EF Challenges Manifested?

Impulse Control

- ✓ Lack of self-monitoring
- ✓ Blurts out answers in class
- ✓ Interrupts others
- ✓ Does not consider consequences before acting
- ✓ Unaware of how his/her actions affect others
- ✓ Easily distracted by internal and external stimuli

12

p. 10

How are EF Challenges Manifested?

Planning

- ✓ Challenges with organizing and prioritizing
- ✓ Difficulty completing long-term projects
 - ✓ Inability to break down long-term assignments into parts
 - ✓ Difficulty estimating time needed for task completion
- ✓ Gets caught up in details without seeing the big picture
- ✓ Challenges with organizing binder/backpack/locker
- ✓ Does not turn in completed homework

13

p. 10

How are EF Challenges Manifested?

Problem Solving

- ✓ Difficulty identifying that there is a problem that needs to be solved
- ✓ Tendency to focus on one aspect of a problem, to the exclusion of other components
- ✓ Resistant to seeking help, when needed
- ✓ Tendency to become "stuck" on one solution and won't try other possible strategies

14

In Your Breakout Rooms . . .

o Discuss the following:

o Did you see competent executive function skills in use with the adults in this video?

16

p. 13

Disabilities Exhibiting EF Deficits

Attention Deficit Disorders	Anxiety	Autism
Depression	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder	Intellectual Disability
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	Schizophrenia	Social Communication Disorder
Specific Learning Disability	Tourette's Syndrome	Traumatic Brain Injury

17

Current Reality

- o More than ever before structure and predictability have been eroded for all of us!
- o Expectations have been confusing and seem to be flexible and ever-changing.
- o Students have grown accustomed to less structure, less predictability, and variable expectations.
- o Students need direct instruction in strategies!

fliptheswitch.org

18


The Good News...

- ✓ There are several ways that we can support students with EF deficits in the classroom and other school environments as well as in the home, community, and vocational settings
 - ✓ Environmental modifications
 - ✓ Metacognitive strategies

19

Resources to Teach EF Skills

- o *FLIPP the Switch: Strengthen Executive Function Skills* (2015, AAPC Publishing)
- o *FLIPP the Switch* website
 - o <https://fliptheswitch.org>
 - o strategy cards
 - o blogposts
 - o resources
- o *FLIPP the Switch* YouTube Channel
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtUVmUzRy5HHKWSUaLQDHUA>
- o *FLIPP 2.0: Mastering Executive Function Skills from School to Adult Life for Students with Autism* (2021, AAPC Publishing)



20

Take-Home Points:

Keep it Visual--Keep it Positive--Keep it Rewarding

If I can see it, I can understand it.

Tell me what TO DO, instead of what NOT to do.

Let me know you appreciate my efforts.

