

ADHD & EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

Practical Tools for Making the Invisible Visible

A 24-worksheet collection for noticing executive-function patterns, building supports, practicing skills, and gradually increasing independence.

CHAOS TO CONSISTENCY™ • EXECUTIVE FUNCTION RESOURCE TOOLS

Awareness • Regulation • Planning • Follow Through • Family Alignment

These tools are educational and skills-based. They are not diagnostic tests and do not replace individualized assessment or treatment.



PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR STRONGER FAMILIES, HEALTHIER CONNECTION, AND GROWTH

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Executive Function Skills Profile

Notice patterns across nine core executive-function skill areas.

Skill	Usually okay	Needs support	Example
Impulse control	☐	☐	_____
Working memory	☐	☐	_____
Emotional regulation	☐	☐	_____
Organization	☐	☐	_____
Planning & prioritizing	☐	☐	_____
Task initiation	☐	☐	_____
Self-monitoring	☐	☐	_____
Cognitive flexibility	☐	☐	_____
Follow-through	☐	☐	_____

Top two skills to strengthen

Choose skills that would make everyday life easier.

One strength we can build from

Executive-function support works better when strengths are part of the plan.



ADHD Strengths Profile

ADHD is not only a list of difficulties. Identify strengths, interests, and conditions that help this person thrive.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Creative | ☐ Curious | ☐ Energetic |
| ☐ Funny | ☐ Persistent | ☐ Big-picture thinker |
| ☐ Empathetic | ☐ Adventurous | ☐ Hyperfocuses on interests |
| ☐ Problem-solver | ☐ Spontaneous | ☐ Passionate |

Other strengths

When I / my child function best

What people, places, tasks, supports, or times of day bring out these strengths?

How can a strength help with a hard task?

Example: use creativity to make a visual checklist.



Impulse Control: Pause–Choose–Act

Practice putting a small space between an impulse and an action.

Situation / trigger

My first impulse

PAUSE

CHOOSE

ACT

Stop • breathe • wait

What are 2 choices?

Which choice helps future me?

What happened?

Did the pause change the outcome?



Working Memory Support Plan

Move important information out of the brain and into the environment.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ I forget multi-step directions | ☐ I lose track mid-task |
| ☐ I forget what I came into a room for | ☐ I need repeated reminders |
| ☐ I forget materials | ☐ I forget assignments / appointments |

Information I keep trying to hold in my head

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Written checklist | ☐ Phone reminder |
| ☐ Visual schedule | ☐ Sticky note |
| ☐ Repeat-back | ☐ Calendar |
| ☐ Whiteboard | ☐ Picture cue |
| ☐ Keep item in sight | ☐ One direction at a time |

My external-memory plan

What will hold the information so my brain does not have to?



Emotional Regulation Meter

Name the intensity, notice body signals, and choose a regulation response.

Level	What it feels like	What helps
1 Calm / steady		
2 Activated		
3 Frustrated		
4 Overloaded		

My earliest warning sign

Catching level 2 is usually easier than recovering at level 4.

My go-to regulation choices

Movement, breathing, sensory input, quiet, connection, water, music, etc.



Organization Audit

Find the friction points in spaces, belongings, and systems.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Desk / workspace | ☐ Backpack |
| ☐ Bedroom | ☐ Clothes |
| ☐ School papers | ☐ Digital files |
| ☐ Bathroom items | ☐ Sports / activity gear |
| ☐ Keys / wallet | ☐ Medication location |

What gets lost, piled up, or forgotten most?

Give everything a home

Item → location. Favor visible, easy-to-use systems over complicated ones.

5-minute reset plan

When and how will the space be reset?



Planning & Prioritizing Matrix

Decide what matters first instead of treating everything as equally urgent.

Tasks on my mind

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT		
LESS IMPORTANT		

My first three priorities

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____



Task Initiation Launcher

Make starting smaller, clearer, and easier to cue.

Task I am avoiding

☐ Too big☐ Boring☐ Unclear☐ Afraid of doing it wrong☐ Too many steps☐ Distracted☐ Low energy☐ Don't know where to start

Make the first step tiny

What action can be completed in 2–5 minutes?

☐ 5-minute timer☐ Body double☐ Music☐ Visual cue☐ Remove distractions☐ Reward after start☐ Start together☐ Prepare materials first

My launch sentence

At _____ I will start by _____.



Self-Monitoring Check-In

Build the habit of checking your work, behavior, time, and progress.

1 Rarely	2	3 Sometimes	4	5 Often
☐ Did I understand the goal?		☐ Am I still doing the task?		
☐ Is my pace working?		☐ Did I skip a step?		
☐ Do I need help?		☐ What needs correcting before I finish?		

My check-in cue

Timer, end of each step, teacher cue, checklist, etc.

What I noticed about myself



Cognitive Flexibility Practice

Practice shifting when the plan changes, a mistake happens, or another perspective appears.

What changed / did not go my way

My automatic thought

Three other ways to see it

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Plan B

If Plan A cannot happen, what is a workable next choice?

Flexibility phrase

Examples: "Different does not mean ruined." "I can adjust the plan."



Task Breakdown Tool

Turn a vague or overwhelming task into visible steps.

