

# Smart But Scattered

Improving Executive Skills to Promote School Success

Speakers:

Peg Dawson, Ed.D., NCSP

Monday and Tuesday, May 11 - 12, 2020

8:15 AM – 3:45 PM

(Registration 7:45 - 8:15)

Brooklyn, NY

## Target Audience

OTs, SLPs, COTAs, parents, behavioral therapists, educators, administrators, guidance counselors, coaches and psychologists working with children

## Course Level

Introductory to intermediate

## Course Description

**Executive skills** are sometimes called “**the hidden curriculum**”. They are skills such as **task initiation, sustained attention, working memory, planning, organization, and goal-directed persistence** that are absolutely critical to school success, yet curriculum standards seldom, if ever, explicitly reference these skills.

Neuroscientists now tell us that these skills take a minimum of 25 years to reach full maturation, and the course of that development is influenced by experience, exposure, modeling, practice and direct instruction.

This workshop will provide participants with a **framework for understanding these key skills, how they develop in diverse populations, and how to support executive skills by embedding them into classroom routines and lessons**. The course will also discuss tailoring interventions to meet the **needs of individual students and classrooms**.

## Speaker

In over 40 years of clinical practice, **Dr. Peg Dawson** has worked with thousands of children who struggle at home and in school. At the center of

their struggles are often weak executive skills. Along with her colleague, Dr. Richard Guare, she has written numerous books on this topic for educators, mental health professionals, and parents, among them *Smart but Scattered*, *Smart but Scattered Teens*, *Executive Skills in Children and Adolescents*, and *Coaching Students with Executive Skills Deficits*.

Peg is also a past president of the National Association of School Psychologists, and the International School Psychology Association, and is a recipient of NASP's Lifetime Achievement Award.

*Disclosure: Peg Dawson receives a speaking fee for her presentation. She has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Educational Credits

**12 contact hours. Certificates will be awarded.**



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This course is offered for up to 1.2 ASHA CEUs (Intermediate level, Professional Area).

# Schedule

**8:15 AM – 3:45 PM**

**Registration: 7:45 AM - 8:15 AM**

## DAY 1

### **8:15-10:30 Overview of Executive Skills**

- Definitions
- Underlying Theory

This portion of the presentation will go through the 11 executive skills individually, providing clear definitions and examples of the kinds of evidence-based interventions that support each executive skill.

### **10:30-10:45 BREAK**

### **10:45-12:00 Executive Skill Development Across the Lifespan**

- Normal executive skill development from infancy through adulthood
- Negative influences on executive skill development (birth issues, head injuries, and disorders such as ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder)
- Key brain processes that control executive skill development

Audience activity: Link specific executive skills to behavioral descriptors of executive skill strengths and challenges

### **12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH**

### **1:00 – 2:30 Assessment of Executive Skills**

- Parent/Teacher/Student Interviews
- Behavior Rating Scales
- Formal/Informal Assessment

### **2:30 – 2:45 BREAK**

## **2:45 – 3:45 Modifying the Environment to Support Students with Weak Executive Skills**

- Changing the Physical or Social Environment
- Modifying Tasks
- Changing the Way Adults Interact with Students

# **DAY 2**

## **8:15 – 9:15 Teaching Executive Skills by Embedding Them in Daily Routines**

- Bedroom Cleaning
- Teaching Students to Make Homework Plans
- Teaching Students an Organizational System

Audience activity: Design a home or classroom routine that incorporates one or more executive skills

## **9:15 – 10:30 Embedding Executive Skills into Classroom Content-Area Lessons**

- Outline 3-step procedure for taking any classroom lesson or problem situation and identifying 1) key executive skills required to complete the task successfully; 2) the obstacles that prevent students from using those executive skills successfully; and 3) strategies students might use to overcome the obstacles.
- Provide several examples
- Complete one example based on audience suggestion

Audience activity: Practice the process individually or in small groups

## **10:30 – 10:45 BREAK**

## **10:45 - 12:00 Designing Student-Centered Interventions to Address Specific Contexts Impacted by Weak Executive Skills**

- Outline step-by-step procedure for designing student-centered interventions
- Provide several examples

Audience activity: Using case examples provided or from the caseload of participants practice designing student-centered interventions

**LUNCH: 12:00 – 1:00**

**1:00 – 1:45 Using Incentives to Encourage Practice**

- The benefits of using incentives or rewards
- Simple incentives
- Elaborate incentives/behavior contracts (more complicated incentive systems to encourage practice of new skills over a longer period of time). Specific examples provided.

**1:45 – 2:30 Classroom or Small Group Curricula for Teaching Executive Skills**

- Incorporating all 3 strategies into whole-class routines
- Seminars for middle or high school students as a vehicle for teaching executive skills

**BREAK: 2:30 – 2:45**

**2:45 – 3:45 Coaching**

- Theoretical underpinnings of coaching (the research base supporting the practice)
- Coach job description
- Fundamentals of Coaching for Academic Success
- Coaching Students to Promote Positive Social Interactions
- Coaching Examples

# Learning Objectives

By the end of this workshop, learners will be able to:

- **To describe the brain processes involved in executive skill development both in typically developing children and those with executive dysfunction (such as ADHD).**

- **To identify how executive skills impact school performance and daily living.**
- **“Best practices” in assessing executive skills, including both formal and informal measures.**
- **To design interventions for improving executive skills in students, including 1) how to make environmental modifications to support weak executive skills, 2) how to develop protocols for teaching executive skills by embedding them in daily routines and classroom lessons, and 3) how to design student-centered interventions targeted to specific problem situations and executive skill challenges.**
- **The critical features of a coaching method geared toward improving school performance through supporting executive skill development.**

## **Pricing Information**

**Early Bird Registration** (by March 31, 2020)

**\$525**

**Standard Registration** (after March 31, 2020)

**\$550**

**Group Registration** (3 or more registrants by March 31, 2020 - must register on the same day and each registrant must mention the others on her registration form):

**\$485**