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On Demand: FACILITATING EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS WITH LANGUAGE AND MOVEMENT

A Comprehensive Guide for SLPs and OTs

SPEAKER: SARAH WARD, M.S., CCC-SLP

Independent Self Study

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Unlock the power of your language and motor planning-based interventions to help students develop proficient executive function skills. This engaging lecture (e.g., powerpoint, case examples, interactive polls/activities, etc.) will guide SLPs and OTs through evidence-based strategies that integrate executive function (EF) skills, such as working memory, situational awareness, and conditional reasoning. We will explore how language and motor planning skills promote the organization and processing of information for effective task execution. Additionally, you'll discover how language supports self-regulation, helping students plan, initiate, and monitor their actions with greater ease. Learn how to teach students to follow routines and manage novelty by predicting and comprehending how situations will be 'same but different,' apply 'if... then' thinking for problem-solving, and master Plan A/Plan B strategies. Motor Imagery and Mental Imagery techniques will also be introduced as a powerful tool to enhance executive function skills, helping students visualize and mentally rehearse tasks before initiating them. Walk away with actionable tools to empower your students to generalize cognitive flexibility across academic, social, and daily life contexts, enabling them to adapt and succeed both inside and outside the classroom.

LEARNER OBJECTIVES:

1. Define how situational awareness, self talk, forethought, gesture/movement and episodic memory are the foundational skills for successful task execution.
2. Describe and compare evidence-based strategies that integrate language and motor planning skills to enhance students' executive function, focusing on working memory, situational awareness, and conditional reasoning.
3. Develop an intervention program to generalize cognitive flexibility across various contexts by using routines, 'if...then' thinking, and Plan A/Plan B strategies, enabling them to manage novelty, problem- solve, and adapt to diverse academic, social, and daily life situations.



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COURSE OUTLINE

- 30 minutes - Introduction to EF Skills
- 30 minutes - Situation Awareness and Future Thinking
- 30 minutes - Movement, Figurative Language & Writing
- 60 minutes - Time management
- 30 minutes - Assignments & Work Completion



SARAH WARD, M.S., CCC-SLP

Sarah Ward has over 25 years of experience in diagnostic evaluations, treatment and case management of children, adolescents and adults with language learning disabilities, nonverbal learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, executive dysfunction, Asperger's disorders and social pragmatics. Her particular specialty is in the assessment and treatment of executive function deficits. Ms. Ward holds a faculty appointment at the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions where she provides instruction to graduate level students in the assessment and treatment of individuals with traumatic brain injury and other cognitive communication disorders. A popular speaker, Sarah regularly presents nationally and internationally on the topic of executive functions to a variety of professional and parent organizations, school and lay groups. She has presented to and consulted with over 450 public and private schools in Massachusetts and across the United States. Awards received include the MGH Expertise in Clinical Practice Award, the Distinguished Alumni Award and the Faculty in Excellence Award from the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions (2002, 2011).

Disclosure: Sarah Ward's company Cognitive Connections produces and sells products on her website, which are tools, that support students in developing an internal sense of time. Some of these materials will be referenced in the presentation. Many of these materials can also be purchased at local stores. The website also sells treatment programs and games to develop independent executive function skills. In addition, the website offers many free resources and references. Sarah Ward receives a speaker's fee for presentations. There are no non-financial relationship to disclose.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

This is an intermediate level course, with advanced level application. It is designed for Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists. Teams that work closely together with the SLP and OT, such as General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers and Administrators may also benefit from the content, however it will primarily focus on support strategies for the SLP and OT. This is appropriate for staff supporting kindergarten through grade 12. No prerequisites are required, however prior knowledge of Sarah Ward's 360 Thinking Executive Function Program is recommended.



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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFERED:

1. **CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE** 3.0 clock hours are available. Full attendance and a passing score of 80% on the test is required.
2. **AOTA** - AEP Connections, LLC is an AOTA Approved Provider of professional development. Course approval ID 11410. This distance learning – independent is offered for up to .3 CEUs (3 contact hours). Intermediate, OT Service Delivery. AOTA does not endorse specific course content, products, or clinical procedures. Full attendance and a passing score of 80% is required for successful completion.
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Independent Self Study Course

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