

Executive Function Deficits

Executive Function deficits, which make up the majority of characteristics we think of when we say a person has “cognitive challenges,” may include problems with:

Judgment

Planning and Organization

Any Aspects of Behavior

Integrating Memory

Emotional Arousal

Attention/Concentration

Flexibility

Execution of Complex Behavior

Impulsivity

Disinhibition

Spontaneity Limitations

Awareness of Deficits

Parents with cognitive limitations (PWCL) might lack the judgment to ensure their child’s basic needs and safety. They may be unable to plan regular healthful meals or to get their children to school consistently and on time. They may have problems controlling their own emotions or temper and may not pay attention to their children when playing by the road or when talking to strangers.

PWCL can be impulsive and therefore not think through their actions. They may act overly punitively or aggressively towards their children. They may make poor choices of friends or partners and therefore put themselves and their children at risk. Often these parents are unable to negotiate the world of child rearing, including doctors’ appointments, school meetings, monitoring friendships, maintaining an awareness of their children’s activities, etc. Parenting can be totally overwhelming for them; therefore they may abdicate responsibility to older children who are not equipped to handle their siblings’ care.

Finally, PWCL may have a total lack of awareness of their deficits and therefore be unlikely to neither reach out for, nor accept, assistance.