Appendix B

Outline of Executive Function Training Curriculum

Each class consists of inhibitory control games, selective attention games, and cognitive flexibility/ imagination games.

Inhibitory Control Games (“Stopping our bodies”)

Objective: be able to stop oneself from performing actions that one is not supposed to do, understand that rules can change and be able to change behavior to adhere to new rules.

1. Sample Activities
   * Head-Shoulders-Knees-and-Toes (classic children’s song): during each verse, the name of a body part is omitted. Children must remember not to say the name of the body part even though they are pointing to it.
   * Red Light, Green Light: game in which children move after they hear “Green light!” and freeze when they hear “Red light!”
   * Simon Says: children perform an action only after the leader precedes the command with “Simon says…”
   * Bear/Dragon: puppet twist on Simon Says. Children perform an action only if the friendly bear tells them to do it. A more complex variation involves switching the rule halfway through so that children only respond to the dragon.
   * Freeze Dance: children dance (matching pace to the music, which shifts from fast to slow) while the music is playing, have to freeze in place when it stops.

Sample Homework

* Simon Says with clean up
* Simon says rule switch
* Red light green light

Selective Attention Games (“Paying attention”)

Objective: Be able to focus attention on relevant information to achieve specific goals. Be able to keep in mind information in order to achieve a goal.

1. Sample Activities
   * Sound Bingo: Each child has a card with 4 animals on it, when they hear an animal sound they place a marker on the matching picture.
   * Blink!: sort cards by a different characteristic (color, shape, or number)
   * Familiar Figures: Children match a card with a picture of an animal on it to one of three photos of animals that look similar to each other.
   * Matching/ Memory Game: Children will be shown 3-6 (depending on the week) picture cards that will then be placed on a board face down. Each child gets a turn selecting a card from a deck, and trying to match it to the card on the board.
   * Spot the Difference: Children have to spot all of the subtle differences between two pictures

Sample Homework

* Follow the leader with chores/clean up
* Memory card game

Cognitive Flexibility Activities (“Using our imaginations”)

Objective: Be able to think flexibly and creatively. Be able to reason under changing circumstances.

1. Sample Activities
   * Sing “The Opposite Song”
   * Cheerios Box: Bring a Cheerios box with a surprising object inside it. Children guess what might be inside besides Cheerios.
   * Read *Black? White! Day? Night!*: a story about opposites where children are prompted to guess what will happen next based on a clue
   * *Planet Opposites* story and Drawing Activity: After reading *Planet Opposites*, children draw pictures of things that could be silly or opposite in the classroom
   * Imagine Island: the class brainstorms and then collectively works on a large poster/ picture of “Imagine Island,” where everything is silly and opposite.
   * “Who am I” imagination game

Sample Homework

* Opposite game
* “Who am I” game
* Problem solving game