FOUR-WEEK SKILL DEVELOPMENT PACKET

Keystone ADHD Method™

Executive Function Skill Development Rubric

Notice patterns. Build practical supports. Track meaningful progress.

Ten executive function areas. Three skill levels.
A baseline and four weekly reviews.

Use this packet with a clinician, coach, or chosen support person.
Choose one or two skills and a small, observable goal.

Developed by Caleb Brooks, LICSW

Keystone Counseling Healthcare
Version 1.2 | Four-week practice packet

Inside this packet

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3-4	Executive function scale
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Bring the completed tracker to your next review.

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How to use & track progress

Start with a real-life goal

1. Choose a setting. Use one routine, such as homework, a work task, or getting ready. Pick one or two priority areas.

2. Establish a baseline. Before practice begins, review all ten areas on pages 3-4. Record the best-fitting level on page 5.

3. Try one support. Choose a practical experiment from pages 7-9. Write down the cue, action, and one thing to observe.

4. Review weekly. Rate the previous seven days in a similar setting. Use examples and record the tools or prompts that helped.

Use the same rating approach

Rating	How to select it
1 | Awareness	Recognizes the pattern; support is still needed to respond consistently.
2 | Structure & Tools	Uses an external strategy or routine to support the skill.
3 | Integration & Mastery	Applies and adapts the skill proactively; helpful tools may remain in use.

N/O = not observed or no opportunity. Use the full descriptions on pages 3-4. Record who rated the skill and keep the setting consistent when possible.

A four-week observation plan

When	Practice focus	What to record on page 5
Week 1	Notice patterns and test one support.	Rate all areas; note one example and the tool or prompt used.
Week 2	Repeat the support; adjust one detail.	Note what was easier, harder, or unchanged.
Week 3	Practice in another similar situation if useful.	Record whether the support transferred and what help was needed.
Week 4	Review the pattern and choose the next step.	Compare with baseline using examples, context, and supports.

Ratings support discussion and progress tracking. Four weeks is a review window, not a promised improvement timeline.

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Executive Function Skill Development Rubric

Version 1.2 | Digital PDF

Ten executive function areas across three levels of skill development.

Executive Function Area	Level 1 Awareness	Level 2 Structure & Tools	Level 3 Integration & Mastery
Time Awareness (Time Blindness)	Notices time disappears when deep in a task or procrastinating. Cannot visualize “next week.”	Uses visual clocks, alarms, weekly planners; starts building time-mapping habits (day → week → month).	Can mentally “zoom out” to see hours, days, weeks. Plans across timelines and shifts based on priority. Uses time proactively, not reactively.
Task Initiation	Aware of internal resistance to starting, even when task is simple. May label it as “laziness.”	Uses 5-Minute Rule, body-doubling, or “Just Open the Tab” strategy. Connects to purpose.	Can initiate tasks with or without pressure. Uses self-talk and energy tracking to start aligned tasks on time.
Working Memory	Frequently forgets mid-task steps or instructions; overestimates memory.	Uses post-it summaries, checklists, or “verbal previewing” tools. Summarizes directions before acting.	Can mentally hold key items and manipulate info. Routinely checks internal working memory against external support (notes/tools).
Planning / Prioritizing	Knows what needs to get done, but everything feels equally urgent or overwhelming.	Begins separating urgent vs. important. Uses color-coding or Eisenhower matrix to prioritize.	Can break goals into weekly/daily steps. Revises plans based on real outcomes. Has tiered systems (Quick Wins / Deep Work / Someday).
Cognitive Flexibility	Struggles when plans change or when switching between mental modes.	Practices “If → Then” flexibility thinking. Role-plays alternate outcomes. Uses “both/and” statements.	Can pivot quickly without emotional flooding. Uses reframing language automatically. Welcomes novelty as adaptive.

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Ten executive function areas across three levels of skill development.

