

## Section 6:

### Executive Functioning

Executive functioning is a widely accepted concept, however, the definition and “sub-categories” of executive functioning differs among the experts. Simply put; executive functioning is our brains ability to plan and adjust to situations while working towards a goal. It is used when we are accomplishing a daily goal such as getting ready in the morning or larger goals such as planning for a future career.

Executive functioning is a common area of deficit in students with ASD. Even though our younger students often display signs of executive functioning difficulties such as distress during transitions, difficulty starting tasks, and difficulty sustaining attention; evaluation of executive functioning is often not completed until upper elementary or middle school. During upper elementary, middle school, and high school we see students struggle with skills such as organization, planning, time management, and working memory.

During a re-evaluation, the team may decide to administer the same formal assessment to determine growth in executive functioning skills or an informal rating scale and interviews may be utilized to gather current information.

- [Barkley Deficits in Executive Functioning Scale \(external website\)](#) This is an empirically based tool for evaluating clinically significant dimensions of child and adolescent executive functioning. Areas addressed include time management, organization and problem solving, self-restraint, self-motivation, and self-regulation of emotions.
  - [Barkley Deficits in Executive Functioning Scale Resource \(Google\)](#)
- [Comprehensive Executive Functioning Inventory \(external website\)](#) CEFI measures a wide spectrum of behaviors associated with executive function and is the most representative nationally-standardized behavior rating scale of executive functions. A full-scale score and nine scales pinpoint targets for intervention.
- [Executive Skills Questionnaire - Dawson & Guare \(external website\)](#) Create by Dawson and Guare this contains a two-page questionnaire to determine level of executive functioning skills along with definitions of the different areas of executive functioning and an intervention planning checklist.

- [Executive Skills Checklist #1 \(external website\)](#)  
This five-pages informal checklist addresses eleven areas of executive functioning. Based on a rating of 1 (no problem) to 5 (big problem).
- [Executive Functioning Questionnaire for Older Students \(external website\)](#)  
This two-page self-assessment on executive functioning is based on a four-point likert scale.
- [Executive Functioning Questionnaire for Younger Students \(external website\)](#)  
This two-page self-assessment asks students to check the statement that is true for them. Addresses seven areas of executive functioning.
- [Executive Functioning Checklist #2 \(external website\)](#)  
Checkbox style checklist of areas of concern related to executive functioning. Separate lists for Elementary, Middle School, and High School Students.
- Executive Functioning (EF) Questionnaires  
These EF Checklists are broken down by developmental levels taken from the book, Smart but Scattered:
- [Executive Skills Questionnaire \(grades PK-K\).pdf](#)
- [Executive Skills Questionnaire \(grades 1-3\).pdf](#)
- [Executive Skills Questionnaire \(grades 4-5\).pdf](#)
- [Executive Skills Questionnaire \(grades 6-8\).pdf](#)