

Simon says

PAY ATTENTION!

WITH THE P.L.A.Y. METHOD, CHILDREN:

- Have fun
- Learn about executive functions
- Acquire strategies to strengthen performance
- Become active partners in managing their ADHD



Daniel Yeager, LCSW, RPT-S & Marcie Yeager, LCSW, RPT-S

Property of
Resource Management
Services

Ange

CONTENTS

Introduction

What is Executive Function?	1
How are Executive Function and ADHD Related?.....	2
Implications for Treatment: Provide External Support at the Point of Performance.....	3
Integrating the Simon Says Program into an Overall Treatment Plan	4
How to Use this Manual	5
The P.L.A.Y. Formula: How It Works.....	6
For Parents: A Bird's-Eye View of the Simon Says Program	8
For Children: A Bird's-Eye View of the Simon Says Program	10

Working Memory

Rationale and Overview.....	15
Play: Introduction and Skills Checklist	17
Game: <i>Simon Says Pay Attention</i>	18
Link: Story: <i>The Morning DJ</i>	23
When Do People Use This Skill in Real Life?	26
Assign: Overview of Assignments.....	29
<i>Don't Forget</i> cue cards	31
Secret Signal cues	35
Wrist Lists	37
Ready, Set, Go for it!	45
Yahoo: Encouraging Words.....	47
Skill Trackers	48
Strategies for Success	51

Behavioral Inhibition

Rationale and Overview.....	55
Play: Introduction and Skills Checklist	57
Game: <i>Simon Says Don't Do It</i>	58
Link: Story: <i>The Distraction Zapper</i>	61
When Do People Use This Skill in Real Life?	64
Assign: Overview of Assignments.....	67
The On-Off Switch	69
Red Light Green Light	71
The Stay-on-Track Map	73
Yahoo: Encouraging Words.....	77
Skill Trackers	78
Strategies for Success	81

Shifting Focus

Rationale and Overview.....	85
Play: Introduction and Skills Checklist	87
Game: STOP, Relax, Focus, Go!	88
Link: Story: The Team Player	91
When Do People Use This Skill in Real Life?	94
Assign: Overview of Assignments.....	97
<i>Attention Please!</i>	99
<i>The Cool Down</i>	103
STOP and Think Poster	107
STOP and "B" Cool cue card.....	109
Yahoo: Encouraging Words	113
Skill Trackers	114
Strategies for Success	117

Goal Orientation

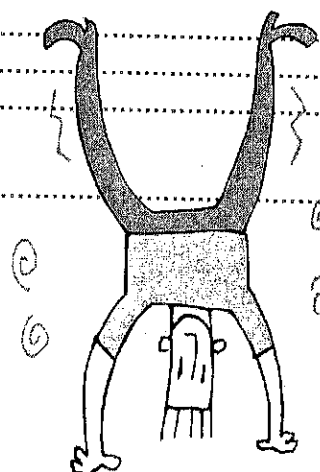
Rationale and Overview.....	121
Play: Introduction and Skills Checklist	123
Game: The Go-for-the-Goal Game Show	124
Link: Story: Have Fun-Get the Job Done	127
When Do People Use This Skill in Real Life?	130
Assign: Overview of Assignments.....	133
Make Your Own Game Plan	135
Encouraging Words cue cards.....	139
Beat the Clock.....	143
Yahoo: Encouraging Words.....	147
Skill Trackers	148
Strategies for Success	151

Assignment Suggestions & Forms

Suggestions	155
Home Assignments Form	156
Yahoo! Tickets	157

References.....

158

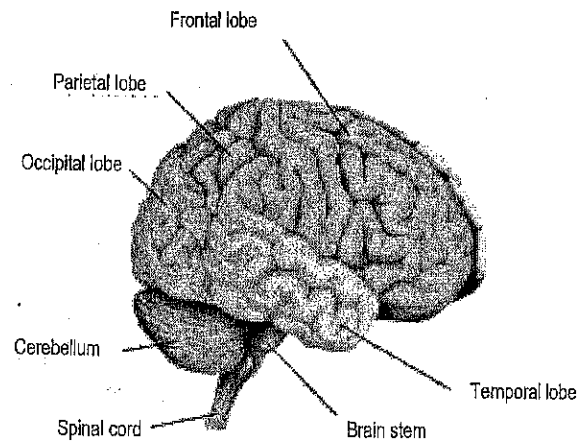


What is Executive Function?

Executive Function is a term used to describe a unique set of mental abilities.

In general, executive functions are a collection of related, yet distinct, abilities that allow the individual to direct and regulate his or her own behavior.

Studies have demonstrated that these functions are performed by the pre-frontal lobes of the cerebral cortex. Ongoing research is providing an emerging picture of how brain growth during childhood contributes to the development of executive function. *



Some commonly cited executive functions are:

Working memory: holding information in mind for the purpose of completing a task or activity

Initiating: beginning a task or activity

Behavioral Inhibition: not acting on impulse; appropriately stopping one's activity at a given time

Internalized speech: using "self-talk" to guide one's behavior and solve problems

Switching Focus: shifting from agenda A to agenda B; ability to move from one situation, activity or aspect of a problem to another as the situation demands

Emotional control: modulating one's emotional response appropriately to the situation or stressor

Goal orientation: establishing an image of the goal in one's mind and using that internal image to direct one's behavior

Self-monitoring: checking on one's actions during an activity to assure attainment of a goal

Planning: anticipating the future, setting goals, developing steps ahead of time

Organizing: establishing order in an activity or space, carrying out a task in a systematic manner

Sense of time: keeping track of the passage of time and altering one's behavior in relation to time

Foresight: ability to predict and plan for the future

* Zelazo, Philip David. Executive Function Part Four: Brain growth and the development of executive function.
www.aboutkidshealth.ca

How are Executive Function and ADHD related?

A new understanding of ADHD

Current researchers in the field of ADHD have advanced varied ideas and models for how executive functions are related to ADHD. We will briefly discuss two of these models, Russell Barkley's and Thomas Brown's.

Types of ADHD:

ADHD, Predominantly Inattentive Type
ADHD, Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type
ADHD, Combined Type

-DSM-IV

1. Russell Barkley model*

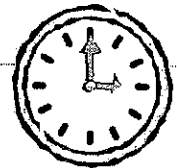
- Barkley limits his model to ADHD, Combined Type.
- Barkley gives primacy to behavioral inhibition as the primordial executive function upon which the development of all other executive functions depend.

Barkley identifies the primary executive function as **behavioral inhibition** which includes: inhibiting responses before actually acting them out, interrupting on-going responses, and resisting distractions. Behavioral inhibition lays the foundation for the development of the other executive functions, which he identifies as

- **Working Memory:** holding events in one's mind, sense of time, forethought, hindsight, self-awareness
- **Internalized Speech:** speech directed toward self, self-questioning, self-directing, generation of rules
- **Self Regulation of affect, motivation and arousal**
- **Reconstitution:** creativity and problem-solving, "playing with" ideas and behaviors by taking them apart and re-assembling them to form novel solutions

Working together, these functions allow for **Behavioral Control:** execution of goal-directed responses, goal-directed persistence, task re-engagement following disruption, sensitivity to response feedback and behavioral flexibility.

*Barkley, Russell. **ADHD and the Nature of Self-Control.** The Guilford Press, 1997



Sense of time

is one of the types of information that is not as readily internalized by the person with ADHD. In fact, Barkley believes that "time is the ultimate yet nearly invisible disability afflicting those with ADHD." (Barkley, 1997, p.337) Barkley states that "the behavior of those with ADHD makes perfect sense once time, or the lack of it, is taken into account in the analysis of their behavior." (Barkley, 1997, p.315)

2. Thomas Brown model*

- Applies his model to all types of ADHD
 - Views behavioral inhibition as just one of multiple executive functions.
- He identifies six different sets of Executive Function that are affected in ADHD:
1. **Activation:** Organizing, prioritizing, and activating
 2. **Focus:** Focusing, sustaining, and shifting attention to tasks
 3. **Effort:** Regulating alertness and processing speed, sustaining effort
 4. **Emotion:** Managing frustration and modulating emotions
 5. **Memory:** Utilizing working memory and accessing recall
 6. **Action:** Monitoring and self-regulating actions

*Brown, Thomas. **Attention Deficit Disorder: The unfocused mind in children and adults.** Yale University Press, 2005

In both models, it is stressed that :

- As the executive functions develop, children become less controlled by external sources and more capable of regulating and directing their own behavior.
- **ADHD** represents a **delay in the development** of this shift from outer to inner control.

Implications for Treatment:

Provide External Support at the Point of Performance

ADHD as a disorder of performance

Barkley makes the point that ADHD should be considered a disorder of **performance** rather than of **knowledge** or **skill**. (Barkley, 1997)

- People with ADHD are just as “smart” as anyone else, but due to deficits in the internally represented information and sense of time, the person has difficulty applying his knowledge and skills throughout the course of his or her day-to-day performance.
- Consequently, no matter how smart or talented the child with ADHD may be, he is not on an even playing field with his peers.
- However, parents and caregivers can help the child compensate for these differences by providing a longer period of **externalized support** for the executive functions.

What ADHD is:

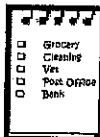
ADHD is a delay in the development of the shift from outer to inner control.

What ADHD is not:

ADHD does not mean the child is less intelligent, talented or skillful.

External support provides a more even “playing field”

With external support in place, the child with ADHD is able to **perform** beyond what his actual development would allow. That is, he is able to use his knowledge, skills and abilities on par with his peers, without being as handicapped by his slower development of the executive functions.



A simple example of externalizing an executive function is one that many of us use on a daily basis: a “to-do” list. When I set out in my car to run errands, rather than relying on my **working memory** (an executive function), I write down a list of things I need to do and use that list to prompt me to initiate the required actions. The list provides an external structure that supports my working memory.

Provide external support at the “point of performance”

Barkley also emphasizes that, to be most effective, the externalized support should be available at the **point of performance**. (Barkley, 1997)



Making a list can be helpful in and of itself, as a way of organizing my thoughts about what I need to do. But it will be far more helpful to me if I don't leave it at home. If I have it with me, on my person, or at least in my car, as I navigate the errands to be done that day, it will always be available at the **point of performance**—the natural setting in which I need to recall just what it is I need to do next.

Point of Performance and the Parent as “Coach”

On the following pages, you will read about the **Simon Says** program, designed for therapists who work with children diagnosed with ADHD. Because of the importance of using interventions at the **point of performance**, parent participation is an integral part of the **Simon Says** program.

The therapist's role is to use his/her clinical skills to help educate and motivate the child, suggest strategies, and provide tools.

The parent's role is to see that the child uses those strategies and tools **when** and **where** they are needed.

In the **Simon Says** program, the parent's role is similar to that of a coach. As a coach, the parent

- Motivates the child by providing a vision of success.
- Creates interesting (and fun!) practice sessions.
- Sees that the child uses tools at the point of performance.
- Recognizes even small signs of progress and provides encouragement.



Integrating the *Simon Says* Program into an Overall Treatment Plan

The *Simon Says* program is part of an overall treatment plan for ADHD.

It should, of course, be noted that there is currently no "cure" for ADHD and that all aspects of treatment are directed toward the successful **management** of this condition. Typically, this management includes:

- **medication**,
- **adaptations** in the school setting, and
- **behavior management** at home.

While these interventions are effective, the child is for the most part, a passive (and sometimes resistant) recipient of these interventions. The *Simon Says* program is meant to

- **engage the child as an active participant in treatment.**

The *Simon Says* program is intended to be one part of an overall treatment plan for ADHD.

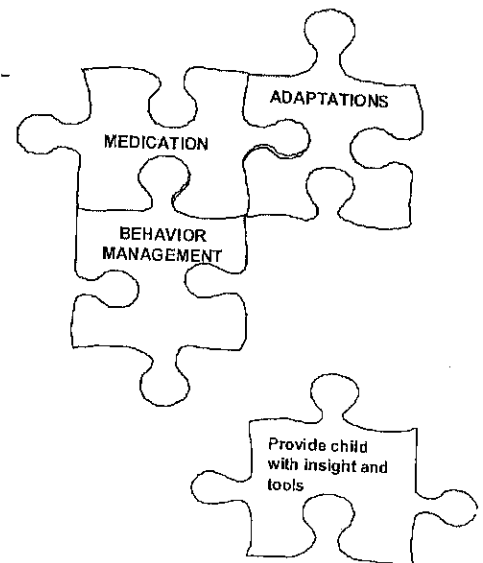
Children are capable of gaining insight into what ADHD is and is not. The concept of executive function provides specific language that will help them understand the challenges that they face.

Using the "language of play," the therapist can:

1. help the child understand the importance of skills/abilities related to executive function
2. give the child opportunities to demonstrate behaviors related to executive function
3. help the child acquire habits and tools that will enable them to compensate for ADHD-related difficulties.

Skills learned in the *Simon Says* program prepare the child for long-term goals.

ADHD is a long-term condition, and management of this condition will need to continue over many years. Parents will need to be prepared to manage their child's treatment throughout their formative years. But many individuals diagnosed with ADHD continue to experience difficulties into their adult years. With the *Simon Says* program, our aim is to begin--in the elementary and middle school years--to instill in the child an accurate understanding of ADHD. With the right foundation, that child will grow into a young adult who has the insight and tools to thrive on his or her own.



Co-existing conditions and issues

As therapists, it is important for us to keep in mind that ADHD doesn't exist in a vacuum.

First, some children diagnosed with ADHD have co-existing conditions, including Specific Learning Disabilities, Anxiety, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, and Conduct Disorder.

Second, many children referred for treatment for ADHD are also dealing with other life issues such as trauma and/or grief and loss.

While ADHD may be what brings the child to the therapist's office, it is also important for the therapist to identify and address these other conditions and issues.

How To Use the Simon Says Manual

This manual is divided into four sections, each focusing on a particular executive function:

- Section 1. Working Memory**
- Section 2. Behavioral Inhibition**
- Section 3. Shifting Focus**
- Section 4. Goal Orientation**

Each section provides ways for the therapist to provide **external support** for that function. This is done in two ways

1. Play activities - Play is a natural way that children learn and practice behaviors that are essential to their development. For example, such games as *Mother May I*, *Simon Says*, and *Freeze Tag* require children to demonstrate **behavioral inhibition**. Play provides an engaging external framework for children to practice regulating their actions-- over and over again. Children with ADHD, by the nature of the condition, internalize more slowly and therefore will benefit from increased opportunities to use the natural medium of **play** to support their developmental progression from external to internal regulation.

