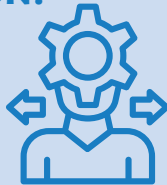


STUDENT LEADERSHIP BUILDS ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT BY STRENGTHENING EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

WHAT IS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION?

Executive function is a set of abilities that help people to control their thoughts and actions so they can reach their goals.



EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS ARE CRITICAL TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS



Stronger executive functioning skills predict academic outcomes like:

- **Grades** (Jacob & Parkinson, 2015)
- **Standardized Test Scores** (Blair & Razza, 2007)
- **Learning Efficiency** (Diamond, 2012)
- **Academic Goal Achievement** (Robson, Allen, & Howard, 2020)
- **Self-Regulation** (Blair & Raver, 2015)

STUDENT'S EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING IN PRE-K SET A LIFE-LONG TRAJECTORY

Numerous studies have documented long-term implications of a person's executive function in early life. People with high executive function as children are more likely to have positive relationships, complete high school, and have a high-paying job. (Heckman, 2004; Poulton, Moffitt, & Silva, 2015).



NO MATTER WHERE A STUDENT STARTS, EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS CAN BE IMPROVED



Early experiences lay a critical foundation for executive functioning but factors like traumatic stress, lack of routine, and developmental delays differentially impact these early years. Interventions that effectively grow students' executive function offer hope for all students. (Diamond, 2020)

SCHOOLS CAN CHANGE LIVES BY BUILDING STUDENTS' EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING ABILITY

School-based development of executive function is an effective approach for wide-range of student populations. Improving a students' executive function skills has long-lasting effects on a variety of academic and life outcomes. (Diamond, 2011)



LEADER IN ME BUILDS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION ABILITY THROUGH OUR APPROACH TO STUDENT LEADERSHIP



At *Leader in Me* schools, student leadership is more than a nice supplement to a school--it becomes the way educators look at students, provide them opportunities, and empower their instruction. Executive functions are critical leadership abilities and are therefore a natural part of what we teach, model and apply.

7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE BUILD EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

Leadership is the umbrella term used in the *Leader in Me* process to encompass the essential mindsets and life skills students need to thrive today and in their future lives. Executive functions are the foundation of these skills and the most direct way we teach them is through the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. By learning and applying the 7 Habits, students develop executive function skills such as planning, organization, time management, self-regulation, goal-setting, and self-awareness.

HABIT 1: BE PROACTIVE

This habit encourages students to take initiative and responsibility for their actions. It builds their ability to plan and make decisions, which are key components of executive functions.



HABIT 2: BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND



This habit teaches students to set clear and specific goals and to visualize the steps necessary to achieve them. This helps to develop their organizational skills and focus.

HABIT 3: PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST

This habit emphasizes the importance of prioritization and time management. By learning how to manage time effectively, students can improve their ability to plan, organize, and execute tasks.



HABIT 4: THINK WIN-WIN



This habit emphasizes collaboration and problem-solving skills, which are essential components of executive functions. By learning how to resolve conflicts and work effectively with others, students can improve their cognitive flexibility and emotional control.

HABIT 5: SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND, THEN TO BE UNDERSTOOD

This habit develops a student's ability to listen and empathize with others which fosters effective communication skills that are critical for executive functions such as working memory and cognitive flexibility.



HABIT 6: SYNERGIZE



This habit encourages students to work together in creative ways to achieve common goals. This builds their ability to think "outside the box" and to problem-solve with a diverse group of people.

HABIT 7: SHARPEN THE SAW

This habit emphasizes self-care and lifelong learning. By prioritizing their own health and well-being, and by continuing to learn and grow, students enhance their executive functions of self-awareness, self-monitoring, and goal-setting.



"EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN PROMOTING PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT AS THEY ENABLE INDIVIDUALS TO REFLECT ON THEIR EXPERIENCES AND SET MEANINGFUL GOALS" (DIAMOND, 2013)