

BVPAGE Meeting 1/30/2020

Executive Function Part II with Diane McLean

Board members present: Amy, Jeannie, Heidi, Delora, Cecilia

Special Guests: Kristin Asquith

Attendance: 76

- I. Welcome and updates
 - A. BVPAGE Coffee meetup Tuesday Feb. 4th
 - B. Summer Opportunities Fair Thursday Feb.th
- II. Where the Rubber Meets the Road: The real reasons smart kids struggle and what to do to help.
 - A. Executive Functions: the skills we need to get things done
 - i. They are needed for school but not explicitly taught
 - ii. Kids may not struggle in all of them, they may even excel at some
 - B. We activate the executive function parts our brains with strengths and interests: creativity, curiosity, humor, teamwork, novelty, etc.
 - C. We may not know what strategy will work but our kids do
 - i. Start with "I Don't Know"
 - ii. Kids need to be a part of the solution. Forcing them into a solution that doesn't fit results in behaviors that don't help
 - iii. Let them do it their way, even if it's not our way. They will feel more successful that way. Accept them exactly as they are. Try a coach mentality.
 - D. We need to shift our vision: Two types of Vision Shifts
 - i. Zoom out: a broader perspective – the behavior is a symptom of the actual problem
 - ii. Zoom in: once you acknowledge that there's a bigger picture, then you can zoom in
 - E. Systematic Terminating Obstacle Resistance Minimizer – STORM
 - i. The problem is usually not what we think it is
 - ii. 1-10 scale of opposites – is it easy or hard? Simple or complex? Short or long? Will I do a good job or will I fail? www.Execskills.com/storm
 - iii. We don't have importance-based brains, we have interest-based brains
 - iv. Kids long-term vision is not developed: elementary may not see past the next day. It's hard to hold on to a long-term goal
 - v. We have to listen to them and believe them – don't assume they are lazy
 - vi. Ask them what gets in their way
 - F. How to use the STORM strategy
 - i. Take a breath together. Then two more. Seriously. Right now. – Belly breath— make it look like a basketball. Put a pillow or animal on their stomach and make it rise. Self-regulation may be one of the hardest things.
 - ii. STORM the problem with curiosity- be genuine. Don't fake it. They know.
 - iii. Ask about past successes? When is a time you were able to do this? Is there a class where this is easier? Find out where they are successful.

- iv. Try a Hack: What are strengths you can use? Research strategies? Brainstorm what you might try. Give options and let them choose. Offer but remain unattached to how they receive it.
 - v. Experiment and adjust. They're not a failure if doesn't work the first time. What got in your way?
 - 1. Ex. If timers stress you out, maybe time it to a playlist instead
 - vi. How do you help younger kids engage? Find something that makes it interesting. Is there a special snack you can eat only when doing this? What do you want to do as soon as you finish? What trips a green light to make you act?
 - 1. If Bravery is a strength.. turn it into a challenge? How long does it take to do one math problem? I have a guess, prove me wrong. How much sand does it take to do one problem? Now can you do it in less sand? Fold the page in half and take a break.
 - vii. It's not important to me. Ask them who is it important to- will you do it for them? The time they have after it's done may be important.
 - viii. Celebrate the success
- G. Anxiety
- i. Mindfulness strategies and breathing are really important- help them find what settles their brain
- H. Hacks
- i. Self Regulation and Focus
 - 1. Optimum environment, do a brain dump, do just one thing, breathe
 - ii. Time Awareness and Management
 - 1. Practice estimating time – how long should a shower take?, Make time visual—PUGG Clock, Use timers—don't have to be clocks
 - iii. Task Planning, Initiation, and completion
 - 1. Plan backwards, utilize low tech and high tech tools, get the ball rolling- give yourself a green light
 - iv. Organization
 - 1. Think in categories- take everything out and organize by what's similar, start small, leave nothing homeless
- I. Resources
- i. Zen and the Art of Productivity, Alan P. Brown
 - ii. Understood.org
 - iii. www.ADDitudemag.com
 - iv. The Guide to ADHD Coaching, Alan Graham, PhD
 - v. Find other parents who get it and help your kids do the same
 - vi. Facebook- Parentingforreal
 - vii. Presentation notes and STORM worksheet: <https://www.execskills.com/storm>