2. Habits and tools - Children with ADHD make slower progress in internalizing regulation of their thoughts and behavior. Studies show that even when these children become adults, some executive functions may be less developed. Many adults with ADHD learn to compensate by using tools that externalize the executive functions. We previously cited the simple example of using a list as an external aid to working memory. This tool, when used consistently, can help the person with poor working memory perform on the same level as a person with much better working memory. In this manual, stories and assignments introduce children to the concept of using tools that will help help them to direct their behavior toward desired goals.

Order and pace of program

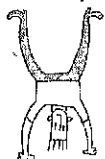
Order: It is recommended that the parts of the program be used in the *order* outlined in the manual, as each of these sections (*Working Memory*, *Behavioral Inhibition*, *Switching Focus*, and *Goal Orientation*) builds on information and tools presented in the previous section.

Pace: However, it is up to the therapist to determine the best pace at which to move through the program. There is great variance from one family to another as to how much time and repetition they need to incorporate the material into their daily lives.

The P.L.A.Y. Formula:

Each section of the manual is divided into four steps:

Step 1: **Play**



A playful activity introduces an executive function (or a group of functions) and allows the child to successfully perform actions related to that executive function.

Step 2: **Link**



Stories give a child-friendly example of the importance of the executive function in real life.

Worksheets link the function to everyday situations

Step 3: **Assign**



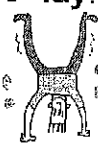



Several options for assignments are included in each section. These assignments give the child opportunities to practice behaviors related to the function and also provide tools to strengthen their performance in relation to that function.

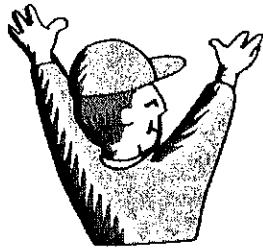
Step 4: **Yahoo!**



The final step provides ways for the therapist and parent to acknowledge effort and reinforce success.

How It Works

<p>STEP 1: Play.</p> 	<p>What: A playful activity introduces an executive function (or a group of functions) and allows the child to successfully perform actions related to that function.</p> <p>Who: Therapist leads the intervention for the child. The child's family can be included.</p> <p>Where: Therapist's office. (Families may like to have a copy of the activity to play at home.)</p>
<p>STEP 2: Link</p> 	<p>What: A real-life story shows a child experiencing a problem in his or her daily activities. (In order to make the stories more interactive, they are written in "play" form so that—if desired-- the child, family members, and therapist can role-play the story.) The story is followed by <i>Questions for Discussion</i> and <i>How Do People Use These Skills in Real Life?</i> worksheets. Each of these activities links the executive function to real life, real people. (Note: The therapist may need to make adaptations according to the child's reading and comprehension level.)</p> <p>Who: Therapist leads the intervention for the child. The child's family can be included.</p> <p>Where: Therapist's office. (Families may like to have a copy of the story to read at home.)</p>
<p>STEP 3: Assign</p> 	<p>What: Several options for assignments are included in each section. These assignments give the child opportunities to practice behaviors related to the executive function and also provide tools to strengthen their performance in relation to that function.</p> <p>Who: Therapist selects the assignment, and makes sure child and coach understand and will be able carry out assignment. The parent, acting as coach, oversees the implementation of the assignment at home.</p> <p>Where: The assignments are carried out at home.</p>
<p>STEP 4: Yahoo!</p> 	<p>What: Both the therapist and the parent/coach should acknowledge effort and reinforce success as the child carries out the assignments. Three reproducible pages are provided for the the therapist and parent to use:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each section contains an <i>Encouraging Words</i> page. This page gives examples of statements that the adults can make to point out areas of progress and to direct attention, in positive ways, to areas that still need some improvement. 2. Each section also contains two <i>Skill Tracker</i> pages that can be copied and given to the parent/coach. These give the adults the opportunity to recognize—in writing—occasions when the child uses the information and self-help tools that are currently being targeted. 3. At the back of the manual is a page of <i>Yahoo! tickets</i>. The therapist can copy these and award them to the child when reviewing assignments (and/or at other times as determined by the therapist.) The tickets can later be exchanged for rewards at the therapist's office. <p>Who: The therapist explains to the parent/coach how to use the <i>Encouraging Words</i> page and the <i>Skill Trackers</i> and gives copies to take home. The therapist decides how to use the <i>Yahoo!</i> Tickets and explains the process to the child.</p> <p>Where: <i>Encouraging Words</i> are examples of statements that can be used by the therapist in the office and by the parent/coach at home. <i>Skill Trackers</i> are used in the child's everyday environment. <i>Yahoo! tickets</i> are given at the therapist's office.</p>



For the PARENT-COACH:

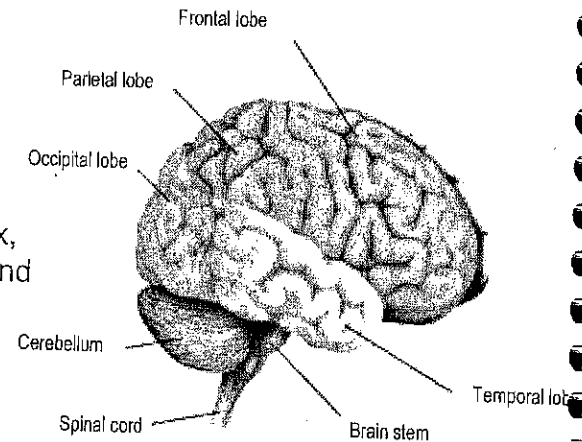
What is Executive Function?

Executive functions are a collection of related, yet distinct, abilities that allow the growing child to begin to direct and regulate his or her own behavior.

Studies have demonstrated that these functions

- 1) are performed by the pre-frontal lobes of the cerebral cortex,
- 2) develop throughout childhood and into late adolescence, and
- 3) allow for a shift from **outer** to **inner** control of behavior.

Current research indicates that ADHD may represent a delay in the development of executive functions.



ADHD & Executive Function: Helping your child to be more independent

What ADHD is not: ADHD does not mean your child is less intelligent, talented or skillful than other children.


What ADHD is: ADHD is believed to be a **delay** in the development of the shift from outer to inner regulation of behavior.

Due to delays in the development of executive functions, the child with ADHD simply does not have the inner resources to consistently harness his intelligence, talents and skills and steer them toward a particular end result. For him to get to that end result, he needs **external support** to compensate for his weaker inner regulation. When you find yourself constantly telling your child to STOP doing this, START doing that, *you* are making up for his weak inner regulation.

Until your child's brain functioning matures, he or she will continue to need that outer support. But that doesn't mean that you have to stand beside him every minute, directing him. You can teach him habits and give him tools that will provide some of that needed external regulation. And, since many children don't outgrow ADHD, those habits and tools will serve him all his life.

It's important that those tools be used at "the point of performance"—in the places and at the times that your child is having difficulty. In the **Simon Says** program, your role is that of "coach" to your child. Your child's therapist will educate your child about ADHD, suggest strategies, and recommend tools that your child can use to help himself. As your child's coach, you'll be in charge of seeing that the tools are used at the **point of performance**—when and where they are needed.

A Bird's-Eye View of the Simon Says Program

Executive Function	Example	 Coach's role	Sample interventions
Working Memory Holding information in mind in order to take the right action at the right time	Child is almost always late for the bus because he forgets to do all of the things needed to be ready for school.	<p><i>Because my child has difficulty with working memory, he needs external structure to help him remember what to do and when to do it.</i></p> <p><i>We can learn to use cues as a tool to help working memory. We can put our heads together and figure out what kind of cues will work best to "grab" my child's attention.</i></p>	<p>Game: Simon Says Pay Attention</p> <p>Story: The Morning DJ</p> <p>Assignments: <i>Don't Forget</i> cue cards Secret Signal cue Wrist Lists Ready, Set, Go for it!</p>
Behavioral Inhibition Stopping oneself from taking undesired actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child plays with the dog instead of getting dressed for school. 2. Child gets angry at someone and lashes out. 	<p><i>Using play, my child can practice STOPPING in response to specific cues.</i></p> <p><i>Then, I can use the same cues to remind my child to stop himself in "real-life" situations.</i></p> <p><i>I can teach my child the concept of on-track and off-track to help him better understand goal-directed behavior.</i></p>	<p>Game: Simon Says Don't Do It!</p> <p>Story: The Distraction Zapper</p> <p>Assignments: The On-Off Switch Red Light-Green Light The Stay-on-Track Map</p>
Switching Focus Moving from one activity to another as the situation demands	Parent tells child to stop playing outside because it's time go to the store. Child doesn't want to switch and throws a fit.	<p><i>I can help my child practice specific strategies for relaxing, calming down, and changing focus.</i></p> <p><i>With practice, these skills will become more habitual, and it will be easier for him to calm down and switch focus in real-life situations.</i></p>	<p>Game: STOP, Relax, Focus, Go!</p> <p>Story: The Team Player</p> <p>Assignments: Attention Please! The Cool-Down STOP and Think Poster STOP and "B" Cool cue card</p>
Goal Orientation Establishing an image of a goal in one's mind and using that internal image to direct one's behavior.	Child is told to clean room before going outside to play ball. When friends arrive, child is in room, playing a game, and the room is still a mess.	<p><i>I can give my child a way to externalize his goal by helping him make a visual game plan. It gives him a concrete way to "see" what needs to be done. It also gives him a way to keep track of his progress toward his goal.</i></p>	<p>Game: Go-for -the-Goal Game Show</p> <p>Story: Have Fun, Get the Job Done</p> <p>Assignments: Make-Your-Own Game Plan Encouraging Words cue cards Beat the Clock</p>

FOR CHILDREN:

Hi!

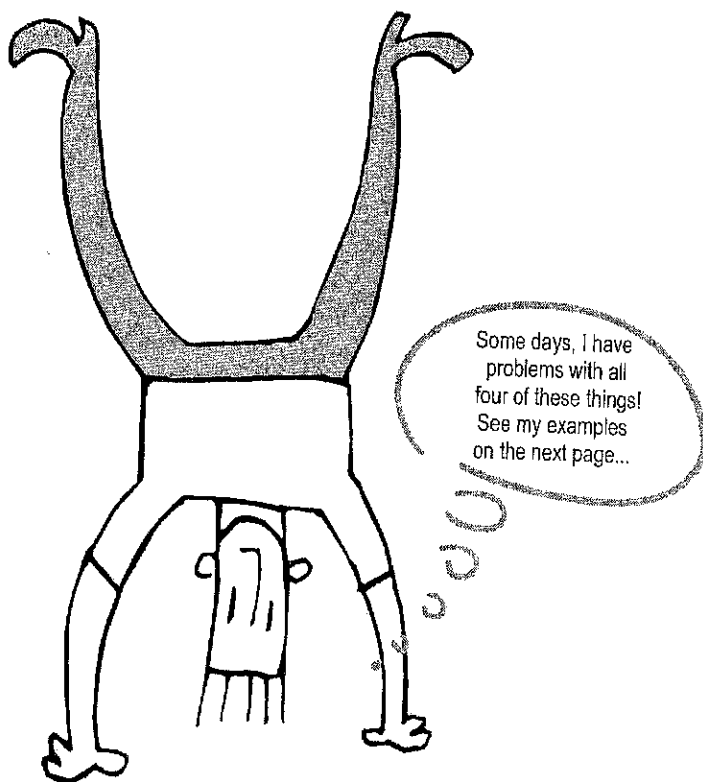
My name is Simon and I have ADHD.

Before I learned what ADHD really is, I used to think maybe I was *just dumb*.

But I learned that people with ADHD are as smart as anyone else. But sometimes they have a problem doing the right thing at the right time.

For example, they may:

- #1 forget all about what they are supposed to be doing
- #2 do something else instead
- #3 have trouble stopping one thing in order to begin something else
- #4 have trouble getting big jobs started and getting them finished on time.

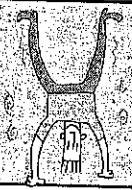


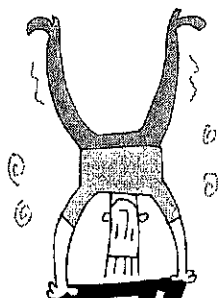
I go to a therapist and I've learned that I don't have to get smarter. (*I'm already smart!*) I just have to understand the *reason* I am having difficulty, then learn some ways to help myself.

And guess what? It's fun! We always start out by playing a game. Next, we read a story about another kid who is a lot like me. Then I have some assignments to do at home with my "coach" (that's my mom or dad.) The assignments are fun, plus I earn rewards when I do my assignments.

A Bird's-Eye View of the Simon Says Program

Here are some of the things I have learned so far:

Here's an example of what happens:	The reason this happens is because I have difficulty with:	My therapist teaches me things that I can do to help myself. For example:	The game that helped me get started is:
<p>#1</p> <p>When I get ready for school, I usually forget to do some of the things that I'm supposed to do. My parents fuss at me to do this, do that.</p>	<p>Working Memory</p> <p>I have trouble keeping things in my mind so I can take the right action at the right time.</p>	<p>I use cues to help me remember to do the right thing at the right time.</p> <p>My therapist, coach and I put our heads together and figure out what kind of cues will grab my attention and be a good reminder of what to do.</p> 	<p>Simon Says Pay Attention!</p>
<p>#2</p> <p>I play with the dog instead of getting dressed for school.</p> <p>I get mad at my friend and do something mean instead of explaining what's wrong.</p>	<p>Behavioral Inhibition</p> <p>It's hard for me to stop myself. Sometimes my brain doesn't even realize I'm doing the wrong thing until it's too late.</p>	<p>I play games to practice stopping myself. In the games, when I get a cue, I have to stop what I'm doing and not move at all.</p> <p>Then, my coach uses those cues in real life to help me remember to stop myself.</p>	<p>Simon Says Don't Do It!</p>
<p>#3</p> <p>My mom tells me to stop playing because it's time to go to the store. I don't want to do it and I throw a fit.</p>	<p>Switching Focus</p> <p>Once my brain is focused on one thing, it has a hard time letting go of that thing and focusing on something else.</p>	<p>I learned how to do a cool-down. It helps my brain and my body get ready to switch focus.</p> <p>I use a STOP sign to help me remember how to do the cool-down.</p>	<p>STOP, Relax, Focus, Go!</p>
<p>#4</p> <p>When it's time to clean my room, I never feel like getting started. Even when I really want to get it done, I get distracted and I lose track of time.</p>	<p>Goal Orientation</p> <p>I don't have a good picture in my mind of all the things I need to do and of how fast I need to work to get the job done.</p>	<p>When I have a big job to do, I make a game plan. It's a picture on paper, so I can see all the things I need to do and which one to do first. It has a START and a FINISH, so it looks kind of like a game board. I even use a game marker to keep track of my progress.</p>	<p>The Go-for-the-Goal Game Show</p>



That's My Cue!

Working Memory

SECTION 1: *That's My Cue!* (Working Memory)

Rationale for *That's My Cue!* Activities

What is the problem?