Big task / assignment / chore

Step	Action	Estimated time	Done
1			☐
2			☐
3			☐
4			☐
5			☐
6			☐
7			☐

The very first action

If the first step still feels hard, make it smaller.



Time Estimation Challenge

Train time estimation by comparing predictions with reality.

Task	My guess	Actual time	Difference
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

What pattern did I notice?

Do I underestimate certain types of tasks? Overestimate boring ones?



Time Blindness Tracker

Notice where time disappears and which cues make time more visible.

Activity / part of day where time disappears

☐ Getting ready☐ Homework☐ Showering☐ Hyperfocus activity☐ Gaming / screens☐ Cleaning☐ Talking / socializing☐ Transitions

What I expected vs. what happened

☐ Visual timer☐ Clock in sight☐ Calendar blocks☐ Time checkpoints☐ Alarm☐ Countdown warnings☐ Music playlist as timer☐ Buffer time

My time-visibility experiment

What tool will I test this week?



Daily Planner

Keep today's priorities visible without overloading the page.

Date

Top 3 for today

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Time / cue	Task	Done
_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	☐

Do not forget



Weekly Planner

See the whole week so deadlines, routines, and recovery time have a place.

Day	Must do	Prepare / remember
Mon		
Tue		
Wed		
Thu		
Fri		
Sat		
Sun		

Weekly reset time

When will I review the next week?



Reminder System Builder

Use fewer, better reminders instead of constant verbal prompting.

Thing I keep forgetting

☐ Calendar☐ Alarm☐ Checklist☐ Visual sign☐ Whiteboard☐ Phone reminder☐ Object placed in path☐ Routine anchor

Reminder recipe

WHEN / WHERE will the reminder appear? WHAT exactly will it say?

How I will know the system worked



Launch Pad Planner

Create one predictable home for the things that must leave the house.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| ☐ Backpack | ☐ Keys |
| ☐ Wallet | ☐ School device |
| ☐ Charger | ☐ Shoes |
| ☐ Jacket | ☐ Sports gear |
| ☐ Lunch | ☐ Important papers |

Launch pad location

Choose a place near the exit that is easy to see and use.

What belongs there

Night-before reset

Who checks it, and at what routine anchor?



Environment & Distraction Audit

Change the environment when attention is being asked to do too much.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Phone | ☐ TV | ☐ Notifications |
| ☐ Noise | ☐ People talking | ☐ Visual clutter |
| ☐ Uncomfortable seat | ☐ Hunger | ☐ Fatigue |
| ☐ Too many tabs | ☐ Supplies missing | ☐ Interruptions |

My biggest three distractions

Environment changes to test

Remove, block, relocate, prepare, simplify, or add helpful stimulation.



Follow-Through Tracker

Track the gap between starting something and actually closing the loop.

Task	Started	Finished	Turned in / put away	What helped
_____	☐	☐	☐	_____
_____	☐	☐	☐	_____
_____	☐	☐	☐	_____
_____	☐	☐	☐	_____
_____	☐	☐	☐	_____
_____	☐	☐	☐	_____

My closing-the-loop cue

What reminds me that “done” includes the final step?



Reset Plan

A rough day does not require abandoning the whole system. Reset and re-enter.

What got off track?

☐ Pause☐ Regulate☐ Name the problem☐ Reduce the task☐ Choose one priority☐ Ask for help☐ Restart at next routine anchor☐ Repair if needed

What still matters today?

Choose one or two things.

What can wait?

My next right step



From Reminders to Responsibility

Move prompts out of the parent's voice and into routines, visuals, and self-cues.

Task that requires repeated reminders

Current adult prompt	Replacement system	Child / teen self-cue

Prompt-fading plan

What support can be reduced after success becomes more consistent?



Independence Ladder

Build independence gradually: support first, then transfer ownership.

Skill / responsibility

1	Adult does / child observes
2	Do it together
3	Child does with prompts
4	Child uses external system
5	Child manages and checks independently

☐ Current level: 1

☐ Current level: 2

☐ Current level: 3

☐ Current level: 4

☐ Current level: 5

What would one step more independent look like?

Do not jump from full support to no support.



Executive Function Problem-Solving Map

Use a repeatable process when executive-function problems show up.

Problem

1. NOTICE

What is happening?

2. NAME THE SKILL

Which EF skill may be involved?

3. CHANGE THE TASK OR ENVIRONMENT

What can be made smaller, clearer, more visible, or easier to start?

4. CHOOSE A SUPPORT

What tool or person can help?

5. REVIEW

What worked? What should change next time?



Weekly EF Progress Check-In

Review progress without expecting perfect consistency.

1 Rarely	2	3 Sometimes	4	5 Often
☐ Impulse control		☐ Working memory		☐ Emotional regulation
☐ Organization		☐ Planning & prioritizing		☐ Task initiation
☐ Self-monitoring		☐ Cognitive flexibility		☐ Follow-through

Win of the week

What became easier, even a little?

Hardest EF moment

What skill or situation was involved?

Tool that helped most

One experiment for next week

Keep it specific and measurable enough to notice.



Consistency Over Intensity

Executive-function growth is often uneven. The aim is to make skills visible, build external supports, practice them in real life, and gradually transfer responsibility as the person becomes more capable.

Our current focus skill

The support we are testing

How we will know it is helping

Chaos to Consistency™ • Ethos Shoreline Resource Library

