

# How Do You Support Executive Functioning During Online Learning?

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## How to teach EF skills and accommodate EF weaknesses in online teaching

### **Learner Objectives:**

- Participants will understand the extra EF challenges in online learning.
- Participants will problem-solve around how to make a tool for fun into a tool for online learning.
- Participants will be able to make some small changes in virtual teaching to get better effects.

### **What are Executive Functions?**

- What are the extra EF demands of online school?

#### Independence/Autonomy

- Initiation
- Inhibition
- Emotional control
- Task monitoring/attention regulation
- Working memory demands
- No peer modeling
- Less support
- More planning

#### Executive Function: Hot and Cool

- **COOL** = decontextualized, meta-cognitive tasks
- **HOT** = socially, motivationally, emotionally salient
  - Real world decision-making
  - Defer gratification, be flexible and follow plans when there are strong social expectations and feelings involved

### Executive Function: Hot and Cool... Which is it for online learning?

- “Zoom Fatigue”
- Zoom Fatigue Solutions
- Flexibility

**“Asperger’s is like a vise on your brain. And each unexpected event is like another turn on the vise...it just keeps building until you feel like you’re going to explode. Sometimes when you explode, it comes out the wrong way.”**

**- A young student with ASD**

## View the tips from our Youth Action Board: How to Check in on Your Students' Mental Health

### How are you feeling today, really? Physically and mentally.

- What's taking up most of your headspace right now?
- What did you do today that made you feel good?
- What's something you're looking forward to in the next few days?
- What's something you can do today that would make you feel good?
- What are you grateful for right now?
- Rose-thorn

### Inflexibility Strengths

- Inflexibility is **adaptive**: It limits unexpected, overloading events
- Respect routines that don't interfere
- Create new routines for online learning
  - Planning/Organizing
  - How can you tell?
  - If It's a Can't, Scaffold
  - The most important accommodations of them all:  
**Be Flexible and Keep it Positive!!**

### Emotions are Contagious...and Flexibility is too

- Reinforcement Breaks a Negative Cycle
- Need Some Help with Motivation?
- Embed positive time
  - Quick games
  - "Talk time"
  - Show me your favorite meme
  - Embed your own memes
  - Short videos (pet collective, fainting goats, unlikely animal best friends)
  - Breathing break

### Use special interests to hold attention

- Video game music playing in the background
- Writing assignments embedded in interest
- Change the format of quizzes- Jeopardy, Family Feud, etc

### Contact Info

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[UnstuckandOnTarget.com](http://UnstuckandOnTarget.com)

**Resources:**

<https://researchautism.org/COVID-19/>

**Conflicts of Interest**

I receive royalties on sales of *Unstuck and On Target* curricula (Brookes)

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