

GAME
CHANGER



Game On: Inside Our Team's Mental Playbook

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

We work with educators, parents, and students on **building youth executive function skills.**

Students practice these skills:

- working memory
- attention
- self-control

They help shape mental health and well-being throughout life.

We asked our team:

Which executive function skill is your biggest game changer and how do you strengthen it?



EMOTIONAL SELF-REGULATION



I think **emotional self-regulation** is one of the **hardest things to tackle**. I try to **use cognitive reappraisal**.

If something is really frustrating, I try to **reframe it in my mind**. So, it's a learning opportunity. I try to find the silver lining in something that's challenging to help me reappraise the situation.

Sarah Norman
Executive Director



POWER OF EXERCISE & NATURE



If I don't get enough exercise, I'm depleted, and I'm more likely to have emotions that need addressing.

For me, it's exercise and nature. Those two things **help me emotionally self-regulate.**

Sarah Norman
Executive Director



PLANNING



I'm very organized and methodical, and **I find comfort in laying out all the steps I need to complete a task.**

Being able to write down every step in a process, big or small, makes me feel confident that I can tackle it.

This is a skill that comes naturally to me, but I **practice it multiple times a day** by making schedules and lists.

Jessica Rose-Malm
Youth Executive Function
Project Director



RESPONSE INHIBITION



It's a skill I've had to hone to be effective as a professional and as a parent.

I've **had to teach myself to pause** when I feel my blood pressure rising instead of reacting immediately. Sometimes **I'll take a walk** to clear my head, or I might **shut my eyes and breathe deeply** for a few minutes.

**Jessica
Rose-Malm**
Youth
Executive
Function
Project
Director





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SELF-CONTROL

I'm a **very passionate person**, and sometimes I can get a little riled up too easily. I realize that **exercise is the key to controlling that.**

Bridget McQuillan
Program Manager



WORKING MEMORY



I can get very **deeply focused** on my work, but sometimes I have trouble focusing after many hours of Zoom calls.

I love to **take calls by phone so I can move my body around.** That helps me focus on the conversation instead of the notifications on my desktop.

Jazz Glastra
Senior
Director



PLANNING



I would say planning is my strength. It keeps me **focused and organized.**



COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY

I would want to strengthen cognitive flexibility. I can sometimes be very rigid, and I like things my way. So, **being flexible with people** and things that I can't control is an ongoing strength that I'm learning.

Kadena Williams
Youth
Executive
Function
Project
Manager



BRAiNFUTURES