Children with ADHD often fail to get things done at the right time and in the right way. Parents and teachers may describe them as distracted and forgetful: their attention wanders "all over the place." One parent describes a typical morning scene: "I wake him up and tell him to get dressed. When I come back to check, he is still daydreaming. Then he is playing with the dog instead of eating breakfast, looking out the window instead of packing his book-sack. If I didn't *constantly* bring his attention back to the task at hand, he'd still be in his pajamas when the bus comes."

What Executive Functions are involved?

The executive functions involved are those of:

- **Working memory** (holding information in mind for the purpose of *completing* a task or activity).
- **Initiating** the required behavior (getting dressed, eating breakfast).

The demands of working memory are more complex when the task or activity involves a *series* of behaviors (dressing, eating, brushing teeth, and getting books ready.)

Executive Functions





- Working Memory
- Initiating Actions

What will help?

Children can learn to **use cues as a tool** to help them remember to get things done in the right way and at the right time.

- Cues provide **external support** for working memory.
- Cues can help children remember to **initiate** the necessary behavior.
- Parents can experiment to find cues that will be strong enough to "grab" the child's attention.
- Cues can be auditory, visual, even tactile, and some children will benefit from multi-sensory cues.
- For more complex behaviors, a series of cues can help to prompt a series of tasks.
- To be effective, cues need to be at the **point of performance**.

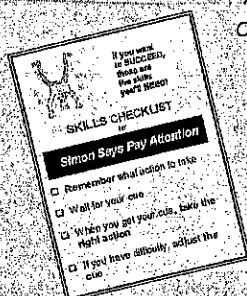
Overview of *That's My Cue!* Activities

	Activity or Assignment	Purpose	Page
Play 	<i>Simon Says Pay Attention</i>	In this game, children listen to a story and demonstrate their ability to use their working memory and to initiate the "right" action in response to cues. This activity also introduces the idea of adapting cues to the child's needs.	17
Link 	Story: <i>The Morning DJ</i>	When Jen's father had to give a speech, he and Jen made "cue cards" to help him remember what to say. Now her father shows Jen how to use a sequence of auditory cues to aid her working memory and help her to initiate the tasks required in getting ready for school in the morning.	23
	Worksheets	A review of the importance of cues in everyday life.	26
Assign 	<i>Don't Forget</i> cue cards	Child makes reminder cards to post at the "point of performance."	31
	Secret Signal cues	Child and coach collaborate to come up with signals that can serve as cues to remind child to initiate certain actions. The signals need to be strong enough to grab the child's attention.	35
	Wrist Lists	As with Jen in <i>The Morning DJ</i> story, these lists provide sequential cues for a <i>series</i> of tasks. Because the cues are attached to the wrist, they are always at the point of performance !	37
	Ready, Set, Go For It!	This activity introduces the concept of working memory and gives the child and opportunity to "test" his/her working memory.	45
Yahoo! 	Encouraging Words Skill Trackers	Adults provide feedback and encouragement as child practices new behaviors.	47

Section 1: That's My Cue! (Working Memory)



Review



In this activity, the player has to utilize his/her **working memory** in order to respond to a **verbal cue**. First, use the skills checklist, and point out what the player did correctly.

You used your working memory to remember what action to take (take just one step.)

Continue through the checklist

Note: There are **eleven** cues in the preceding story.

1. If the child responded to all or most of the eleven cues, without help, go through all of the items on the checklist. Then raise the level of challenge by going on to the activity (Simon Says Pay Attention #2, on pages 20-21)

2. However, if the player had some difficulty responding to all of the cues, tell the player:

Remember that one of the skills on the checklist was “If you have difficulty, adjust the cue.” Let’s think about ways to make the cues easier to pay attention to.

In order to understand why the child had difficulty, ask some questions such as:

What made it sometimes difficult to respond to a cue?

What did you do to help yourself when it was difficult?

What can I do to help you respond to the cues?

Possible ways to modify cues to provide more external support:

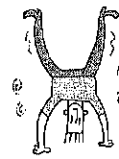
- Strengthen the verbal cue by changing the tone or volume of voice.
- Strengthen the verbal cue by adding eye contact.
- Pair the verbal cue with another type of cue: visual or tactile.
- Write the cue words on a piece of paper for the child to look at as the story is read.
- Have an additional “private cue” to serve as a signal that a cue has been missed.
- Be creative in finding cues that will work for the child.

Play it Again

With the child, decide how to “adjust the cue” and then repeat the activity, giving enough support so that the child responds to all eleven of the cues. It’s OK to stop in the middle and make further modifications to strengthen the cues, if needed.

When finished, go over the checklist and talk about the skills that they child demonstrated.

Section 1: *That's My Cue!* (Working Memory)



Play

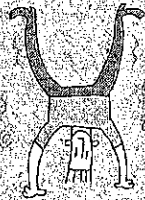
Play Intervention: *Simon Says Pay Attention*

In the game outlined on the next three pages, children listen to a story and demonstrate their ability to use their **working memory** and to **initiate** the "right" action in response to cues. This activity also introduces the idea of *adjusting cues* to the child's needs.

Begin by giving the child a copy of the checklist on this page. The checklist explains what the child needs to do to succeed at playing *Simon Says Pay Attention*. Go over the checklist with the child *before* playing the game and use it again to review *after* playing the game.

The purpose of the game is to let the child realize that he already has these skills.

In the steps following this **Play** activity (**Link**, **Assign**, and **Yahoo!**) the child and coach will learn strategies and tools that will help the child perform these skills when and where they are needed in day-to-day life.



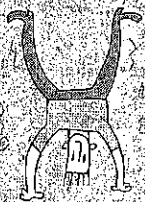
If you want to **SUCCEED**, these are the skills you'll **NEED!**

SKILLS CHECKLIST

for

Simon Says Pay Attention

- ☐ Remember what action to take
- ☐ Wait for your **cue**
- ☐ When you get your cue, **take the right action**
- ☐ If you have difficulty, **adjust the cue**



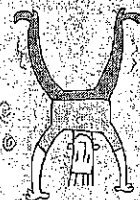
If you want to **SUCCEED**, these are the skills you'll **NEED!**

SKILLS CHECKLIST

for

Simon Says Pay Attention

- ☐ Remember what action to take
- ☐ Wait for your **cue**
- ☐ When you get your cue, **take the right action**
- ☐ If you have difficulty, **adjust the cue**



If you want to **SUCCEED**, these are the skills you'll **NEED!**

SKILLS CHECKLIST

for

Simon Says Pay Attention

- ☐ Remember what action to take
- ☐ Wait for your **cue**
- ☐ When you get your cue, **take the right action**
- ☐ If you have difficulty, **adjust the cue**



Review

In this activity, the player has to utilize his/her **working memory** in order to respond to a **verbal cue**. First, point out what the player did correctly.

You used your working memory to know what action to take (one baby step forward or back or right or left.) When you heard the cue, you took the correct action.

If the player had some difficulty responding to all of the cues, tell the player:

*Remember that one of the skills on the checklist was **"If you have difficulty, adjust the cue."** Let's think about ways to make sure that the cues really grab your attention.*

Some questions to ask:

What made it sometimes difficult to respond to the cues?

What did you do to help yourself when it was difficult?

What can I do to help you respond to the cues?

What can we do to make sure the cues really grab your attention?

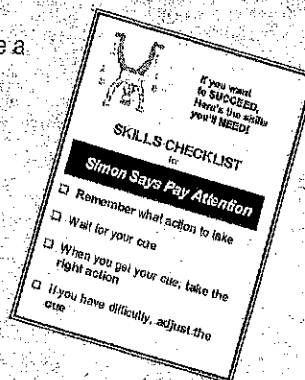
Possible ways to modify cues to provide more external support:

- Strengthen the verbal cue by changing the tone or volume of voice.
- Strengthen the verbal cue by adding eye contact.
- Pair the verbal cue with another type of cue: visual or tactile.
- Write the cue words on a piece of paper for the child to look at as the story is read.
- Have an additional "private cue" to serve as a signal that a cue has been missed.
- Be creative in finding cues that will work for the child.

Play it Again

With the child, decide how to "adjust the cue" and then repeat the activity, giving enough support so that the child responds to all eleven of the cues. It's OK to stop in the middle and make further modifications to strengthen the cues, if needed.

When finished, review the checklist and give a big **Yahoo!**





Review

In this activity, the player has to utilize his/her working memory in order to respond to a verbal cue. First, point out what the player did correctly:

You used your working memory to know what action to take (one baby step forward or back or right or left.) When you heard the cue, you took the correct action.

If the player had some difficulty responding to all of the cues, tell the player:

Remember that one of the skills on the checklist was "If you have difficulty, adjust the cue." Let's think about ways to make sure that the cues really grab your attention.

Some questions to ask:

What made it sometimes difficult to respond to the cues?

What did you do to help yourself when it was difficult?

What can I do to help you respond to the cues?

What can we do to make sure the cues really grab your attention?

Possible ways to modify cues to provide more external support:

- Strengthen the verbal cue by changing the tone or volume of voice.
- Strengthen the verbal cue by adding eye contact.
- Pair the verbal cue with another type of cue: visual or tactile.
- Write the cue words on a piece of paper for the child to look at as the story is read.
- Have an additional "private cue" to serve as a signal that a cue has been missed.
- Be creative in finding cues that will work for the child.

Play it Again

With the child, decide how to "adjust the cue" and then repeat the activity, giving enough support so that the child responds to all eleven of the cues. It's OK to stop in the middle and make further modifications to strengthen the cues, if needed.

When finished, review the checklist and give a big **Yahoo!**

If you want to SUCCEED, here's the skills you'll NEED!

SKILLS CHECKLIST
for **Simon Says Pay Attention**

- ☐ Remember what action to take
- ☐ Wait for your cue
- ☐ When you get your cue, take the right action
- ☐ If you have difficulty, adjust the cue



Simon Says Pay Attention #2

(Use after player has shown mastery at the previous activity.)

Play it Again

You can make the *Simon Say Pay Attention* activity more challenging by following the directions below. But it is very tricky. Have fun and don't take it too seriously! It might be a good idea to have the parent do this along with the child.

Tell the child:

*Are you ready to try again, and make it a whole lot harder? This time, you will take different actions for different cues. You will still take one step forward when you hear the cue words **Simon** and **Says** and **Pays** and **Attention**. But if you hear the word **Back**, that's your cue to move one step back. And if you hear the word **Right**, that's your cue to move one step to the right. And if you hear the word **Left**, that's your cue to move one step to the left. Remember the skills: you not only have to listen carefully for the cues, you have to take the right action at the right time and **only** at the right time. Are you ready?*

Far away, up on a hill, there lives a little rabbit. His name is **Simon**.

Every morning **Simon** wakes up and **says** good morning to the world. Then he starts to explore, going up and down the hill, back and forth, moving to the right and then to the left. He sniffs around, looking for something to eat. He doesn't have to go to the store and **pay** for his food like we do. It's all right there for him to take. Whatever comes to his **attention**, that looks good, **Simon** eats it right up. This morning, **Simon** doesn't eat everything that he finds. So there is some left for the other rabbits. But he doesn't leave much, so they will have to **pay** close **attention**. "I'll come back later to see if they found it," **Simon says** to himself.

After **Simon** eats, he turns his **attention** to other things. "I think I will go back up the hill and **pay** my respects to Mrs. Robin, he **says**. And **Simon** hops right over to the tree where she lives. "Hi there, **Simon**," **says** Mrs. Robin, peering over the edge of her nest. "Let me finish feeding my babies and then I will give you my full **attention**." She turns back to her babies and feeds them until there isn't a worm left. Then she turns back to **Simon**. "I'll be right with you as soon as I get them all tucked in." She tucks each baby into the nest. She gives special **attention** to the little one, who wiggles a lot and sometimes falls right out of the nest. Then she turns back to **Simon** and flies down to meet him. "Hi, **Simon**," she **says**. "I'm so glad you've come to **pay** me a visit."



PAGE 2

Narrator: Jen's dad had to make a speech at a meeting. He was worried that he might forget some of the things he was supposed to say. So he made a set of **cue cards**. On each card, he put a word to be a **cue**--a **reminder**--of what to say next. Then Jen drew a picture for each card, as an extra **cue**.

Father: Those cue cards helped me a lot. Without those cues, I would have forgotten some of the things I was supposed to say at the meeting, just like you forget some of the things you are supposed to do in the morning.

Jen: That was fun making cue cards! I liked drawing the pictures to help you remember what to say!

Father: Well, this new idea will be fun, too. It's called **The Morning D.J.** But instead of *seeing* your cues on cards you'll *hear* your cues--we'll put them on your i-pod.

Jen: A D.J. like on the radio?

Father: Exactly! Here's the idea: You'll pretend that you are a D.J. and you'll choose some songs and put them on your i-pod. The songs will be the **cues** to remind you what to do. No one will have to fuss at you!

Jen: How can songs be cues?

Father: You'll choose a song for each thing that you need to do in the morning. For example, you'll choose one song to listen to while you make your bed. When that song **starts**, you know it's time to make your bed--and you have to **finish** before the song is over.

Jen: I can do that!

Father: I know you can. And there will be a special song for each thing that you have to do in the morning. Each **song** will remind you of what task to do next. And you'll know that you have to get each task done before that song is over. That will help you get everything done on time.

Jen: I like that idea! Let's see, I have to make my bed, get dressed, eat, comb my hair, and brush my teeth.Oh, and feed Ginger! That's important. I love Ginger!

Mother: I know you do, and if you finish everything on time, you will still have plenty of time to play with Ginger or maybe even to watch TV.

Narrator: Jen smiled. She liked the sound of that. She hardly ever got to watch TV on school mornings.

Jen: When can I put the songs on my i-pod?

Mother: As soon as we get the table cleared and the dishes washed.


Jen: Let's go. I'll be thinking of which songs I want while we work.

THE END

** The Morning DJ technique was taken from the ADHD: Organizational Tips Section of About.com
(<http://add.about.com/cs/organizationtips>)

Section 1: *That's My Cue!* (Working Memory)



 If you want to SUCCEED, these are the skills you'll NEED!

SKILLS CHECKLIST

Simon Says Pay Attention

- ☐ Remember what action to take
- ☐ Wait for your cue
- ☐ When you get your cue, take the right action
- ☐ If you have difficulty, adjust the cue

When do people use these skills in Real Life?

When Jen's father had to give a speech, he and Jen made "cue cards" to help him remember what to say.

When Jen has difficulty getting ready for school in the morning, her father shows her how to use cues to help her remember to do the right thing at the right time.

The Morning D.J.

Mother: Jen? Jen! Are you still in bed? You'll to be late for school again! Get going. You need to make your bed, eat your breakfast, brush your teeth, comb your hair, get dressed, check your book sack, and be outside to meet the bus at 7:30 sharp.

