

Recognizing Executive Function Observation Guide

A simple tool for noticing where kids get stuck.

1 The Moment

What was happening?

2 The Demand

What was the child being asked to do?

3 The Observable Behavior

What did you actually see or hear?

4 The Possible EF Need

Where might the child be getting stuck?

5 The Response

What happened next?
What helped?



Possible EF Need



Start Block
Getting Started/
Initiating



Feelings Block
Managing
Emotions/Impulses



Stop Block
Stopping/Thinking
Before Acting



Calm Block
Regulating,
Calming Body



Flex Block
Adapting,
Shifting Plans



Help Block
Asking for Help,
Using Resources

This is a thinking guide, not a diagnostic tool. Use your professional judgement & knowledge of the child.

Observe first. Wonder second. Respond third.