

PBIS Update

Sweetwater School District Number One

February 2020

Assisting with Executive Functioning Tasks

Within this newsletter, we will review ways to support Executive Function tasks, examine SWIS gender data, and focus on sleep for self-care. The information contained within this update is taken from several sources including

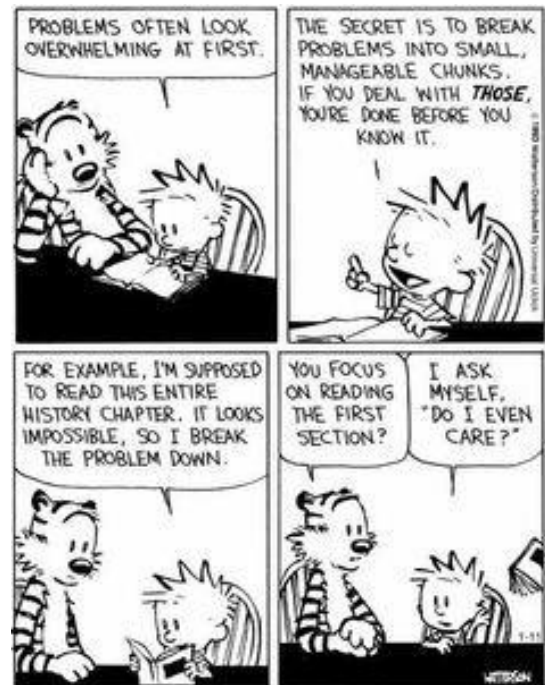
Otten, Kaye L., and Jodie L. Tuttle. *How to Reach and Teach Children with Challenging Behavior: Practical, Ready-to-Use Interventions That Work*. Jossey-Bass, 2011.

Tina Johnson
Academic and Behavior Coordinator

Executive Function

Executive function skills guide everything we do including

- Paying attention
- Organizing, planning, and prioritizing
- Starting tasks and staying focused on them to completion
- Understanding different points of view
- Regulating emotions
- Self-monitoring (keeping track of what you're doing)
- Learning from past mistakes
- Controlling impulsivity
- Shift between situations and/or thoughts
- Controlling emotions
- Keeping track of time
- Waiting to speak until called on



Executive function takes time to fully develop, and it develops at different rates in different children. It is possible to improve the executive functions of students with deficits **as well as all students** through classroom strategies and support. Implementing the strategies listed below benefits all students.

Possible Signs of Executive Function Struggles

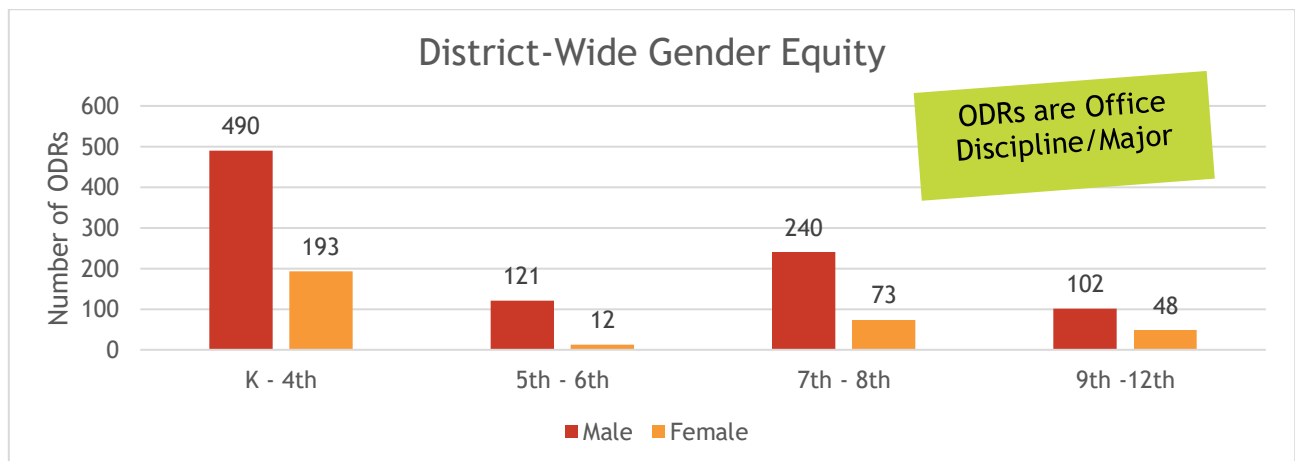
- Difficulty changing tasks - change shakes them up, lose focus when asked to change tasks
- Disorganization - overflowing folder, stuffed locker, messy desk, may appear to be lazy
- Discomfort with novelty - tantrums are often reactions to unexpected events
- Missing main points - difficult for some students to take away important points from a book or paper, executive function goes hand-in-hand with reading comprehension
- Difficulty managing time - failure to finish work, lack of planning skills, changes mind midpoint

Organizational Support - Advantageous For All Students

- Checklists - The steps necessary for completing a task often aren't obvious to kids with executive dysfunction, and defining them clearly ahead of time makes a task less daunting and more achievable
- Set a goal for mid-way when working during class, then using a visual timer complete a check in at the mid-way point for a student to check their progress
- Break down larger assignments and develop a visual list of tasks/activities to do and pair with a set time for completion, due date or time frame
- Use graphic organizers to assist with organization of thought and keeping on topic
- Stabilize materials for independent work times: structured file folders or structured tasks with visual instructions, clarity and organization
- Use an assignment notebook
- Develop a color coded system (with highlighters or post its) establishing specific colors for what to do first, second and so on
- Have visual expectations for the different activities in the classroom and prime these expectations before the different activities
- Provide a visual schedule of events or activities
- Utilize transition pre-corrects i.e. five-minute count down, timers
- Give notice (when possible) about schedule changes
- Give a short review or connection to a previous lesson before teaching
- Share the assignment/test format ahead of time so the student can focus on content
- Help the student create a daily to-do list to track assignments
- Have a daily routine that changes as little as possible
- Post schedules, directions, class rules, and expectations; make sure the student sees them
- Provide folders and a basket of supplies to keep the student's desk organized