Narrator: Jen sighed. She wished it was still summer. She made her bed and went to the kitchen for breakfast. Waffles! Her favorite! She felt a little better.

She sat down to eat her waffles. Uh-oh! The dog dish was empty. That was Jen's job. She got up and put out fresh food and water. Ginger came up and licked her hand.

Jen: Hi Ginger.

Narrator: Jen petted her soft fur. Ginger ran under the kitchen table and brought out a tennis ball.

Jen: OK Ginger, I'll play ball with you.

Narrator: She opened the back door and the two of them ran outside. Soon Jen was laughing and having a good time.

Father: Jen! What are you *doing*?..... You're still in your pajamas. The bus will be here in 15 minutes!

Jen: I'm sorry. Ginger wanted to play ball and I....

Father: I don't want to hear it! We can't go another year with you missing the bus. Get going. And I mean *now!*

.....
Narrator: At dinner that night, Jen's parents said they wanted to talk with her.

Mother: Honey, your father and I have been talking. We love you and we don't like yelling at you to get ready every morning.

Narrator: Jen looked at her mom and almost started to cry. She *hated* being yelled at.

Jen: I'm trying. I don't know what happens. I guess I just forget what I'm supposed to be doing.

Father: Yes, I think that is exactly the problem. And I heard about an idea that we think will help you remember what it is you are supposed to be doing.

Narrator: Jen looked at her dad, wondering what he was going to say next.

Father: Remember when you helped me make the cue cards for my speech?

Make this story come alive!

The story on the next page is written so that it can be read aloud as a "play."

If possible, have the child and other family members each read one of the four parts in this story. The parts are:

- 1) Mother
- 2) Narrator
- 3) Jen
- 4) Father

Have fun!

Hint: To make the parts easier to read, make a copy of the story for each reader. On each copy, highlight the part(s) that person will read. (See example below, with Jen's part highlighted.)

Do the same with the following stories in the other sections:

The Distraction Zapperpage 61

The Team Player.....page 91

Have Fun, Get the Job Done.....page 127

The Morning D.J.

Mother: Jen? Jen! Are you still in bed? You'll be late for school again! Get going. You need to make your bed, eat your breakfast, brush your teeth, comb your hair, get dressed, check your book sack, and be outside to meet the bus at 7:30 sharp.

Narrator: Jen sighed. She wished it was still summer. She made her bed and went to the kitchen for breakfast. Waffles! Her favorite! She felt a little better. She sat down to eat her waffles. Uh-oh! The dog dish was empty. That was Jen's job. She got up and put out fresh food and water. Ginger came up and licked her hand.

Narrator: Jen petted her soft fur. Ginger ran under the kitchen table and brought out a tennis ball.

Narrator: She opened the back door and the two of them ran outside. Soon Jen was laughing and having a good time.

Father: Jen! What are you *doing*?..... You're still in your pajamas. The bus will be here in 15 minutes!

Father: I don't want to hear it! We can't go another year with you missing the bus. Get going. And I mean *now*!

Narrator: At dinner that night, Jen's parents said they wanted to talk with her.

Mother: Honey, your father and I have been talking. We love you and we don't like yelling at you to get ready every morning.

Narrator: Jen looked at her mom and almost started to cry. She *hated* being yelled at.

Father: Yes, I think that is exactly the problem. And I heard about an idea that we think will help you remember what it is you are supposed to be doing.

Narrator: Jen looked at her dad, wondering what he was going to say next.

Father: Remember when you helped me make the cue cards for my speech?



The Morning D.J.

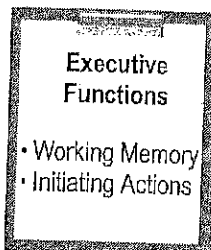
Questions for Discussion

- How do you think Jen feels about getting up in the morning for school?
- How many things does Jen need to do to be ready for school? How many things do you need to do?
- Was Jen being forgetful on purpose? (Explain your answer.)
- Jen's parents could have punished her for not being ready. But they decided to try a new idea. How do you think Jen felt about that?

Extra Questions

Remember the skills that you needed to succeed when you played ***Simon Says Pay Attention***. (see checklist at right) Which of those skills will Jen need to use to get ready in the morning using the Morning DJ?

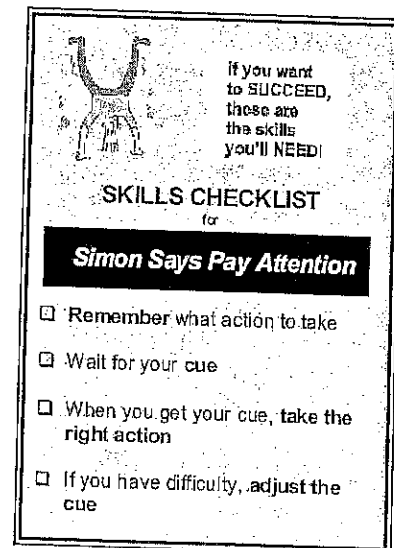
Working memory means that you can remember what it is that you need to do. Jen's father used cue cards to help his working memory. Jen is going to use songs as cues to help her working memory. When does *your* working memory need some help?



When using cues to aid working memory, remember that if the cues you select don't work, they can be adjusted or strengthened to be better "attention grabbers." For example, when Jen's father made his cue cards, she added a picture to his written words, thus *strengthening* the visual cue.

NOTE: The auditory cues in the "Morning DJ" technique will serve a dual purpose:

- 1) cueing Jen as to which task to **initiate** next and
- 2) externalizing Jen's **sense of time**, as the length of each song will also guide her to complete the task within a specified time period.





If you want
to **SUCCEED**,
these are
the skills
you'll **NEED!**

SKILLS CHECKLIST
for

Simon Says Pay Attention


- ☐ Remember what action to take
- ☐ Wait for your cue
- ☐ When you get your cue, take the right action
- ☐ If you have difficulty, adjust the cue

When do people
use these skills
in Real Life?

Person	What's their cue? <small>Choose one from "Cue" column</small>	What is the right action to take? <small>What happens if they take the right action?</small>	What happens if they don't take the right action?	Cue
Person waiting at home for friend to come for a visit				A Alarm clock buzzing
Person swimming in the ocean				B Starter gun
Football player				C Lifeguard's whistle
Hot and hungry child with money to spend				D <i>Hike!</i>
Person sleeping in bed				E <i>Knock, Knock!</i>
Runner at the race starting line				F Music from ice cream truck





 If you want to SUCCEED, these are the skills you'll NEED!

SKILLS CHECKLIST

for

Simon Says Pay Attention

- ☐ Remember what action to take
- ☐ Wait for your cue
- ☐ When you get your cue, take the right action
- ☐ If you have difficulty, adjust the cue

When do people
use these skills
in Real Life?

How about YOU?

When do you need to use these skills in Real Life?

At SCHOOL, what are some cues that you should respond to?

1) _____ 2) _____

What action do you need to take?

1) _____ 2) _____

At HOME, what are some cues that you should respond to?

1) _____ 2) _____

What action do you need to take?

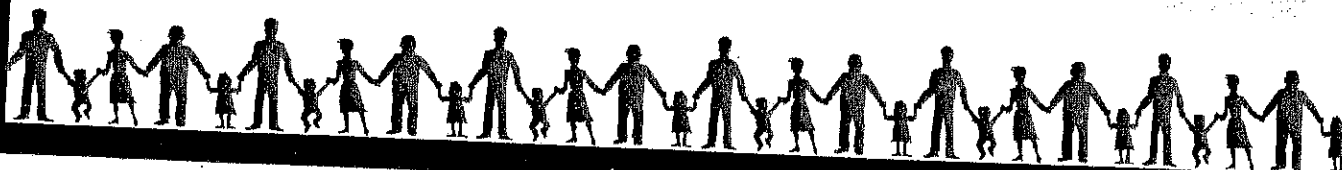
1) _____ 2) _____

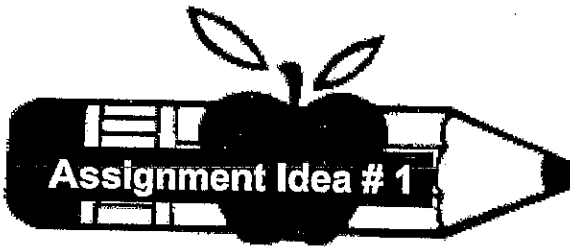
With FRIENDS, what are some cues that you should respond to?

1) _____ 2) _____

What action do you need to take?

1) _____ 2) _____





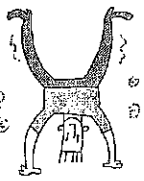
"DON'T FORGET" Cue Cards

RATIONALE: Creating written reminders can be an effective way of providing oneself with a **cue** to take a particular action. And, the closer the reminder is to the **point of performance**, the more effective it will be. (Point of performance means the time and place where you have to take that action.)

BENEFIT: This assignment can help the child acquire the helpful habit of using visual cues as **reminders** of things to do *and* thinking about the best placement for the reminders.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Copy the *Don't Forget* cue cards (on following page) on heavy paper. (Hint: To make it a better "attention grabber" copy on brightly colored paper.)

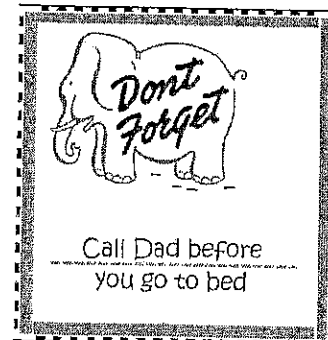
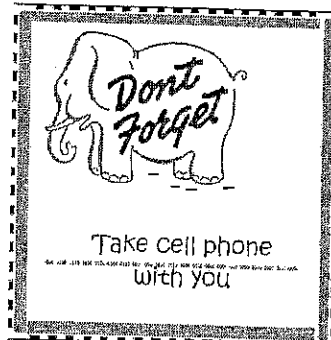
EXPLANATION FOR CHILD:



Have you ---or your parent---ever said, "Oh no, I completely forgot to _____"
(Fill in the blank: bring home my book, go to the bank, pick up the clothes from the cleaner)
Most people have, some more often than others! If you often forget, or if the thing to be done is very important, it's a good idea to write yourself a reminder. **That's the first step.**

The second step is think about the best place to put the reminder, so you'll be sure to see it at the right time.

For example:

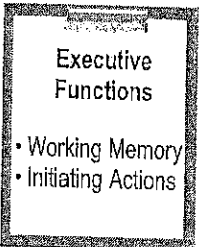


Where would be a good place to put each of these cue cards?

ASSIGNMENT:

Take home the **Don't Forget** cue cards and use them as cues to remind you "to do the right thing at the right time."

1. Write on the cue card the thing that you need to do.
2. Then think of the best place to put the card so you'll see it when and where you need to do that thing.



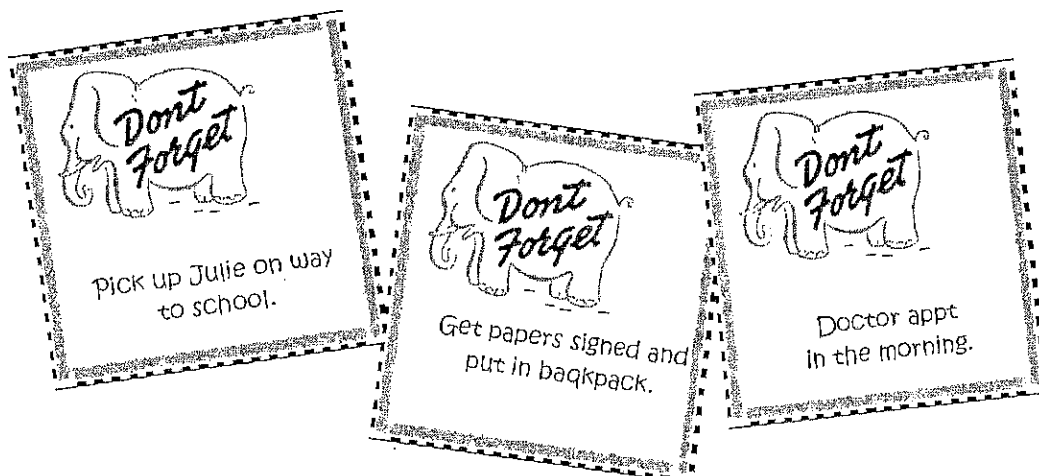
Coaching Tip



MEASURING SUCCESS: The emphasis should be on the child recognizing the need for a reminder, then making the cue card and posting it. The child may need help in figuring out a good spot to post the cue card, where it won't be overlooked. If the first spot you try doesn't work, try others. Remember that the child's **effort to solve the problem** is the essential **first step** toward success. Give encouragement to keep on trying.

VARIATION: The child can also help make a cue card for a parent to use, and help the parent think about where to put it. Whether done for self or others, this activity is a good way to learn about the concept of using written reminders as cues, and placing them for maximum benefit.

It's OK to measure success one small step at a time!





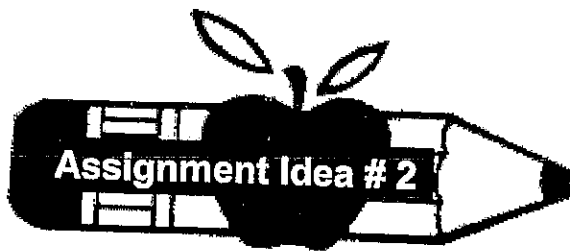
Coaching Tip



Secret Signals Lead to Success! Children are inspired by role models. A story about Michael Phelps, as cited in the April/May 2007 issue of **ADDitude Magazine**, can provide inspiration for this assignment. According to Michael's mother, Debbie Phelps, Michael was diagnosed with ADHD at age 9. She recalls a swim meet in which he came in second and angrily ripped off his goggles and threw them on the floor. She decided to teach him that good sportsmanship—and keeping one's composure—is as important as winning. Together, they came up with a signal that she could give him from the stands: she would form a "C" with her hand, which stood for "compose yourself."

Michael's mother knew that the plan was not only effective, but had "sunk in," when Michael gave her the "C" signal when she was getting stressed while making dinner.

www.additudemag.com



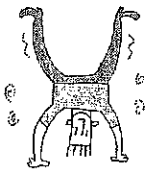
Secret Signal Cues

RATIONALE: In Assignment #1, cue cards at the **point of performance** are used to help someone remember to initiate a particular action. This is a good technique when one can plan ahead and foresee the need for a reminder at a particular time and place. There are many times, however, when a child might need to be reminded to initiate an action in unplanned situations. To help in these circumstances, the parent and child can collaborate ahead of time and agree on **signals** that will cue the child to initiate a particular action at the time and place needed.

BENEFIT: This assignment provides another step in helping the child think about how he can set up cues in his environment to help him do the right thing at the right time.

