

ASK I-LABS

WHAT IS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION?

Executive functions are a suite of mental processes. They include the ability to plan, focus attention, inhibit impulses, and solve problems. Child-centered, back-and-forth interactions with caregivers support executive functioning.



What's all the buzz about?

Executive function (EF) skills are some of the best predictors of later success. Health, wealth, and quality of life are all linked to EF. Who wouldn't want to give children this boost? Promoting the development of EF is essential for children's academic and career success. EF also supports healthy relationships throughout life.

What age is most important for executive function development?

We continue to develop our EF skills well into our 20's! But children's early experiences form an important foundation for later executive functioning. Infants who experience high-quality, responsive interactions perform better on EF tests at 3 years of age. It's important to support EF development early.

How do I support young children's executive function development?

It's all about relationships! Positive, stable and nurturing relationships with adults is strongly linked with children's EF. One of the key elements in these relationships is autonomy support. Adults use autonomy support when they provide choices, follow the child's lead, and encourage their growing independence.



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