Executive Function Area	Level 1 Awareness	Level 2 Structure & Tools	Level 3 Integration & Mastery
Emotional Regulation	Can name frustration or shame but struggles to pause once triggered.	Uses “Name it to Tame it,” breathing, somatic resets, or DBT tools (STOP, TIP). Builds buffer time before hard tasks.	Recovers emotionally mid-task. Applies cooling-off techniques within minutes. Can respond rather than react in real-time.
Self-Monitoring (Metacognition)	Often unsure how long things take or whether focus was productive. May overwork or under-engage.	Tracks time/energy after tasks. Journals outcomes. Reviews habits weekly. Begins estimating and adjusting future workload.	Anticipates personal traps (e.g., late nights, overplanning). Uses reflection to tweak behavior before issues arise.
Impulse Control (Inhibition)	Acknowledges that impulse decisions or distractions cause regret, but struggles to interrupt them.	Builds pause routines: “Do I need to act now?” Uses blockers, cooling rituals, or anti-impulse friction.	Chooses long-term over short-term rewards. Delays gratification in service of aligned goals. Regularly creates low-distraction environments.
Organization (Mental & Physical)	Knows things are “everywhere” but still manages to keep up. Loses items often or double-books.	Creates core “home zones” for items/tasks. Uses check-in rituals (Sunday Setup, Weekly Review).	Maintains simplified, sustainable systems. Has mental clarity from organized environments. Updates systems without resistance.
Sustained Attention	Zoning out mid-conversation, mid-task, or reading. Repeated need to refocus.	Uses time-blocking, micro-breaks, and novelty stacking to stay engaged. Recognizes overstimulation vs. understimulation.	Maintains attention across long blocks. Shifts attention by design, not distraction. Can tolerate low-stimulation tasks with internal support.

Four-week tracking scorecard

Participant / initials: _____ Rater / role: _____ Setting / routine: _____

Key: 1 = Awareness | 2 = Structure & Tools | 3 = Integration & Mastery | N/O = Not observed / no opportunity.
Use the scale descriptions on pages 3-4. Baseline comes before practice; weekly ratings describe the prior seven days.

Executive function area	Baseline Date: _____	Week 1 Date: _____	Week 2 Date: _____	Week 3 Date: _____	Week 4 Date: _____
Time Awareness (Time Blindness)					
Task Initiation					
Working Memory					
Planning / Prioritizing					
Cognitive Flexibility					
Emotional Regulation					
Self-Monitoring (Metacognition)					
Impulse Control (Inhibition)					
Organization (Mental & Physical)					
Sustained Attention					
Optional descriptive total*					

*Total 10-30 only when all ten areas have a 1-3 rating. No diagnostic cutoffs apply; interpret the individual areas and examples.

Weekly assessment notes

Week	One example + tool or prompt used	What helped / next small adjustment
1		
2		
3		
4		

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How skills build on one another

The three levels offer a practical pathway. Skills can develop unevenly, overlap, and vary by setting; they do not follow one fixed biological sequence.

1 | Awareness

Notice the pattern
Identify where a routine breaks down and describe a concrete example.

→

2 | Structure & Tools

Add a workable support
Use a cue, checklist, timer, or shared routine during a real task.

→

3 | Integration & Mastery

Adapt and apply
Use the support proactively, adjust it, and carry it into similar tasks.

Three skill buckets support the same task

Bucket	Areas in this scale	How the skills support one another
Thinking skills	Working Memory; Planning / Prioritizing; Cognitive Flexibility; Organization.	Hold the goal in mind, arrange the materials and steps, and create another plan when needed.
Action skills	Task Initiation; Sustained Attention; Time Awareness.	Use a clear next step to begin, stay engaged, and check the time available.
Self-regulation skills	Emotional Regulation; Impulse Control; Self-Monitoring.	Pause, manage the response to difficulty, and use feedback to change the next attempt.

Example: completing an assignment
Organize materials and select one step → use a timer and begin → notice frustration, reset, and return → review the result and update tomorrow's plan.

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Sample interventions | Part 1

PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Choose one experiment at a time. Adapt the task, cue, support, and duration to the person and setting.