MATERIALS NEEDED: None

EXPLANATION FOR CHILD:



*We can't always plan ahead and use a **cue card** to remind us about what we need to do. But cards aren't the only kind of reminders that we can use. We can give one another **signals** that remind us to do something. We can even use **secret signals** for cues.*

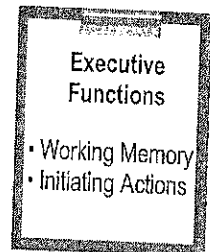
Note: if the child knows about Michael Phelps, the swimmer who won eight gold medals in the 2008 Summer Olympics, tell the child the story of the cue that he and his mother developed. (See opposite page.)

We all forget what to do sometimes, and secret signal cues can help us remember to do the right thing at the right time.

ASSIGNMENT: The parent and child identify an action that the child sometimes forgets to take. Then they work out a signal that can be used to cue the child to take that action. As always in working with cues, if the cue doesn't work the first time, think of ways to adjust the cue to make it more effective.

Examples: Come up with a secret signal to cue the child to:

- Use *Please* and *Thank you*
- Shake hands
- Use your inside voice
- Put away your tennis shoes
- Go back and close the door
- Clear your plate



Coaching Tip



MOTIVATING: In the following assignment, **wrist lists** are used for those situations in which the child must take not just one action, but a series of actions. In order to provide additional motivation for the child to move through the series of tasks, the coach can also specify what will happen when the child completes the all of the tasks.

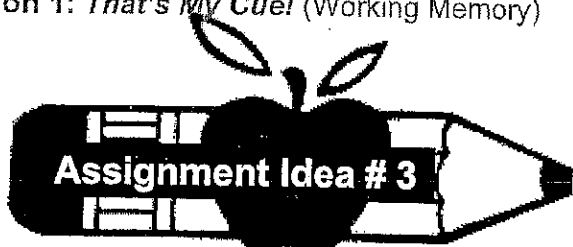
Keep this simple! Some possibilities are:

- an activity with the parent (such as reading a story or playing a short game)
- a star on a chart that can be redeemed for a special privilege at a later time
- permission to watch TV or play a computer game
- a snack

Each of the three wrists lists in the following assignment has a built-in way to include this "special activity."

1. With the *paper chain list*, the activity can be written on the last link in the chain.
2. With the *sticky list*, the **Yahoo!** icon is moved after all the other tasks are completed and can represent the activity.
3. With the *checklist*, the activity can be listed as the final item on the checklist

FOLLOWING THROUGH: The coach can also challenge the child to use the wrist list for three weeks, then see if he/she can use his "**working memory**" to complete the tasks after that. But if they can't, that's OK. Provide external support for working memory as long as it is needed!



Wrist Lists

RATIONALE: Like Jen in the story, *The Morning DJ*, many children have problems following through on *all of the steps* involved in a particular activity or chore. Often parents find they must give reminders "every step of the way" in order for the child to complete the expected actions. For people of all ages, a **list** is an excellent way to remind *oneself* of the next step, and to make sure that all steps are completed.

BENEFIT: This assignment can help the child perform a *series* of tasks. As a reminder of the steps to be followed, the child uses a list which is attached to his or her wrist. The wrist list engages the child's attention and--by virtue of being attached to the child's wrist-- ensures that the list is always at the all-important **point of performance**.

Executive Functions

- Working Memory
- Initiating Actions

MATERIALS NEEDED: Three types of wrist lists are described:

1. Paper Chain Wrist List
2. Sticky Wrist List
3. Wrist Checklist

See the individual instructions for materials needed.

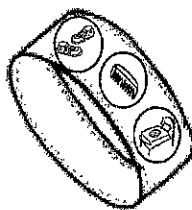
Wrist List #1:

Paper Chain Wrist List
page 38



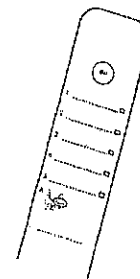
Wrist List #2:

Sticky Wrist List
page 40

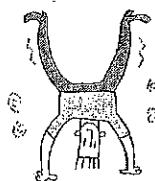


Wrist List #1:

Wrist Checklist
page 42



EXPLANATION FOR CHILD:



In the story, *The Morning DJ*, Jen had to remember to do a lot of things! One way to help yourself, when you have to do a lot of things, is to use a list. A **list** can help you remember all of the things you need to do. You are going to use a special kind of list called a **wrist list**. It will be attached to your wrist, so it will be easy to keep the list with you.

COACH'S ROLE: The coach should choose a situation in which the child has difficulty following through on a job or activity. (Example: cleaning up toys or room.) The coach breaks the job down into **five** (or less) smaller steps and incorporates the steps into one of the wrist lists.

Wrist List #1: Paper Chain Wrist List

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Copy the form on the next page to create

1. Paper wrist band
2. Paper strips (which will form links for a paper chain.)

See sample below.

1. Make wristband

Write final (reward) activity here. Then fold in on dotted lines to hide the writing and keep it secret. Wrap around child's wrist and tape the end securely.



Play a game
Take dirty clothes to laundry room
Put cars and blocks in toy box
Put games on shelf
Take books to living room
Make bed

2. Make paper chain links

- a. Write things to do in these sections. Cut into strips.
- b. Beginning with the first item to be done, bend strip into a circle and close with tape.
- c. Join the next circle to that one to create a chain.
- d. End with the last item to be done.

wristband



3. Attach the chain to wrist band (The first thing to be done should be at the loose end)




How to use the *Paper Chain Wrist List*:

1. Make the wrist band, write the final (reward) activity on it, fold it, and attach to the child's wrist. (For more fun, keep the reward activity hidden from the child until the end of the assignment.)
2. Write the tasks to be done on the strips. Put them in the order to be done.
3. Attach the chain to the child's wrist band, with the first item to be done at the loose end.
4. The child then removes the first link and does the task.
5. After completing that task, the child checks with the coach and removes the next link.
6. After all the links have been removed and all of tasks have been completed, the child takes the wrist band to the coach and learns what the final activity is.

Section 1: That's My Cue! (Working Memory)



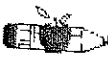
COPY this page and CUT on solid lines

 **Wristband:** Write final (reward) activity here. Then fold in on dotted lines to hide the writing and keep it secret.

Links: Cut into strips. Write one task to be done on each strip. Beginning with the first item to be done, bend each strip into a circle and close with tape. Join the next strip to that one to create a chain. End with the last item to be done, and attach that one to the child's wrist band.

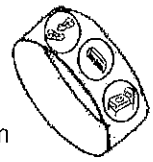


--	--	--	--	--



Wrist List #2: Sticky Wrist List

For jobs that need to be done on a daily basis, such as getting ready for school in the morning, or getting ready for bed at night, a **Sticky Wrist List** provides a re-usable alternative to the paper-chain wrist list. In this version, as the child completes each task, an "action" icon is moved from the left (Go!) wrist band to the right (Yahoo!) wrist band.



MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1) Copy the facing page on heavy paper.
- 2) Round **Velcro™** tabs can be purchased at hobby and craft stores. You will need **12 sets** to complete the wrist lists as described below. (Each set contains two parts, a "fuzzy" tab and a "hook" tab.)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. For the wrist bands:

- Cut out both bands.
- Laminate the wrist bands (you can use clear packaging tape if you don't have a laminator.)
- Place them with the front side facing you.
- Place the Velcro™ tabs on the bands as follows:
 - a. Note the **Go!** and the **Yahoo!** icons at the *top* of each band. Turn the bands over and put a "fuzzy" tab on the opposite side (behind the two icons.)
 - b. Turn the bands so the front is facing you again. On each of the five colored spots, attach a "hook" tab.
 - c. The last spot (with arrow) also receives a "hook" tab. This last tab will attach to the "fuzzy" tab that you put on the opposite side of the band, forming a closure for the band. Adjust the placement of the last "hook" tab to fit the child's wrist.

2. For the "action" icons:

- Choose ten of the icons below (or create your own) to represent tasks/actions.
- Laminate the icons.
- Then attach the remaining ten "fuzzy" tabs to the back of each icon.

How to use the **Sticky Wrist List**:

1. The **Go!** band goes on the child's left wrist; the **Yahoo!** band goes on the child's right wrist.
2. Choose five icons representing actions to be taken.
3. Attach them to the tabs on the **Go!** Wristband. (Put them in the order they should be completed, starting with the first tab under the **Go!** icon.)
4. The child then performs the first action (the one immediately under the **Go!** icon)
5. After completing that task, the child moves that icon to the **Yahoo!** band.
6. Continue to complete the actions represented by each icon, moving the icon from the left to the right wrist when it is completed.
7. The Yahoo! (Simon) icon can be used to represent a reward activity. (See page 36.)

Coaching Tip

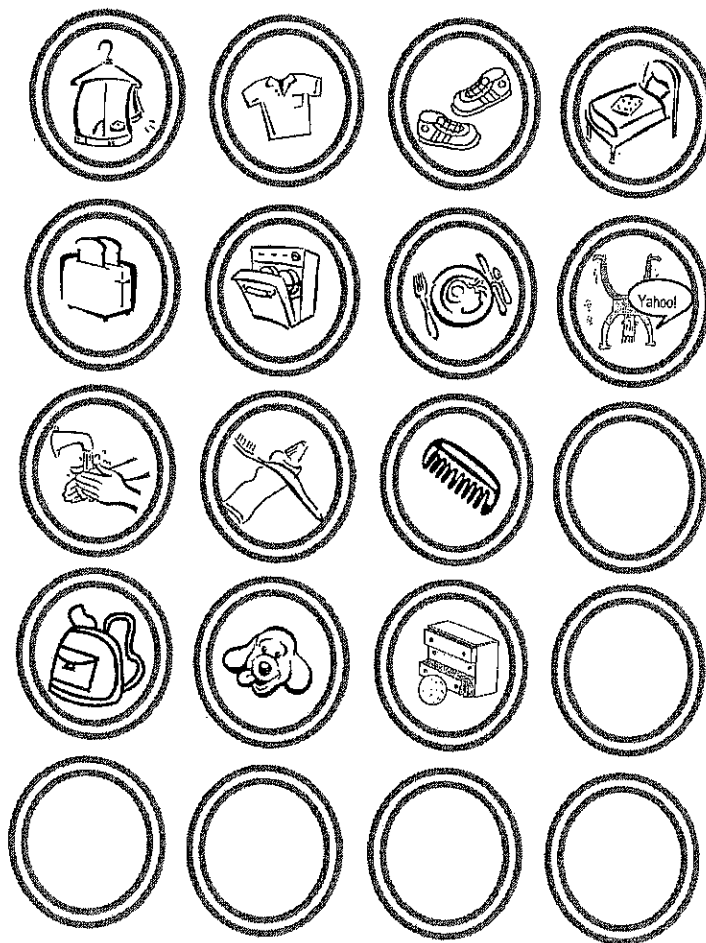


Sticky Wrist-List Variation: Here is a quicker and simpler alternative to using the laminated bands and Velcro tabs. Take two pieces of scotch tape or masking tape and wrap one around each of the child's wrist *with the sticky side facing out*. Then just stick the (laminated) icons to the tape and move the icons from the left wrist to the right wrist as the items are completed.

Section 1: *That's My Cue!* (Working Memory)



Go!



Wrist List #3: Wrist Checklist

This wrist list is the simplest. It is a basic "To-Do" list, the kind many people use every day, with two additions:

- 1) It is attached to the wrist, so it is always at the **point of performance**.
- 2) It includes a built-in motivator: the last item is something that the child wants to do (play a game, go outside, have a snack, watch TV, read a book.)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Copy and cut out one of the wrist lists on the next page.

How to use the *Wrist Checklist*:

1. On the list, the coach writes down the tasks to be done, breaking them down into no more than five small steps. (The final item on the list can be a "reward" activity.)
2. Circle the list around the child's wrist and tape the ends together, with the list facing out.
3. The child completes the assigned tasks in the order on the list. After the child completes all of the items, remove the list. The child and coach should then go over the list together, placing a check by each item successfully completed.
4. If all items are checked, the child is allowed to do the final activity.

Alternate uses: The use of a checklist is an excellent habit for children to acquire early in life. Look for a variety of opportunities to use the wrist checklist. The more the child practices its use, in different situations, the better. Some ideas for using the wrist checklist are:

- Have the child run errands with the parent, and assign the child the job of writing the checklist and reading it to the parent as they progress through the errands. Make the last item something fun--a stop at the park, a visit at grandma's.
- Have "chore day" at home and use wrist checklists to divide up the chores--one wrist list for each person. Make the final activity a family get-together (for example, make some popcorn and play a game together.)
- Use the wrist checklist for planning and executing the steps for a fun activity such as getting ready for a party or a family movie night.

The Power of the Humble Checklist!

If you read some of the the many books, articles and web-sites offering advice to adults with ADHD, you will find that using a humble checklist is one of the top suggestions. There's a reason for this: as simple as they are, checklists work!

Research backs this up. A study at hospitals in Michigan found that enforcing a five-step checklist of anti-infection measures cut the infection rate at intensive care units by 66%. They estimated that over 18 months, the use of the checklist saved many lives and millions of dollars.*

*Gawande, Atul, *A Lifesaving Checklist*, *The New York Times*, December 30, 2007.

Section 1: *That's My Cue!* (Working Memory)



<div>Go!</div>	<div>Go!</div>	<div>Go!</div>
1. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	1. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	1. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>
2. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	2. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	2. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>
3. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	3. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	3. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>
4. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	4. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	4. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>
5. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	5. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	5. _____ <input type="checkbox"/>
6. _____	6. _____	6. _____

Coaching Tip



Hint: The *Ready, Set, Go!* assignment helps the child understand the concept of **working memory**. Keep this activity FUN! Stop long before your child tires of it. Practice this frequently, but for short periods of time.

Variation:

Another game that involves working memory is *We're Going on a Trip*.

1. The first player says:

We are going on a trip and we're taking _____
(Player names an item to bring on the trip.)

2. The next person says

We're going on a trip and we're taking _____ and _____.
(Player has to say the item named by the first person *and* add another item.)

3. Keep it going: each player has to recall all past items and add a new item. Continue until a player is unable to recall all items. Keep track as a group; count how many items were recalled before the game ended. Then play another round and try to do better each time. (It's OK to be silly with this game and take all kinds of wacky items!)



Assignment Idea # 4

Ready, Set, Go For It!

RATIONALE: Not everyone is blessed with a good **working memory**. It is important to know the limits of one's ability to work from memory. With that understanding, we can either

- 1) use practice to improve our working memory or
- 2) find ways to give our memories a boost or a reminder by using **cues** as **memory helpers**.