21

Keep it Visual

4 - outside voice

3 - talking to whole class

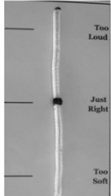
2 - talking in a small group

1 - whisper

0 - Be silent

Make a Choice


PowerPoint Presentation OR Poster Session




22

Keep it Positive

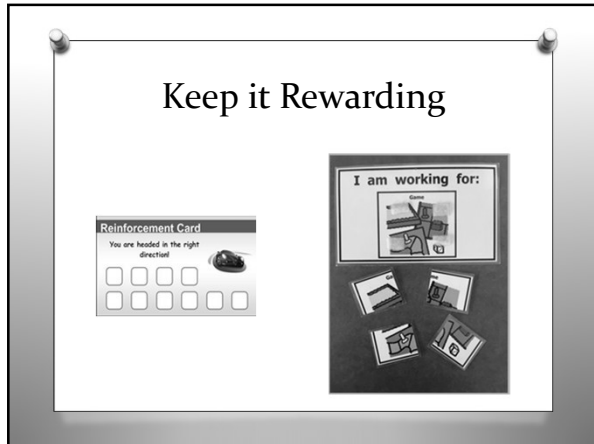
hands down



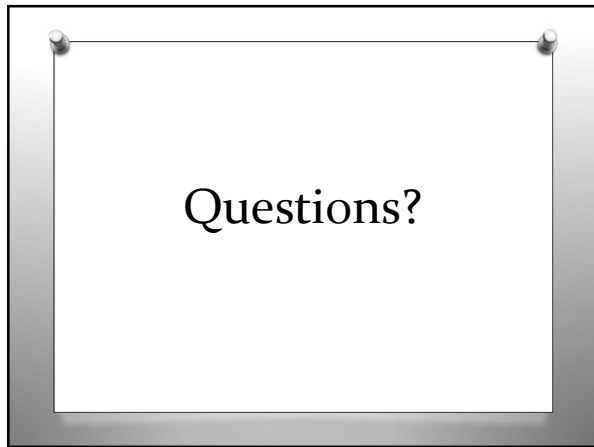
Keep your thoughts in your thought bubble



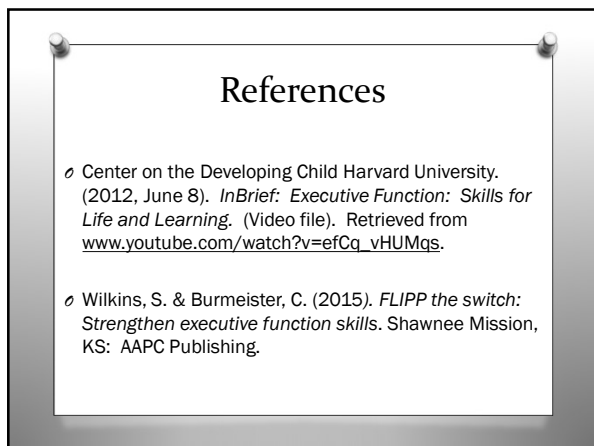
23



24




25



26

Please take a short break

- We will return in 10 minutes



27

The Role of the Paraprofessional

- The paraprofessional is an integral part of the life of the school, the classroom, the teacher, and individual students.
- The job of the paraprofessional has never been more vital – students need:
 - more individualized help,
 - positive adult role models and support,
 - consistency and positivity.

28

Paraprofessionals...

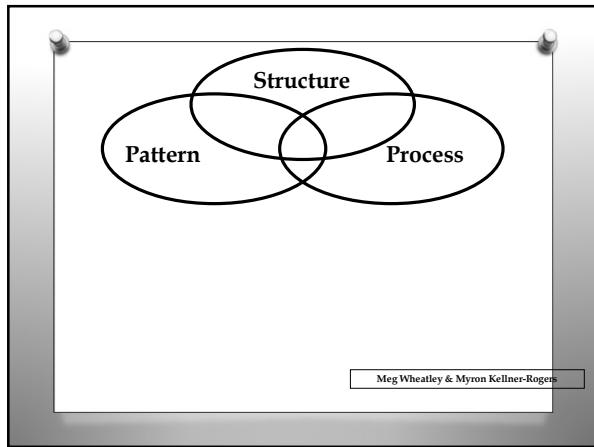
- Are uniquely positioned to encourage, assist, and connect with students.
- Often are the front line when dealing with misbehavior, frustration, and emotional problems.
- Are focused on students, which allows them to become experts in human relations and the individualized needs of their students.

29

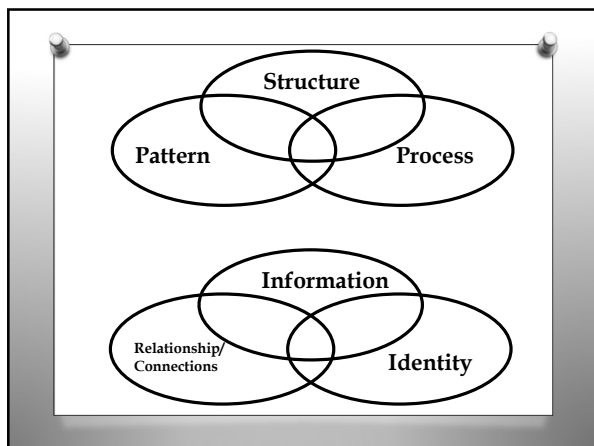
May 7, 2022

- o We are going to have a fun and dynamic face-to-face gathering at which we will share specific strategies to build EF skills in your students.
- o We will also spend time as a large group defining a mission statement for the paraprofessionals of FUSD.
- o Today we are going to start that work with some conversations to generate ideas.

