

Executive Function and ADHD

The tasks of the brains' executive function are **behavioral control and inhibition**. These are tasks that many people with ADHD show impairment in. Sometimes taking a look at how their behaviors can be understood in terms of impaired executive function can be helpful.

<p>These are classes or types of executive function according to behavioral science</p>	<p>1. Working Memory (nonverbal) Includes being able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold thought or information in mind • Manipulate multiple thoughts at the same time • Imitate complex sequences of behavior • Have hindsight or value past behavior • Practice forethought—to anticipate the results of future behavior • Be self-aware • Organize behavioral sequences according to a “rule” or to achieve a “goal”. 	<p>2. Internalization of speech/silent self-talk (verbal working memory) Includes being able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk and think about the environment • Self-question/problem solve • Generate rules to guide behaviors • Instruct oneself to follow directions/rules • Comprehend what is read • Have moral reasoning 	<p>3. Self-control of emotions, motivation, arousal Includes the ability to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control one’s emotional sensitivity and reactions • Consider other points of view • Generate and control motivation • Generate and control the arousal needed to for goal-directed actions 	<p>4. Fluency—the smooth flow of behaviors that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized, goal-directed and chained together seamlessly and carried out easily • Creative but organized or structured
<p>These are the symptoms or traits that we see that suggest that the related executive function tasks as listed above are impaired</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor short term memory • Poor concentration • Distractibility • Short attention span • Trouble learning from experience/repeating mistakes • Poor time management • Running late • Poorly organized work/projects • Daydreaming • Missing details • Not proof reading school work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talkative • Blurts out inappropriately • Talks to self out loud • Noisy, disturbs others • Poor reading comprehension • Not liking to read • Acting without regard for rules, though the rules are known • Procrastination • Trial and error problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moody • Oversensitive • Over-reacts • Hot/short-tempered • Low motivation • Trouble seeing other viewpoints • Stubborn, prefers self-selected tasks • Hyper or hypo active • Fidgety • Cannot turn thoughts off • Thinks too much/worries excessively • Cannot match activity to goals • Too loud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impulsive • Poor verbal expression and oral reading • Poor movement control and fluency • Clumsy/awkward • Accident prone • Printing instead of cursive • Twitches/jerks