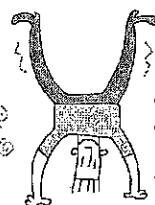
BENEFIT: This assignment helps the child test his or her working memory. It also helps the child to recognize the limits to his/her working memory and to use tools and reminders, as needed, to get the job done.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Everyday objects

Executive Functions

- Working Memory
- Initiating Actions

EXPLANATION FOR CHILD:



*Sometimes we have to remember to do several things in a row. For example, when I go to the grocery store, I have to remember which things to get from the shelves. If there is just one thing to get, I don't need a grocery list, I just use my **memory**. But if I have to get a lot of things, my memory needs a helper. So, I make a list. The list is a **memory helper**.*

*Let's play a game called **Ready, Set, Go For It!** Let's see how many things you can do from memory:*

STEP 1: READY = I'll tell you what to do.

STEP 2: SET = You say back to me what you are supposed to do.

STEP 3: GO FOR IT! = That's your cue to go ahead and do it.

*We'll start off easy and then get harder and harder. First, I'll give you just one thing to do. The next time I'll tell you two things. I will add one thing each time and we'll see how many things you can remember at once. When you get to where you have too many things to remember, we are going to use some **memory helpers**.*

Examples:

Trial A

Bring me the:
blue book by the phone.

Trial B

Bring me the:
red cup by the sink and the
newspaper from the coffee table.

Trial C

Bring me the:
book sack by the door
ruler from the desk
apple from the bowl.

USING MEMORY HELPERS

When the child begins to have difficulty, teach the child to use **memory helpers**. Here's how: When you get to STEP 2 (**READY**) the child decides on a memory helper to give external support to his/her working memory. Some possibilities are:

Memory Helper #1: Before you say **Go For It!** have the child repeat the items aloud three times (instead of just once.)

Memory Helper #2: Before you say **Go For It!** have the child make a list of the items. He can use words or draw quick pictures of the items. (You could also use the wrist checklist from the previous assignment.)

Memory Helper #3: Encourage the child to come up with his/her own memory helpers.


After deciding on a memory helper, go on to STEP 3 (**GO FOR IT!**) Then discuss: did the memory work? If not, try again, perhaps changing the memory helper to make it more effective.

ASSIGNMENT: The child and the coach can play this game at home. (See Hint and Variation on opposite page.)

Section 1: *That's My Cue!* (Working Memory)



Yahoo!



If you want to **SUCCEED**, these are the skills you'll NEED!

SKILLS CHECKLIST
for

Simon Says Pay Attention

- ☐ Remember what action to take
- ☐ Wait for your cue
- ☐ When you get your cue, take the right action
- ☐ If you have difficulty, adjust the cue

In the *Simon Says* program, the coach:

- motivates the child by providing a vision of success.
- creates interesting (and fun!) practice sessions
- sees that the child uses tools at the point of performance
- recognizes even small signs of progress and provides encouragement.

This page gives examples of encouraging statements that the adults can make to point out areas of progress and to direct attention, in positive ways, to areas that still need some improvement. Add other statements to fit the needs of your child.

Encouraging Words

Getting started

I think that will be a good cue to help your (or my) working memory. Let's start using it today.

We came up with a good plan to remind you what to do. Let's try it out and see how it works.

Trouble-shooting

I know you want to do the right thing. Let's see if we can figure out a way to remind you when and where to take action.

That didn't work out today, but we can try again. Let's work on the cue and see if we can make it "grab your attention."

Recognizing effort and success

You used your cues and finished everything. Now we have time to play a game.

As soon as you got my signal, you took the right action. Well done!

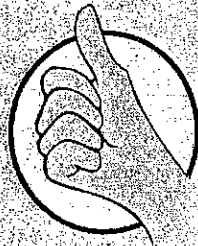
Thanks for doing your part to get things done on time. We are making some good changes in our home.





Thumbs up!
for

(name)



Skill Tracker

That's my cue!

This week's skills are:

I observed the skill used on:
(please initial by the day observed)

Use cues to help remember to do the right thing

S ____ M ____ T ____ W ____ T ____ F ____ S ____

Take the right action at the right time

S ____ M ____ T ____ W ____ T ____ F ____ S ____

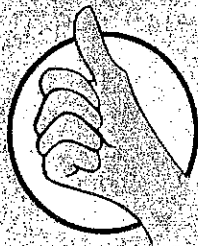
Comments: (use back if needed)

Yahoo!

Signature: _____

Thumbs up!
for

(name)



Skill Tracker

That's my cue!

This week's skills are:

I observed the skill used on:
(please initial by the day observed)

Use cues to help remember to do the right thing

S ____ M ____ T ____ W ____ T ____ F ____ S ____

Take the right action at the right time

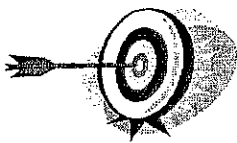
S ____ M ____ T ____ W ____ T ____ F ____ S ____

Comments: (use back if needed)

Yahoo!

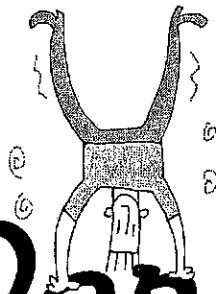
Signature: _____

Section 1: *That's My Cue!* (Working Memory)



Strategies for Success!

Use this page to record strategies that you have found helpful in implementing the interventions in this section.
(If you would like to share them with others, please email your strategies to us at playtherapy@att.net)



Don't Do It!

Behavioral Inhibition

SECTION 2: *Don't Do It!* (Behavioral Inhibition)

Rationale for *Don't Do It!* Activities

What is the problem?

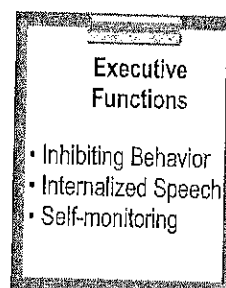
As noted in the previous section, children with ADHD often fail to get things done at the right time and in the right way. Cues can help them remember what they are supposed to do, and prompt them to initiate the correct action. However, to complete tasks on time, they must also *refrain* from doing other actions that distract them from their goal. (When they are getting dressed, eating breakfast, brushing teeth, and packing a book sack in preparation for going to school, they must refrain from gazing at the fish tank, playing with a puzzle, and/or reading a book.)

The ability to inhibit behavior is important in other situations as well. When children act impulsively in social situations, their behavior may be annoying to others, causing strain in relationships.

What Executive Functions are involved?

The executive functions involved are those of:





- Inhibiting* the behaviors that interfere with timely completion of required tasks
- Internalized Speech* (self-talk) to guide one's behavior
- Self-monitoring* (checking on one's actions during an activity)



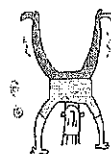
What will help?

1. Traditional childhood games provide external structure for practicing behavioral inhibition.
2. Children can learn:
 - to understand the difference between *on-task* and *off-task*.
 - to become more aware of when they are off-task.
 - to use self-talk to inhibit and re-direct their behavior
 - to create a map or plan to guide their actions.

Overview of *Don't Do It!* Activities

	Activity or Assignment	Purpose	Page
Play 	<i>Simon Says Don't Do It!</i>	In this version on the traditional game <i>Simon Says</i> , children demonstrate their ability to inhibit behavior. The activity also introduces the concept of using "self-talk" to guide one's actions.	57
Link 	Story: <i>The Distraction Zapper</i>	When Simon goes to after-school care, he learns that he is not as good as his friends at staying "on-task." When this causes him to lose out on having fun, Simon learns to use self-talk to help him inhibit behaviors that get him off-task	61
	Worksheets	A review of the importance of being "on task" in everyday life.	64
Assign 	The On-Off Switch	Child practices inhibiting actions in response to tactile cue.	69
	Red Light, Green Light	Child practices inhibiting actions in response to verbal cue	71
	The Stay-on-Track Map	For a particular situation, coach and child 1. make a visual "map" of on-track and off-track behaviors 2. agree on a cue that coach will use if child gets off track (Note: This assignment introduces the concept of self-monitoring, which will be expanded in the next section. The map provides an external plan for behavior. The coach helps the child monitor his or her adherence to the plan.)	73
Yahoo! 	Encouraging Words Skill Trackers	Adults provide feedback and encouragement as child practices new behaviors.	77

Section 2: *Don't Do It!* (Behavioral Inhibition)



Play

Introduction to:

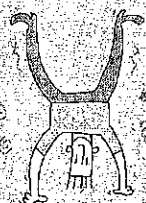
Play Intervention: *Simon Says Don't Do It!*

In the game outlined on the next three pages (a version of the traditional childhood game *Simon Says*) children demonstrate their ability to **inhibit behavior**. The activity also introduces the concept of using "self-talk" to guide one's actions.

The checklist on this page explains what the child needs to do to succeed at playing *Simon Says Don't Do It!* You will go over the checklist with the child while playing the game. It is helpful review it again *after* playing the game.

The purpose of the game is to let the child realize that he already has these skills.

In the steps following this **Play** activity (**Link, Assign, and Yahoo!**) the child and coach will learn strategies and tools that will help the child be able to perform these skills *when* and *where* they are needed in day-to-day life.



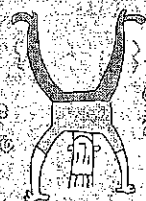
If you want
to **SUCCEED**,
these are
the skills
you'll **NEED!**

SKILLS CHECKLIST

for

Simon Says *Don't Do It!*

- ☐ **Do** what you are supposed to do.
(Stay **on-task**.)
- ☐ **Don't do** anything that you are not
supposed to do. (Don't be **off-task**.)
- ☐ If someone or something tries to get
you off-task, tell yourself, **Don't Do It!**
- ☐ If you notice you are off-task, **STOP**
right away.



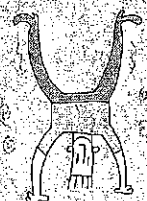
If you want
to **SUCCEED**,
here are
the skills
you'll **NEED!**

SKILLS CHECKLIST

for

Simon Says *Don't Do It!*

- ☐ **Do** what you are supposed to do.
(Stay **on-task**.)
- ☐ **Don't do** anything that you are not
supposed to do. (Don't be **off-task**.)
- ☐ If someone or something tries to get
you off-task, tell yourself, **Don't Do It!**
- ☐ If you notice you are off-task, **STOP**
right away.



If you want
to **SUCCEED**,
here are
the skills
you'll **NEED!**

SKILLS CHECKLIST

for

Simon Says *Don't Do It!*

- ☐ **Do** what you are supposed to do.
(Stay **on-task**.)
- ☐ **Don't do** anything that you are not
supposed to do. (Don't be **off-task**.)
- ☐ If someone or something tries to get
you off-task, tell yourself, **Don't Do It!**
- ☐ If you notice you are off-task, **STOP**
right away.



Simon Says *Don't Do It!* (Part 1)

Materials

None needed. (Part 1 is just an introduction; don't use the skill checklist until Part 2)

Get Ready

Tell the child:

*The name of this activity is **Simon Says Don't Do It!** In this game, what you **Don't Do** is very, very important. You have to be very careful that you **Don't Do** the wrong thing--because guess what happens if you do? ... (You have to go back and start all over again!)*

Get Set

"Simon" stands on one side of the room (Finish Line) and the child stands on the other end of the room (Starting Line.)

Go

"Simon" gives a series of commands such as *Take three baby steps forward, Jump up and down, Twirl around, Take one giant step forward, Pat your head, Rub your tummy, Take two bunny hops forward, etc.*

Sometimes Simon should begin the command with the magic words, *Simon Says*. Sometimes Simon will just give the command without saying the magic words.

The child is to follow the command only when it is preceded by the magic words, *Simons Says*.

If the child follows the command without the magic words, he has to go back to the start line and begin again.

Note: Go slowly and give the child a chance to succeed. However, try to "trick" the child into taking at least one wrong move, so that he has the experience of going back to the Start Line. Try to do this early on and then follow up more slowly, giving the child a chance to succeed. If the child starts to do the "wrong thing" and then stops himself, comment on this:

Good job! You remembered and you stopped yourself from doing that. You are really paying close attention!

Review

Tell the child:

You did a great job. You understand that sometimes what you don't do is very, very important. Sometimes you almost did the wrong thing, but then you remembered and you stopped yourself.

(Give specific example.)

That was excellent. Are you ready to make the game a little harder?



Simon Says *Don't Do It!* (Part 2)

Materials

Skill checklist on page 57.

Get Ready

Tell the child:

*We are going to play **Simon Says** again and we are going to do a few things differently. You'll need some special skills to win at this game. Let's look at the skills checklist.*

Read over checklist and give copy to child.

Get Set

*In this game, I am going to try really, really, really hard to trick you. Whenever I tell you to do something without saying **Simon Says**, I want you to whisper to yourself, "**Don't do it!**"*

Have the child practice doing this. The whisper needs to be loud enough for you to hear.


*In this game, if you move at the wrong time **OR** if you forget to whisper "**Don't Do It!**" you will have to go back to the start line.*

Go

"Simon" stands on one side of the room (Finish Line) and the child stand on the other end of the room (Starting Line.)

In this version, Simon tries harder to trick the child. Some ways to do this are:

- 1) sometimes begin the command with similar but different words
(*Simon Says, Pimon Says, Simon Suggests, Simon wants you to.....*)
- 2) Sometimes begin with the child's name (*Marie, take one giant step forward.*)
- 3) Say, *Let's do this*, and demonstrate a funny or silly move.



If you want to SUCCEED, here are the skills you'll NEED!

SKILLS CHECKLIST

Simon Says *Don't Do It!*

- ☐ Do what you are supposed to do. (Stay on-task.)
- ☐ Don't do anything that you are not supposed to do. (Don't be off-task.)
- ☐ If someone or something tries to get you off-task, tell yourself, **Don't Do It!**
- ☐ If you notice you are off-task, STOP right away.

Remember: The purpose of this game is to have the child use "self-talk" as an aid to inhibiting behavior. Respond to his actions in ways that raise his awareness of his ability to do this.

- 1) If the child remembers to whisper **Don't Do It**, be sure to acknowledge this:

Good job, you told yourself just what to do...

- 2) If the child starts to do the "wrong thing" and then stops himself and whispers **Don't Do It**, comment on this:

*Good job! You told yourself to **stop** just in time.*

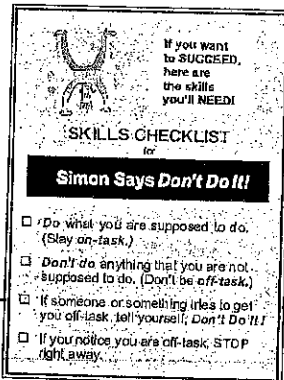
- 3) If the child fails to inhibit his behavior, or fails to whisper **Don't Do It**, comment on this:

Uh-oh, what did you forget to do? It's back to the starting line!

Let's practice together. What do we need to tell ourselves when there is something we are not supposed to do?

(Practice together. Feel free to ham it up and be silly; make the game fun, even if the child has to start over again. For example, the two of you might practice saying **Don't Do It** in three different kinds of voices.)