Executive function area	Notice → Practice → Extend	Track one example
Time Awareness (Time Blindness)	**Notice:** Estimate how long one task will take before starting. **Practice:** Use a visible timer; compare the estimate with actual time. **Extend:** Add a buffer and plan the next similar task using recent estimates.	Estimated vs. actual minutes; on-time starts.
Task Initiation	**Notice:** Name the first observable action, such as opening the document. **Practice:** Try the first five minutes; use an accountability partner if helpful. **Extend:** Pair a consistent start cue with the first step in a familiar routine.	Planned vs. actual start; prompts needed.
Working Memory	**Notice:** Identify the point where instructions or steps get lost. **Practice:** Chunk directions, repeat them back, and use a short checklist. **Extend:** Check the list at task transitions and adapt it for similar tasks.	Steps completed with the chosen support; missed steps.
Planning / Prioritizing	**Notice:** Name one goal and its deadline. **Practice:** Plan backward into three steps; choose the most important next step. **Extend:** Compare the plan with the result and revise the next weekly plan.	Planned steps completed; one useful plan adjustment.

My selected experiment
When / where: _____ Support person / cue: _____
I will try: _____
I will track: _____
After practice, I will keep or adjust: _____

Practice examples adapted from the supplied 210 Strategies for ADHD guide and the Keystone ADHD Method. Using a support can remain part of mastery.

Sample interventions | Part 2

PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Choose one experiment at a time. Adapt the task, cue, support, and duration to the person and setting.

Executive function area	Notice → Practice → Extend	Track one example
Cognitive Flexibility	**Notice:** Identify a change that makes a routine feel stuck. **Practice:** Create Plan A and Plan B; practice a both/and statement. **Extend:** Try Plan B after a small change and review what made switching easier.	Plan B used; supports needed to return to the task.
Emotional Regulation	**Notice:** Name the emotion and one early body signal. **Practice:** Try comfortable breathing, sensory grounding, or a planned brief break. **Extend:** Use the early signal to choose a reset and return to an agreed next step.	Trigger, strategy used, and what helped recovery.
Self-Monitoring (Metacognition)	**Notice:** Predict the time, effort, or support a task may require. **Practice:** Record actual time, effort, and outcome after the task. **Extend:** Review the pattern weekly and change one part of the next attempt.	Prediction vs. outcome; one change for next time.

My selected experiment

When / where: _____ Support person / cue: _____

I will try: _____

I will track: _____

After practice, I will keep or adjust: _____

Practice examples adapted from the supplied 210 Strategies for ADHD guide and the Keystone ADHD Method. Using a support can remain part of mastery.

Sample interventions | Part 3

PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Choose one experiment at a time. Adapt the task, cue, support, and duration to the person and setting.

Executive function area	Notice → Practice → Extend	Track one example
Impulse Control (Inhibition)	**Notice:** Notice the cue, urge, and likely consequence. **Practice:** Practice a pause; reduce one distraction or add a visual reminder. **Extend:** Choose a plan in advance, such as parking the phone during a work block.	Pauses used / opportunities; which support helped.
Organization (Mental & Physical)	**Notice:** Choose one frequently misplaced item or confusing information flow. **Practice:** Create a labeled home for the item and a short reset routine. **Extend:** Review the system weekly and simplify it to fit actual use.	Finding time or missing items; resets completed.
Sustained Attention	**Notice:** Notice when attention drifts and what is happening around you. **Practice:** Try a short single-task block, a visible timer, and a planned break. **Extend:** Adjust block length and the environment using your observations.	Minutes engaged, restarts, and supports that helped.

My selected experiment

When / where: _____ Support person / cue: _____

I will try: _____

I will track: _____

After practice, I will keep or adjust: _____

Practice examples adapted from the supplied 210 Strategies for ADHD guide and the Keystone ADHD Method. Using a support can remain part of mastery.

Contact & next steps

Keystone Counseling Healthcare

Caleb Brooks, LICSW
Questions about this packet or services? Contact the practice.

EMAIL

support@keystonecounselingcare.com

PHONE

(617) 468-6426

WEBSITE

keystonecounselingcare.com

Bring your tracker

At your next review, discuss:

1. One area that felt easier.
2. One support worth keeping.
3. One barrier that needs a change.
4. One small next-step goal.

About this packet

This packet supports collaborative skill discussion and progress tracking. It is not a stand-alone diagnostic assessment. Ratings and optional totals have no established diagnostic cutoffs in this packet.

Source materials: Keystone ADHD Method - Scale, Scorecards, and Cascade; 210 Strategies for ADHD (supplied materials).