

Information booklet

3 Stage Executive Function Coaching Programme



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STRIVE

Who are Strive?



We are Emily Lanigan and Sal Uddin, Executive Function coaches with over 30 years combined experience in education and mental health support.

We founded Strive to allow us to provide comprehensive coaching programmes to children, young people and their families. Throughout our extensive careers and personal experiences, we have continually noticed a missing link in the support available for school and college aged young people.

To provide more support, we set out on a mission to engage schools and parents in in-depth coaching targeted at young people aged 18 and under. We have worked with schools, mental health professionals and fellow coaches to develop a bespoke 3-stage executive function coaching programme.

We believe that every young person has it within them to succeed, but we also understand that some may need a bit of assistance in realising their own greatness. Our coaching is designed to harness the strengths and skills of the coachee, whilst simultaneously developing their executive functions and providing an extremely solid foundation for moving forward throughout their teenage and adult life.

No two people are the same, and this is a principle that underlies everything we do. All programmes and workshops are tailored to suit the need of individuals, and coaching is a process in which the coach and coachee work together to inspire progress based on personal goals.

This booklet outlines the 3-stage programme available for young people between the ages of 9-18.



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What are executive functions and how can coaching help with dysfunction?

At their core, all executive functions (EFs) are skills that together, make up the management system of the brain. They enable us to make plans, set goals and complete our work.

Executive functions develop quickly during early childhood and continue to mature during adolescence and into the mid-20s. This timeline is why executive function coaching during the school years can play a vital role in the development of many areas of life, from organisation all the way to emotional processing.

For a variety of reasons, some people can find these skills difficult to manage. As a result, they may struggle with things such as:

- Completing homework and handing it in on time
- Losing track of time and personal belongings
- Becoming easily overwhelmed
- Impulsive behaviour (e.g. shouting out in class or overspending)
- Managing anxiety and stress

Look below at the main 8 executive functions. Do you recognise any that you or your child may struggle with?

- Emotional regulation
- Task initiation
- Working memory
- Planning & prioritising
- Organisation
- Self-management
- Impulse control
- Flexible thinking



3 stage programme

Strive has worked with schools and mental health practitioners to develop a comprehensive executive function coaching programme, for students of all ages.

Based on our mission: to **empower minds, ignite potential** and **nurture growth**, the programme offers individualised coaching for each young person and their family.

The stages are broken down into:

Stage 1: Empower

Duration: 8 weeks

The first stage of the programme is **empower**. During these 8 weeks, the coachee will build the foundations of executive functioning. For some, this may mean targeting emotional regulation, organisation or impulsivity, while others may find it beneficial to work on building social skills and resilience.

By the end of stage 1, the young person will be armed with knowledge on executive functions and how dysfunction may be affecting them in school and at home. They will be able to recognise areas for personal improvement, and this provides a solid base for moving onto stage 2.

Stage 2: Ignite

Duration: 6 weeks

During the 6 weeks of stage 2, **ignite**, the young person will set long, medium and short-term goals. They will build on their knowledge of executive functioning, and choose target areas for the coaching process. Alongside their coach, they will build a solid understanding of what *makes them tick*, and learn to harness this for present and future success. A big focus of stage 2 is accountability, where the young person will learn to take responsibility for their wellbeing and success.

By the end of this stage, the young person will have a much deeper understanding of their strengths, and will have a toolbox of strategies and techniques to manage these functions.

Stage 3: Nurture

Duration: Ongoing

By stage 3, each young person will receive a personalised **continuous support plan (CSP)**. They will have one coaching session every 2 weeks, to monitor progress and continue developing their independence. They will **nurture** the skills they have learned throughout the coaching process, and will work with their coach to maintain wellbeing and progress towards their goals.

Some young people will not need many sessions during this stage, others may need more regular support. Individual needs are constantly assessed and the CSP is flexible to meet these needs. Sessions are paid individually at £60 each.

Example programme

It can be helpful to understand the kind of things that may be included in your child's coaching. The sessions will differ depending on the needs of each young person but example of aims for each of the weeks can be seen below.

Parent sessions and check-ins can take place periodically throughout the programme. To understand what parent coaching entails, please see the next page.

Stage 1: Empower

1. Understanding what executive functions are and use a rating scale to pinpoint problem areas.
2. A deep dive into impulse control. What can cause impulsive behaviour (neurobiology) and what can we do to manage our impulsiveness?
3. Understanding anxiety and the biological mechanisms which underpin anxiousness.
4. What really are emotions? Understanding emotional regulation and linking thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Parent session included

Parent session included

5. Understanding executive dysfunction-friendly tools for managing organisation and planning.
6. What is working memory? Understanding how to manage distraction and keep on top of work.
7. The art of being reflective. How reflection can help us to measure progress and gain independence.
8. A look back on the last 8 weeks. Where did we start and where are we now? Setting goals for the next stage.

Parent session included

Parent session included

Stage 2: Ignite

1. Using highlighted executive function problem points from stage 1 to create targets for the next 6 weeks. What is important for you? What would you like to focus on?
2. Understanding the brain and the power it has in our wellbeing. Learning techniques for resilience and managing stress.
3. Recognising personal triggers and creating a calm down plan for overwhelming situations.

Parent session included

4. Building confidence in social situations. Recognising your positive traits and learning skills for coping with social anxiety.
5. Harnessing individual strengths and planning for the future. How can these strengths be implemented in exams, sports, career?
6. Reflecting on the coaching process so far. What have you learned about yourself? Has anything surprised you? Measuring progress using a variety of rating scales. Setting long term goals.

Parent session included

Stage 3: Nurture

Between stage 2 and 3, your child's coach will put together a continuous support plan (CSP). This CSP will draw on the previous coaching sessions to create the best course of action for each young person. It will recognise the strengths of the individual, as well as the target areas agreed on between the coach and coachee.

By this stage, the young person will be meeting with their coach once every 2 weeks to monitor progress and set new targets. Parent sessions will be carried out on an ad-hoc basis.

What is whole family coaching and why is parental support important?

Whole family coaching focuses on the entire family network, rather than one individual. We have seen that when parents/carers and siblings are receiving coaching, the outcomes are vastly improved.

Executive dysfunction is not just something that affects children at school. Every aspect of their life is ruled by executive functions, and when parents understand how to encourage growth and build structure within the home, the young person often begins to thrive.

The skills parents learn throughout coaching can be used to support their child as they entire further education and the world of work.

When parents receive coaching from us, it is an opportunity for them to work through any barriers they are facing with their child's executive dysfunction. We recognise that sometimes, parents can feel stuck and not know what to say or do to help their child.

Our parent coaching sessions are a judgement free zone. A safe space to explore challenges, and build on strengths to develop healthy communication within the home. Perhaps your goal is to better support your child with emotional regulation, or help them to stay on track with their studies. Whatever your aims, Strive coaches are here to support you throughout the programme.

We understand that being a parent is a full time job, and with other commitments it may be difficult to commit to regular sessions with a coach. However, we also know that having parental input is vital to success in executive function coaching - and as a result, we can offer shorter "check-ins" compared to 45 minute coaching sessions.

We also periodically run workshops for parents to learn about executive dysfunction, as well as specific workshops for parents of children with ADHD, dyslexia, ODD and Anxiety. For more information on these workshops, please visit our website or contact your child's school.