Section 2: *Don't Do It!* (Behavioral Inhibition)



When do people use these skills in Real Life?

When Simon goes to after-school care, he learns that he is not as good as his friends at staying "on-task." When this causes him to lose out on having fun, Simon learns to use *self-talk* to help him inhibit behaviors that get him off-task.

The Distraction Zapper

MONDAY

Narrator: Simon's mom started a new job, so Monday was his first day to attend the After-School Camp. His friends Paul and Joni had told him about playing ball at the camp. Simon couldn't wait! When he got to the gym, Simon was surprised when his friends sat down and pulled out homework.

Simon: Hey, I thought we were going to play ball!

Paul: Yeah, we are, but we have to do homework first. That's the rule.

Narrator: Paul got to work right away. Simon slowly pulled out his books. He hated doing homework! At home, his dad always helped him. Simon took out his math homework. He didn't have a pencil. Joni said:

Joni: There are extra school supplies on that table over there.

Narrator: Simon walked across the gym. He stopped to watch two counselors getting bats and balls out of a closet. He went to the supply table and chose a pencil. Then he went to the water fountain and got a drink. When he got back to his table, Paul had already finished his homework and was heading outside with one of the counselors, carrying a bat. Simon looked at Joni.

Simon: Man, how did Paul finish so fast?

Joni: Oh, he's a master at staying on-task. Not me; I get off-task a lot. I think I'll go sit on the bleachers so I can concentrate better.

Narrator: Simon worked his first math problem. Then he remembered that he had a new pen. He opened up his backpack. He saw his baseball cards. He got them out and began to arrange them. A little later, Joni tossed her spelling notebook on the table.

Joni: Hey that was easier than I thought. Are you ready to go outside?

Narrator: Simon looked down at his *one* completed math problem. He told Joni to go ahead, he'd be out soon.

TUESDAY

Paul: Hey, why didn't you come outside yesterday?

Simon: I didn't finish my stupid homework.

Paul: Well, get it done today. We need you on our team!

Narrator: Simon told Paul he'd get it done. He decided to do what Joni had done, and took his math homework to the bleachers. Simon had two problems done when he glanced under the bleachers. He saw some coins! He climbed down, and picked up the money. Then he went and talked with Al, the counselor.

Simon: Can I keep this money I found?

Al: Sure! Finders keepers.

Simon: Can I use it in the snack machine?

Al: I guess so. But didn't you just have a snack?



PAGE 2

Simon: Yeah, but I like using the snack machine.

Al: Well, if that's what you want to do. It's your choice, man.

Narrator: Simon ran to the snack machine. It was hard to decide! He finally chose a bag of cheese crackers. He went back to his table and looked for his spelling work. It was gone--someone must have taken it! Then he remembered. He had taken it to the bleachers. Yes, there it was. Simon got to work. But before he finished, the ball players came back inside. Ball time was over.

WEDNESDAY

Simon: I hate this camp!

Narrator: That's what Simon thought on Wednesday when, for the third day, he watched his friends leave for the ball field. He put his head down on the table. Then he heard someone speak. It was Al, the counselor.

Al: Hi Simon. Can we talk?

Simon: Sure, why not? I might as well talk, 'cause I'm never going to get to play ball.

Al: You're a lot like me. You have a hard time staying on-task because you get distracted easily, don't you?

Simon: Yeah, I guess so.

Al: What you need is ...a *Distraction Zapper*.

Narrator: Al held out his hand as if he was holding a remote control.

Al: When I am trying to get something done, and I get off-task, I pull out my handy *Distraction Zapper*. Let's say I'm cleaning my room, and then I start to think about eating potato chips.

Narrator: Al pointed his hand to a bag of chips on the table and whispered...

Al: *Zap!* ... You see, when I say '*Zap*', those potato chips lose their power to distract me. And I'm back on-task.

Simon: You don't really think an imaginary zapper will help me get my homework done, do you?

Al: You never know until you try. You may be surprised, Simon.

Narrator: Simon sighed. *Al is crazy*, he decided. Back at the bleachers, he finished one math problem. He glanced under the bleachers and saw a baseball cap. He climbed down and was about to reach for the cap when he caught Al's eye. Al lifted his hand and pointed his "zapper" at Simon and smiled. Simon laughed and looked again at the baseball cap. Then he pointed toward the cap and whispered:

Simon: *Zap! Quit distracting me.*

Narrator: Simon felt kind of silly, talking to a cap, but it worked! He left the cap there and finished his math. He looked at the clock. He was doing great. He put his math book in his back pack. His baseball cards were still there. He took one out and started reading it. Just then Al walked by. Al looked at the cards and then at Simon. He held out his hand.

Al: Do you need to borrow my zapper?

Simon: That's OK, Al. I've got my own. I'm getting back on task right now.

Narrator: Simon pointed to the baseball card. *Zap!* Then he finished his spelling, put his books away and headed outside. Paul and Joni saw Simon come out to the field.

Paul: Come on, Simon! We've been waiting for you. We need you on our team!

Narrator: Simon ran to join them, smiling. He thought to himself:

Simon: *I guess Al isn't so crazy after all. Maybe tomorrow I can be the first one out instead of the last. I'll just have to keep my distraction zapper handy!*



The Distraction Zapper

Questions for Discussion

Joni said that Paul was a master on staying "on task." What did she mean?

Was Simon being slow on purpose? (Explain your answer.)

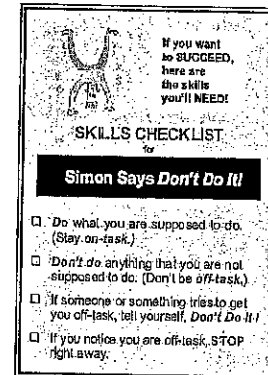
At first, Simon thought that Al's idea was weird. Why did he decide to try it?

Extra Questions

Two times, Al gave Simon a **cue** to remind him that he was off-task. What were the cues?

Pretend that you are writing "Chapter 2" of Simon's story. What would happen in Chapter 2?

Tell about a time that you were distracted and got off-task.



Executive Functions

- Inhibiting Behavior
- Internalized Speech
- Self-monitoring

Internalized Speech means using self-talk to guide your actions.


• In the game *Simon Says Don't Do It*, players use the words "Don't Do It" as a guide to inhibiting the undesired actions.

• In the story *The Distraction Zapper*, Simon uses the word "Zap" along with other words ("Quit distracting me") to guide himself and inhibit the behavior that was interfering with his goal.

• In the assignment, *Red Light-Green Light* (on page 71) the term "Red Light" is used as a cue to inhibit behavior.

Each child can be encouraged to come up with the one or more terms that he/she can use as **self-talk** to help inhibit undesired behaviors.

Section 2: *Don't Do It!* (Behavioral Inhibition)



If you want
to **SUCCEED**,
here are
the skills
you'll **NEED!**

SKILLS CHECKLIST

Simon Says Don't Do It!


- ☐ Do what you are supposed to do. (Stay on-task.)
- ☐ Don't do anything that you are not supposed to do. (Don't be off-task.)
- ☐ If someone or something tries to get you off-task, tell yourself, *Don't Do It!*
- ☐ If you notice you are off-task, **STOP** right away.

When do people
use these skills
in Real Life?

Person	Do It! On-task behaviors	Don't Do It! Off-task behaviors	What happens if they get off-task?
Person driving a car down a busy street			
Baseball player in the outfield waiting to catch a ball			
Grandmother making the birthday cake for her grandchild's party that afternoon			
Santa loading his sleigh on Christmas Eve			
School bus driver on his way to pick up children to go on a field trip			





 If you want to SUCCEED, here are the skills you'll NEED!

SKILLS CHECKLIST

Simon Says *Don't Do It!*

- ☐ Do what you are supposed to do. (Stay on-task.)
- ☐ Don't do anything that you are not supposed to do. (Don't be off-task.)
- ☐ If someone or something tries to get you off-task, tell yourself, *Don't Do It!*
- ☐ If you notice you are off-task, STOP right away.

When do people
use these skills
in Real Life?

How about YOU?

When do you need to use these skills in Real Life?

What is an activity or job that you do very well? (examples: play soccer, take care of baby brother, fold clothes, make friends.)

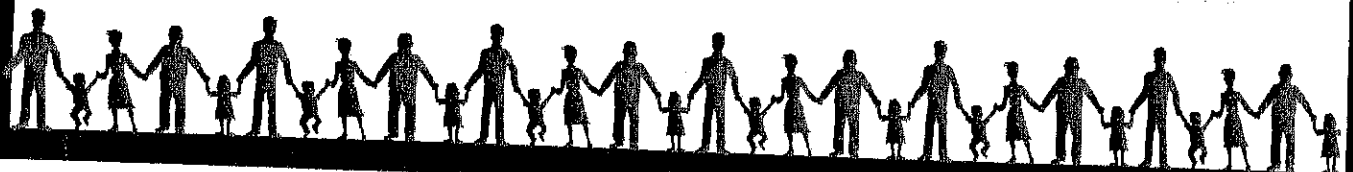
When you are on-task for that activity or job, what do you do?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

What are some behaviors that would be off-task for that activity or job?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

What would happen if you stayed off-task for that activity or job?



Section 2: *Don't Do It!* (Behavioral Inhibition)



This section contains three assignments:

Assignment Idea # 1

The ON-OFF Switch

This activity is a variation of the childhood game of *Statues*. Although this seems like an extremely simple activity, what is being practiced here--**inhibiting behavior**--is an ability that is essential in many situations. As the child demonstrates this ability within the structure of a game, he becomes aware that he can make a conscious choice to control his actions.

A secondary benefit is that, since the child responds to a **tactile cue** (a touch on the shoulder) to inhibit behavior, this same cue can be used by a parent or teacher in other situations in which the child needs to inhibit actions.

Page 69

Assignment Idea # 2

Red Light, Green Light

In Assignment #1, the child practices inhibiting behavior in response to a tactile cue. In this assignment, the child responds to a **verbal cue** (the words *Red Light*) This can be played as the traditional childhood game of Red Light, Green Light, or adapted for a variety of other activities. As with all assignments, providing variety keeps the activities fresh and make them more fun.

The same cue used in this activity, the term *Red Light*, can also be used by the parent in other situations as a reminder to the child to stop a certain behavior.

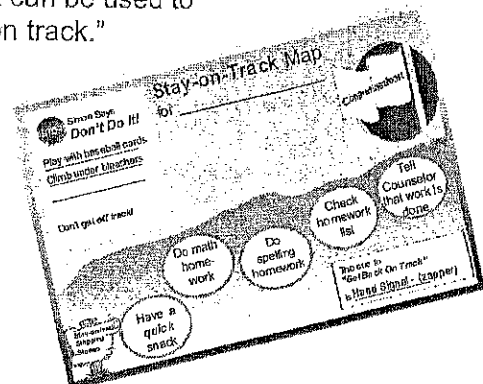
Page 71

Assignment Idea # 3

The Stay-On-Track Map

In this assignment the child and coach create a visual plan to identify on-track and off-track behaviors in a particular situation. They also agree on a **cue** that can be used to remind the child to get back "on track."

Page 73



Assign

5

Coaching Tip

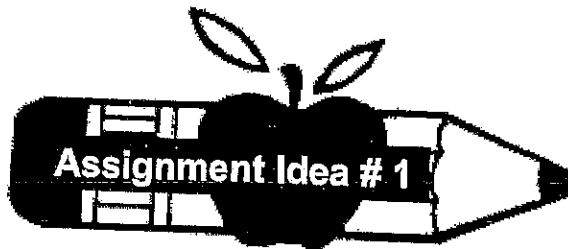


Helpful Hint for the **ON-OFF Switch** Assignment:

In doing this assignment at home, keep this activity FUN! Stop long before the child tires of it. Practice this frequently, but for short periods of time.

Praise the child, using language that focuses on the skill of stopping the action immediately in response to the cue.

- *You stopped right on cue--that was perfect timing.*
- *You are getting really good at **not-doing!***



The ON-OFF Switch

RATIONALE: To be successful in many activities, children need to be able to *inhibit* behaviors that are not pertinent to the given activity.

BENEFIT: This activity is a variation of the childhood game of *Statues*. Although this seems like an extremely simple activity, what is being practiced here—**inhibiting behavior**—is an ability that is essential in many situations. As the child demonstrates this ability within the structure of a game, he becomes aware that he can make a conscious choice to control his actions.

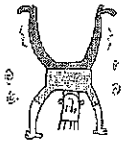
A secondary benefit is that, since the child responds to a **tactile cue** (a touch on the shoulder), this same cue can be used by a parent or teacher in other situations in which the child needs to inhibit actions. (Assignment Idea # 2, Red Light-Green Light, is very similar but uses words rather than touch as the cue. It can be helpful to have the child learn to respond to both verbal and tactile cues.)

Executive Functions

- Inhibiting Behavior
- Internalized Speech
- Self-monitoring

MATERIALS NEEDED: None

EXPLANATION FOR CHILD:



Remember that sometimes what you **don't do** is just as important as what you **do**. In this assignment, you practice switching between **Do** and **Don't Do** whenever you get a special **cue**. In this game the cue isn't one that you hear or see; it is one that you feel.

ASSIGNMENT:

Your assignment is to do an activity called **The ON-OFF Switch**. We will play the game now and then you can play it again later with your coach to get more practice.

In this game, one person is the Museum Director. Everyone else is a statue at the Museum. These are very special statues. They can move, but only when the Director turns them **ON** by pressing the "switch" on their shoulders. And as soon as the Director turns them **OFF**, they immediately turn back into regular statues.

Ask permission to touch child on shoulder and then demonstrate: the first touch means **ON/Go**, the second touch means **OFF/Stop**.

Each player gets to decide what kind of statue to be (Dancer, Baseball Player, Cook, Parent with Baby, Musician, Teacher, Traffic Cop, etc.) The Museum Director visits each statue, turns it **ON** and watches the statue move. The Museum Director guesses what kind of statue that person is. The Director gets to decide when to turn the statue **OFF**, and presses the **ON-OFF switch** again. All statues have to stop immediately and hold perfectly still when they are in the **OFF mode**.

Demonstrate for the child, using an example such as Cook: the Cook might chop vegetables, add water to a pot, stir, smell the aroma, taste with a spoon, add some spices, etc.

When the Cook statue receives the **OFF** cue, it must stop in mid-action.

COACH'S ROLE: The coach should set up practice sessions at home. (See suggestions on preceding page.)

