



**DuPage & Fox Valley**  
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**Easter Seals DuPage & Fox Valley  
Presents...**

# Cutting Edge Strategies to Improve Executive Function Skills

Presented by Sarah Ward, M.S., CCC/SLP

**Date & Location:**  
**Monday, June 20th, 2016**  
at  
**Northern Illinois University**  
**5555 Trillium Blvd.**  
**Hoffman Estates, IL 60192**

**Day 1: How to Teach Preschool and School Aged Children to Efficiently Manage their Tasks, Time Space and Materials (and keep their emotions in check!)**

## Course Description/Target Audience:

**Sarah Ward, M.S., CCC/SLP** is returning once again to teach OT's, special educators, teachers, SLP's, parents and professionals hands-on practical strategies to improve Executive Function skills. Whether you've seen her before, or this is all new, you're sure to walk away with new ideas and strategies to help you better assist clients, students, or your own children.

Individuals with strong executive function skills stay a beat ahead. In contrast, teachers and parents describe individuals with weak executive function skills as being "a beat behind". Strong executive function skills enable us to imagine and plan a "dry run" of the task in our mind before we begin to carry out the plan. This imagery is a mental anchor that allows the student to better resist distractions and maintain a pace so as to reach a goal. When forethought guides children's actions, they can carry out tasks more successfully.

This seminar is all about providing dozens of practical strategies that you can learn today and implement tomorrow! From task initiation and execution to time management, practice using strategies such as 'Future Sketch', 'Get Ready, Do, Done', 'STOP and Read the Room', and seeing and sensing the passage of time.

During this Workshop through demonstration and practice you will learn how to teach students the following executive control skills:

- **Awareness:** to "Tune in" to what is happening around them so they can understand how information, events, and their actions will impact their goals and objectives, both now and in the near future.
- **Forethought:** to predict the successful outcome of tasks and to know what a 'stop spot' looks like.
- **To Wait:** to control a reaction long enough to contemplate the outcomes of their choices.
- **Planning Skills** to estimate how long tasks will take, to be able to sense the passage of time and to know how to break down the steps for immediate tasks, nightly homework and long term projects.
- **To Shift:** Fresh approaches to help students develop automaticity for class routines and to be able to stop doing one activity and then move on to and be prepared to start new tasks.
- **To Pace:** to speed up or slow down within a given time frame, to complete tasks within allotted time and to persist on tasks even if the tasks are difficult, boring or non-preferred.
- **Flexibility:** to consider multiple possible solutions to problems, to see the "gray" in a situation and to avoid having black and white or rigid thinking.
- **Speed of Information Processing:** to help students quickly react to incoming information, understand it, and think about the information, formulate a response or plan, and then execute.

## Learning Objectives:

*After completing this program, you will be able to:*

- State the functional working definition of what is meant by the term "executive function skills" as it pertains to therapeutic interventions .
- Be able to identify what is the typical developmental course of the executive function skills and how to assess and identify Executive Dysfunction.
- Define how situational awareness, self talk, forethought , gesture/movement and episodic memory are the foundational skills for successful task execution.
- Develop an intervention program to foster a student's ability to form more independent executive function skills by describing therapeutic activities to improve:
  - ◆ Situational awareness and forethought
  - ◆ Task planning, task initiation and transition within and between tasks
  - ◆ Active self management of the factors related to the passage of time
  - ◆ Organized thinking
- Describe at least 4 systematic methods that can be used in the classroom in conjunction with the core curriculum to enhance self-regulation, information processing and task completion.

## About the Instructor:

### **Sarah Ward, M.S., CCC/SLP**

Sarah Ward, M.S., CCC/SLP has over 20 years of experience in diagnostic evaluations, treatment and case management of children, adolescents and adults with language learning disabilities, nonverbal learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, executive dysfunction, Asperger's disorders and social pragmatics. Ms. Ward holds a faculty appointment at the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions where she provides instruction to graduate level students in the assessment and treatment of individuals with traumatic brain injury and other cognitive communication disorders. A popular speaker, Sarah regularly presents nationally and internationally on the topic of executive functions. She has presented to and consulted with over 480 public and private schools in Massachusetts and across the United States. Awards received include the MGH Expertise in Clinical Practice Award, the Distinguished Alumni Award and the Faculty in Excellence Award from the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions (2002, 2011).



Ms. Ward has the following financial disclosures to report: She is the co-director of Cognitive Connections at The Center for Executive Function Skill Development. Her company, Cognitive Connections, produces and sells products that support students in developing an internal sense of time, attending to the passage of time, and organizing tasks in written form. Some of these products will be referenced in the presentation. In addition, the Cognitive Connections website offers many free resources and references. Ms. Ward receives an honorarium from Easter Seals DuPage & Fox Valley for this presentation.