SWIS District-Wide Gender Equity

The following district-wide data was taken from SWIS ODRs dated August 1, 2019 through January 30, 2020



The article written by Ron Coniglio, Why Gender Matters in the Classroom: the Differences Between Boys and Girls shares the following information:

Gender Trends in Schools - What we know is that in America:

- 80% of high school dropouts are boys
- 80% of all classroom discipline problems are boys
- 70% of students with learning disabilities are boys
- 80% of students who are behaviorally disordered are boys
- 80% of students on medication for ADHD and AD are boys
- 44% of college students are boys

When asked, teachers will often list the differences they see in performance and behavior between their male and female students. Here is what I hear most often:

Male Student Trends

- Boys are more physical
- Boys need more space to learn
- Boys are not as good at reading and writing as girls

Female Student Trends

- Girls produce more drama
- Girls tend to multitask better
- Girls will write with more detail

How Do Gender Trends Affect Your Teaching?

If we acknowledge that boys and girls have different learning and behavior management needs, then we must also acknowledge that we need to differentiate for those needs. When planning lessons/activities or structuring learning environments keep in mind that physically, boys tend to be more active than girls, and by the same token more restless if they have to sit for long periods. They are also more prone than girls to rely on physical aggression if they are frustrated. Both of these tendencies are inconsistent with the typical demands of school life and could make it more likely that school will be a difficult experience for boys, even for boys who never actually get in trouble for being restless or aggressive. ASCD has published an article that lends itself to teaching to the “minds of boys”. It suggests

- Increase experiential and kinesthetic learning opportunities
- Support literacy through spatial-visual representations
- Let boys choose topics that appeal to them
- Make reading and writing purposeful
- Seek out male role models

You can read the entire article here: Ascd. (n.d.). With Boys and Girls in Mind. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov04/vol62/num03/With-Boys-and-Girls-in-Mind.aspx>.

Educator Self-care - Secure your own oxygen mask first before assisting children

Self-care is not selfish and yet so often educators put themselves last. Research tells us that happy educators lead to happy students. As schools across the country put more of a focus on social-emotional learning for their students, experts have come to realize that educator’s social-emotional competencies, especially their stress-management skills and their ability to regulate their emotions, are a vital piece of that puzzle. Educators need a level of social-emotional competence that’s way above the norm. You wouldn’t put the average person, in a classroom with 27 kids or driving a bus with 60 kids and expect them to be successful. As great as it is to get training on pedagogy, none of it really matters if you can’t cope with the emotional realities and daily stressors of education. Please take a moment and read through the following list of 12 Choices. The 12 Choices come from the Happy Teacher Revolution website. The vision of this organization is...for teachers to feel empowered to claim happiness as their own.

12 Choices from - Happy Teacher Revolution

1. I choose to be happy.
2. I choose to disconnect and detach with love.
3. I choose to be mindful.
4. I choose to make time for sleep.
5. I choose to get outside and get moving.
6. I choose to be grateful.
7. I choose what to overlook.
8. I choose the battles worth fighting.
9. I choose what to do next time and what to stop doing.
10. I choose to enjoy the relationships that matter.
11. I choose to schedule and prioritize what really matters.
12. No matter how the school year started, I choose to finish well.

Choose to make time for sleep - Choice Number 4

You make time for exercise, friends, video games and your favorite shows. But do you make time to sleep? Along with a balanced diet and regular exercise, sleep is one of the pillars of a healthy lifestyle. Getting the sleep that your body needs will help you be your best self. When your body is fully recharged by sleep, you will think more clearly and feel energized.

Tips to getting a good night's sleep:

- Identify a consistent bedtime that allows you to get the recommended hours of sleep. For adults age 18 - 64 it is recommended that you get 7 to 9 hours per night.
- Make it a goal to be in bed with the lights out by bedtime each night.
- Create a pre-sleep routine.
- Set a bedtime alarm to remind you when it is time to get ready for bed.
- Power down at least 30 minutes before bedtime by turning off your phone, computer, tablet and TV.
- Create the right environment for sleep; quiet, dark and a moderate temperature.
- Silence your cell phone notifications and keep the phone away from your bed during the night.
- Be aware that the effects of caffeine can last for 4 to 7 hours.
- Keep in mind, that alcohol can help you fall asleep however, it fragments your sleep making it less restful.
- Separate your day from your nighttime. It is very hard to shut down your brain or quiet anxious thoughts when you're on the go before bedtime.

Be the best you, let sleep recharge you tonight and every night.

Celebrations

Northpark, Farson, Black Butte, Eastside, and Pilot Butte are now completing paperless SWIS minor referrals! A special thank you from the district (and trees) to these schools. We appreciate their willingness to take a risk.



PBIS/SWIS To Dos

- March 6th will be the end of the third quarter. It is a district expectation that SWIS data be shared at a minimum once a quarter. If you need assistance with a SWIS drill down please don't hesitate to contact Tina S. or myself.