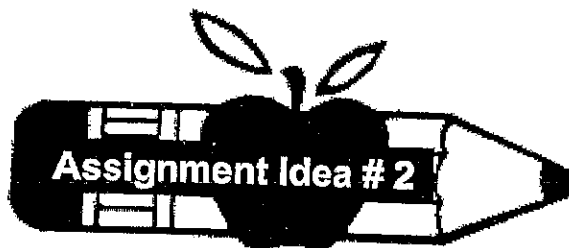
Coaching Tip



Helpful Hint for the *Red Light-Green Light* Assignment:

As with the preceding assignment, keep this activity FUN by playing for short periods. Parents might also try using this same technique with simple chores (such as setting the table, feeding the dog, folding the clothes.) Here's how:

- Make the *Green Light* times longer.
- When the coach says *Red Light*, the child must pause all action.
- Use the pause to recognize what the child has done thus far in completing the chore. Show your appreciation!
- Give a big *Yahoo!* when the chore is done.



Red Light - Green Light

RATIONALE: To be successful in many activities, children need to be able to *inhibit* behaviors that are not pertinent to the given activity.

BENEFIT: This is a traditional childhood game. Although this seems like an extremely simple activity, what is being practiced here—**inhibiting behavior**—is an ability that is essential in many situations. As the child demonstrates this ability within the structure of a game, he becomes aware that he can make a conscious choice to control his actions.

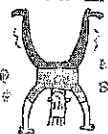
A secondary benefit is that, since the child responds to a **verbal cue** (the words *Red Light*), this same cue can be used by a parent or teacher in other situations in which the child needs to inhibit actions. (Assignment Idea # 1, *The On-Off Switch*, is very similar but uses touch rather than words as the cue. It can be helpful to have the child learn to respond to both verbal and tactile cues.)

Executive Functions

- Inhibiting Behavior
- Internalized Speech
- Self-monitoring

MATERIALS NEEDED: No materials. A large room or long hallway is needed to have sufficient room for the standard play. However, see *Variations* (below) for ways to play in a smaller space.

EXPLANATION FOR CHILD:



*Remember that sometimes what you **don't do** is just as important as what you **do**. In this assignment, you have to switch from **Do** to **Don't Do** whenever you hear a special cue. The cue to switch from **Do** to **Don't Do** is the words "**Red Light**."*

ASSIGNMENT:

*Your assignment is to do an activity called **Red Light-Green Light**. We will practice the game right now and then you can play with your coach later.*

*In this game, one person is the Stop Light and stands at one end of the room (or hall.) The other players stand at the opposite end. When the Stop Light says "**Green Light**," the players can walk, hop on one foot, jump, skip, or crawl (no running unless played outdoors) toward the Stop Light. At any time, the Stop Light can say "**Red Light**." Then the players have to STOP exactly where they are, even if in mid-movement.*

(Demonstrate.)

*If they move at all after **Red Light** is called, they have to go back to the beginning. Then the Stop Light says **Green Light** and the players can move again until the next time **Red Light** is called. The first player to get to the Stop Light is the winner and that Player becomes the Light.*

VARIATIONS

1) The players engage in some sort of activity: it could be eating a snack, or building with blocks, or putting together a puzzle. They begin when the Stop Light says **Green Light** and must stop immediately when they hear the cue **Red Light**. Since there is no clear end point in this game, just play for a while and when the child shows mastery, switch roles.

2) Make the game more challenging (and silly) by substituting similar sounding words for **Green Light** and **Red Light**. (*Green Grass, Green Tight, Red Bed, Red Fight.*)



Assignment Idea #3

The Stay-On-Track Map

RATIONALE: To be successful in many activities, children need to be able to *inhibit* behaviors that are either not pertinent or not appropriate. The concept of **on-task** and **off-task** (or **on-track** and **off-track**) can give the child a helpful framework for thinking about what behaviors are desirable in a given situation. The child's own heightened awareness, along with cues from others, can help the child inhibit behaviors that lead him off-track.

BENEFIT: In this assignment the child and coach create an **external plan** (a map) to identify on-track and off-track behaviors in a particular situation. They also agree on a **cue** to be used to remind the child to get back "on track."

Examples of situations in which a map might be used are:

1. The child has difficulty completing tasks on time because he/she gets distracted and does other things that are not pertinent to the task.
2. The child has difficulty in social situations (visiting relatives, going to the store) because he/she does things that are inappropriate for the situation or are annoying to others.

Executive Functions

- Inhibiting Behavior
- Internalized Speech
- Self-monitoring

MATERIALS NEEDED: The **The Stay-On-Track Map** on the next page.

EXPLANATION FOR CHILD:



Remember the story about Simon and **The Distraction Zapper**? In that story, Simon's goal is to finish his homework and play ball with his friends. He learns that what he **doesn't do** is just as important as what he **does**. So, when he notices himself doing something he shouldn't, he tells himself to **STOP**. After he stops, he can get back **on-track** toward his goal.

- When Simon gets off-track, his counselor gives him something. What is it?
(The counselor gives Simon a cue to remind him to STOP what he is doing and get back on-track.)
- What are the things that Simon has to **do** to stay on-track?
(Do his math, do his spelling, etc.)
- What are the things that Simon has to **not do**--things that get him **off-track**?
(Playing with his baseball cards, climbing under the bleachers, etc.)

ASSIGNMENT:

In this assignment, you are going to make a map to help you stay on-track. If Simon made a **Stay-On-Track Map**, it might look this:

(Assignment continued on next page.)

Simon Says Don't Do It!
 Play with baseball cards
 Climb under bleachers
 Don't get off track!

Stay-on-Track Map
 for After School Camp

Congratulations!

Do math homework

Do spelling homework

Check homework list

Tell Counselor that work is done

Stay-on-track Stepping Stones

Have a quick snack

The cue to "Get Back On Track" is Hand Signal - (zapper)



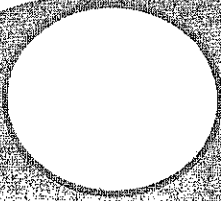
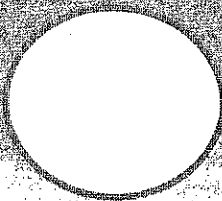
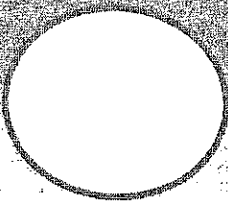
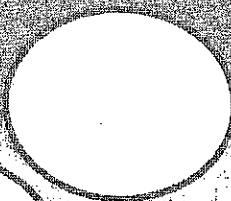
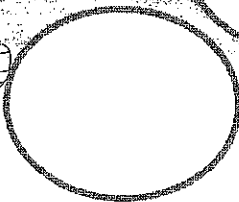
Simon Says
Don't Do It!

Stay-on-Track Map

for _____



Don't get *off track*!



The cue to
"Get Back On Track"
is _____



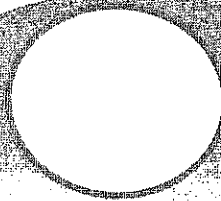
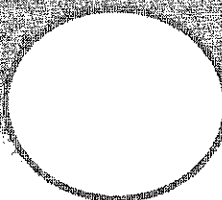
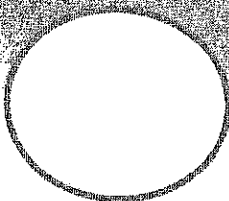
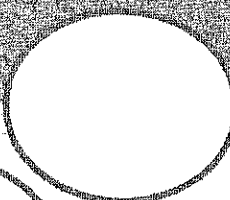
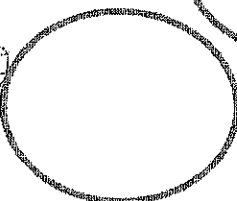
Simon Says
Don't Do It!

Stay-on-Track Map

for _____



Don't get *off track*!



The cue to
"Get Back On Track"
is _____



The Stay-On-Track Map (continued)

ASSIGNMENT: In this assignment, the child and coach make a **Stay-On-Track Map** to help the child stay "on-track" for a particular situation. (See examples below and on previous page, then use map on page 75)

Here's how:

1. Copy and cut out a blank **Stay-On-Track Map** (page 75).
2. On the stepping stones, write the actions that the child needs to take to stay **on track** in that situation.
3. On the *Don't Do It!* List, write some actions that would be **off track** for that situation.
4. Decide on a **cue** that the coach can use if the child gets off-track. Write the cue in the lower right corner.

Example of a
Stay-On-Track map
for getting ready for
school in the morning.

The goal in this plan
is to be ready on time,
(or perhaps even a bit
early, so the child has
time to play.)

Stay-on-Track Map
for getting ready for school

Simon Says Don't Do It!

Watch TV _____

Play _____

Don't get off track!

Stay-on-track Stepping Stones

Get dressed

Eat breakfast

Brush Teeth

Comb hair

Make bed

The cue to "Get Back On Track" is "Are you on track?"

Congratulations!

Example of a
Stay-On-Track map
for going on a
shopping trip.

The goal in this plan
is for a shopping trip to
be a pleasant time for
both parent and the
child.

Stay-on-Track Map
for Shopping Trip

Simon Says Don't Do It!

Run _____

Ask for things not on list _____

Don't get off track!

Stay-on-track Stepping Stones

Help make shopping list

Push shopping cart

Get things off shelf when asked

Cross things off on list

Help put bags in car

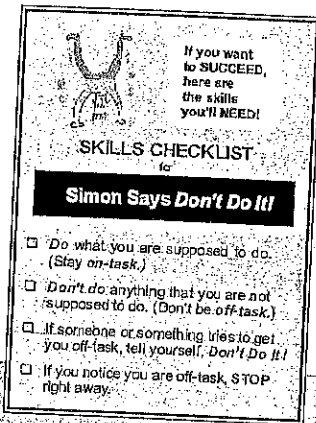
The cue to "Get Back On Track" is "Red Light"

Congratulations!

Section 2: *Don't Do It!* (Behavioral Inhibition)



Yahoo!



In the *Simon Says* program, the coach:

- motivates the child by providing a vision of success.
- creates interesting (and fun!) practice sessions.
- sees that the child uses tools at the point of performance
- recognizes even small signs of progress and provides encouragement

This page gives examples of encouraging statements that the adults can make to point out areas of progress and to direct attention, in positive ways, to areas that still need some improvement. Add other statements to fit the needs of your child.

Encouraging Words

Getting started

You are stopping yourself as soon as you get the cue! I'm impressed!

We came up with a good plan to help us stay on track. Now we know exactly what to do and not-do.

Trouble-shooting

I think we need some more practice sessions. Shall we play The On-Off Switch or Red-Light Green-Light?

We got off to a good start with the Stay-on-Track map. You had some problems toward the finish. Next time we'll have a shorter shopping trip. Let's see if you can stay on track from Start to Finish!

Recognizing effort and success

You are getting better at noticing when you are off-task. Good progress!!

Nice way to get back on-track.

You stayed on-track so well that now you have time to (play, watch TV, go outside, etc.)

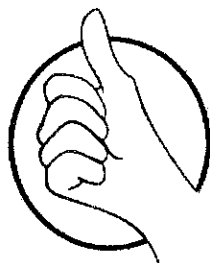





Skill Tracker

Thumbs up!
for

(name) _____





If you want to **SUCCEED**, here are the skills you'll **NEED**!

SKILLS CHECKLIST

Simon Says Don't Do It!

- ☐ Do what you are supposed to do. (Stay on-task.)
- ☐ Don't do anything that you are not supposed to do. (Don't be off-task.)
- ☐ If someone or something tries to get you off-task, tell yourself, **Don't Do It!**
- ☐ If you notice you are off-task, **STOP** right away.

Don't Do It!

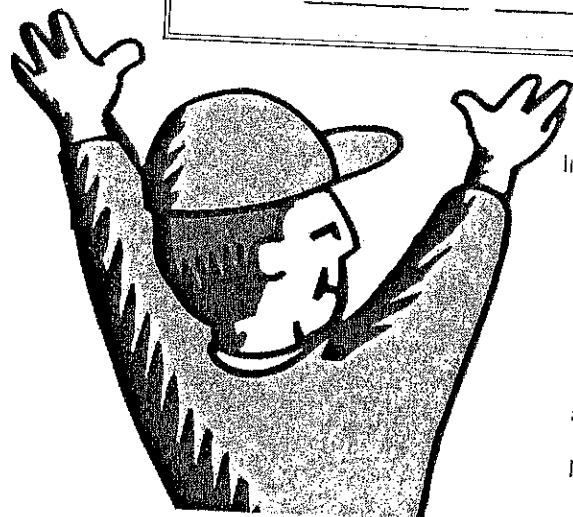
This week's goals are:

- ☐ Do the right thing at the right time (be **on-task**).
- ☐ Use **cues** to help remember to do the right thing.
- ☐ When you notice yourself getting off-task, tell yourself, **Don't do it!** Then **STOP**, and get back on-task.

Date

Where and how the skills were used

Signature



SKILL TRACKER

In the *Simon Says* program, the coach:

- motivates the child by providing a vision of success.
- creates interesting (and fun!) practice sessions.
- sees that the child uses tools at the point of performance
- recognizes even small signs of progress and provides encouragement

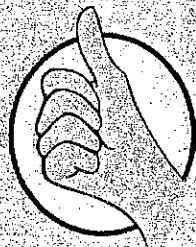
The form on this page can be copied and used for the child's parent, teacher, tutor, sitter, etc. to provide positive feedback when the child uses these skills in "real life." Fill in the child's name at the top; the adult fills in the bottom section and adds his or her signature or initials.

NOTE: A variation of the Skill Tracker appears on the next page.



Thumbs up!
for

(name)



Skill Tracker

Don't Do It!

This week's skills are:

I observed the skill used on:
(please initial by the day observed)

Use cues to help remember to do the right thing
and stay **on-task**.

S ___ M ___ T ___ W ___ T ___ F ___ S ___

If you get **off-task**, tell yourself *Don't Do It*. Then
STOP and get back on task.

S ___ M ___ T ___ W ___ T ___ F ___ S ___

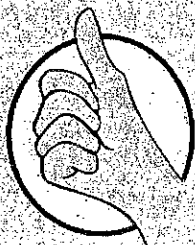
Yahoo!

Comments: (use back if needed)

Signature: _____

Thumbs up!
for

(name)



Skill Tracker

Don't Do It!

This week's skills are:

I observed the skill used on:
(please initial by the day observed)

Use cues to help remember to do the right thing
and stay **on-task**.

S ___ M ___ T ___ W ___ T ___ F ___ S ___

If you get **off-task**, tell yourself *Don't Do It*. Then
STOP and get back on task.

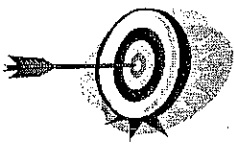
S ___ M ___ T ___ W ___ T ___ F ___ S ___

Yahoo!

Comments: (use back if needed)

Signature: _____

Section 2: *Don't Do It!* (Behavioral Inhibition)



Strategies for Success!

Use this page to record strategies that you have found helpful in implementing the interventions in this section.
(If you would like to share them with others, please email your strategies to us at playtherapy@att.net)