## Course Schedule:

### 7:30AM-8:00AM Registration & Check-In

8:00-9:00

**Future Thinkers: A New View of Executive Function Skills:** Gain a new understanding on how students demonstrate executive function skills and a new perspective on what is meant by the term "executive dysfunction." Learn the 360 Thinking Executive Function Model. Understand the relationship between motivation and executive control. The premise of executive function therapy and how to ensure strategies generalize.

9:00-9:45

**The 3P's of Executive Function: Play, Planning and Processing Speed: Starting Executive Function Interventions in Preschool:** Learn activities that can be used to develop the foundational executive function skills in preschool aged children. Even if you do not work with a preschool population you will learn the core developmental executive control skills and how they mature and change as the child enters elementary and middle school.

9:45-10:30

**Self-Regulation and Situational Awareness:** Improving self-regulation: He has done this task before! In fact he just did it an hour ago. Why can't he do it now? Understanding and treating the underlying executive control skills for task motivation, initiation and output.

- Helping students to create futuristic imagination and do a mental dress rehearsal
- Practice teaching students to develop situational awareness skills so they can "stop and read a room" and self-regulate their behaviors for a given situation.

Learn how students can think in an organized and flexible way about systems and then self-initiate to manage their clothes, backpack, papers, personal belongings in personal and shared spaces.

10:30-10:45

### Morning Break

10:45-12:00

### Being a Beat Ahead: Following Routines, Initiating Tasks, Making Transitions:

- Teach student to Develop a "memory for the future."
- Decrease Prompts! Increase the independence with which students can self-initiate, transition, control their impulses and complete tasks with less supervision and fewer prompts. Increase a student's ability to fluidly transition from one mental mindset to another and to switch from a current task to being prepared for a new task.

12:00-1:00

### Lunch Break

1:00-2:00

**Time and Task Management:** Teach students to internally sense the sweep of time for hourly, daily, weekly tasks and long term projects. Support students in sustaining concentration, managing pace and completing tasks in allocated time frames.

2:00-2:45

### The Get Ready \* Do \* Done Model:

Individual and small group treatment interventions to help students develop executive function thinking skills for planning and completing tasks. Do what you do...just make one tiny tweak and turn the core curriculum and class/treatment plans into powerful tools to teach students executive control skills for classroom and treatment interventions.

2:45-3:00

### Afternoon Coffee Break

3:00-3:15

### The Get Ready \* Do \* Done Model (continued)

3:15-4:00

**Closing the Homework Circle – How can you Help if You Don't Go Home with the Student?:** New techniques for teaching students to record, bring home, complete and return assignments in a timely manner.

6.5 Contact Hours

### CONTACT INFO:

Phone: 630-282-2026

Email: ce@EasterSealsDFVR.org

www.eastersealsdfvr.org/continuingeducation

## Registration for DAY 1 Executive Function

Please complete this form and mail with payment to:

Easter Seals DuPage & Fox Valley  
830 S. Addison Avenue  
Villa Park, IL 60181  
Fax: 630-620-1148

### Registration Options

- \$195 (Single Day)
- \$175 (Single Day if registered on or before 5/1/16)
- \$350 (Both Days—6/20/16 & 6/21/16)

**Please note—Group Rates: 10% discount for groups of 4 or more (all registrations must be received at same time.)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(This is how your name will be printed on the course completion certificate.)

Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Org. address: \_\_\_\_\_

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State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Business phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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Registration fee includes the Executive Function conference, continental breakfast, and afternoon refreshments. Nearby hotel information will be provided upon request.

Space is limited—early registration is encouraged. Registration deadline: June 6, 2016.

Cancellations must be in writing and will incur a \$25 processing fee. No refunds granted after June 6, 2016.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

### Occupational Therapy and Social Work

Continuing Education Credits for OT & Social Work will be offered through the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation.

### CPDUs

ISBE School Personnel must request prior approval from their district or regional office and will need to submit evidence after the workshop to have CPDUs confirmed.

All participants will receive a course completion certificate upon successful completion of the conference. No certificates will be awarded until course completion is verified on the final date of conference.

### Occupational

### Therapy:



### APPROVED PROVIDER of CONTINUING EDUCATION

by The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.



Easter Seals DuPage and the Fox Valley Region is approved by the Continuing Education Board of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) to provide continuing education activities in speech-

### Speech

### Therapy:

language pathology and audiology. See course information for number of ASHA CEUs, instructional level and content area. ASHA CE Provider approval does not imply endorsement of course content, specific products or clinical procedures.

This course is offered for .065 CEUs (Intermediate level, Professional area).