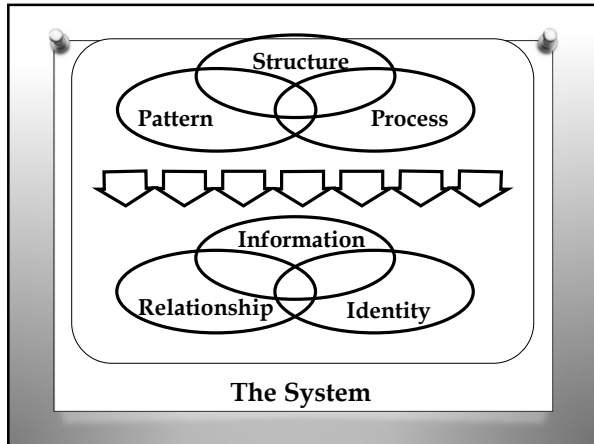
30



31



32



33

Appreciative Inquiry

- o Appreciate: Value, respect, and acknowledge contribution and worth.
- o Apply: Explore new ways of thinking, ask questions, discover hopes, passions, and creative ways to move forward.
- o Collaborate: Work together interdependently and welcome diverse contributions.

"The participants in change are central to the change process."

34


Appreciative Inquiry

- o A key concept to remember is that we are not simply looking for the positive and celebrating that...
- o What makes AI powerful is that we are analyzing the conditions that enabled success and actively seeking to build on those patterns.

35

Think and Write

- o Think of a situation that is working well.
- o What do you value most about the people you work with and the special ed. department
- o What would you say 'gives life' to the district?
- o What does FUSD have the capacity to become?
- o What are priorities?
- o What are key positive patterns and conditions?
- o What is the role of the paraprofessional in meeting these intentions?



36

Group Discussion

- o You are going to be in a group with three to four other people.
- o In the first minute we will ask you to decide who will take on the following roles:
 - o Facilitator
 - o Timer
 - o Note-taker #1
 - o Note-taker #2

37

Appreciative Inquiry Conversation

- o Reflect on a few situations in the district where you are already experiencing the success you would like to see across the district:
 1. What is the actual situation? Take each situation in turn - approximately 3-5 situations)
 2. What seem to be the conditions that enable this to be successful?

38

**Appreciative Inquiry
Conversation**

o What do you value most about:

1. The people with whom you work?
2. The special education department?

39

**Appreciative Inquiry
Conversation**

o Rise above the district, take a 3rd person view and see the district as a dynamic social system. What "gives life" to the district? What is it that, without which, the district would cease to fulfill its purpose?

40

**Appreciative Inquiry
Conversation**

o Hopes for the future...

1. What does FUSD have the capacity to become in the next 1, 3, or 5 years?
2. What are priorities?
3. What are key positive patterns and conditions leading to success?
4. What is the role of the paraprofessional in meeting these intentions?

41

Large Group Discussion

- o Note-takers, please jot down in the chat the answers given to this question:
- o "What does FUSD have the capacity to become in the next 1, 3, or 5 years?"
- o "What is the role of the paraprofessional in meeting these intentions?"

42

Next...

- o We will have the opportunity on May 7, 2022 to collate the ideas shared in these smaller groups regarding the vision for the role of the paraprofessional in FUSD.
- o By the end of the day, we will have a mission statement for the FUSD paraprofessional group that can guide your work together in the district going forward.

43

Thank you!

- o Thank you for participating today!
- o We look forward to seeing you in person on May 7!

44