

Unstuck and On Target: Helping Students with Planning, Organization and Flexible Thinking: Part 3

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Tri-State Webinar Fall 2018

Conflict of Interest: Royalties on Unstuck manuals

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Now for Part 3!

- Finish: how to teach EF skills
- How do we know that Unstuck and On Target works?
- Additional resources
 - NEW!! Online parent training program
 - What's next for Unstuck



Teach How to Be Flexible: Self-Regulatory Scripts

- ✓ Avoid too much talking
- ✓ Refer to the big picture
- ✓ Build an alliance—you're collaborating!
- ✓ Need to be practiced



How to be Flexible: Words and Scripts

Flexible

- Great job being flexible

Unstuck

- I'm getting stuck on ____, how can I get unstuck?

Compromise

- Let's compromise so we both get some of what we want

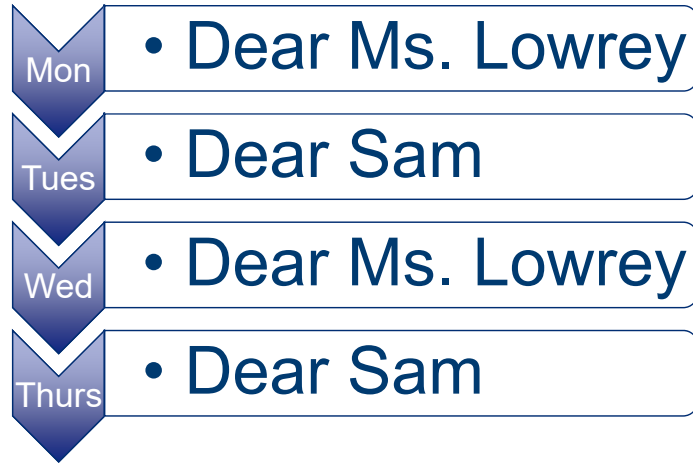
Plan A/Plan B

- What is our plan?
- What is our Plan B?



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An Unstuck Email Exchange:



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Modeling Plan A/ Plan B & Little Deal



Mr. Tome, School Within a School

Next Video

The back story on this next video is that Monica Werner went in to observe a class and the video the teacher wanted to show wouldn't work. The teacher frantically scrambled around asking kids to help her be flexible and make plans. They all shouted plans out to her, and then, hurrah, the video worked. The teacher is reviewing the plans here:



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Problem Solving Plan A, B, C



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Flexibility Scripts

Big Deal/Little Deal

- How can we make this big deal into a little deal?

Choice/No Choice

- Is this a no choice situation?

Handling the Unexpected

- What will change?
- What will stay the same?
- Why is the change happening?



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Modeling Flexibility Scripts

- **Accidents:** After a child spills something at the lunch table, you could say, “When that spilled and was starting to drip on me, I felt like it was a really *Big Deal*, but then I realized I could make it a *Little Deal* by mopping it up and you helped clean it up. Thanks.”
- **On a play date or at recess.** When a child wants to play Legos, but his or her friend wants to play a board game: “How can you be *flexible* and still reach your goal of having fun with your friend?” “Can you *compromise* and play a board game first and then Legos? Then you will both get what you want in the end, which is better than not getting what you want at all.”
- **Unpopular Chores:** If you got a parking ticket: “Oh, how I wish paying this parking ticket was a *choice* situation...”



GWPDC script (Goal, Why, Plan, Do, Check)

Goal	To have fun at recess
Why	Recess is my free time
Plan A	Ask Johnny if he wants to play soccer
Plan B	(If J says, "no") Ask Melissa to play soccer
Plan C	Swing on the swings
Do	Follow my plans
Check	Did I meet my goal? Which plan worked? Would I do it the same or different next time?



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3 Videos Demonstrating How to Use These Strategies in 3 Different Ways

- Individual model using lots of language and a visual support with a particularly cute and wonderful 11 year old
- A full class model with primary school kids
- A model of how to use it in a difficult moment



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GWPDC



Katie C. Alexander, MS, OTR
Occupational Therapist, Unstuck Author

Stevie Anthony
Student



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Mr. Tome GWPDC



School Within a School

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Mary, in a Difficult Moment

Using Unstuck in a Difficult Moment

This student is disappointed because he wants to see Ms. Whitmore that day; he thinks that's when she told him he would see her. Ms. Whitmore is busy and can't see him until his usual time in three days...



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What about you?

- If you were Mary, what would be the first thing you would try?



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Mary, in a Difficult Moment

They walk to get water together and by the time they're done he's calm enough to rejoin the group.



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How Can I Train Parents and
Caregivers in Unstuck?



E-Unstuck


- SBIR funded to 3C Institute (NIMH 1R44MH109193-01)
- Developed and tested parent training modules on an e-learning platform
 - Adaptation of our parent book and our parent trainings for ASD

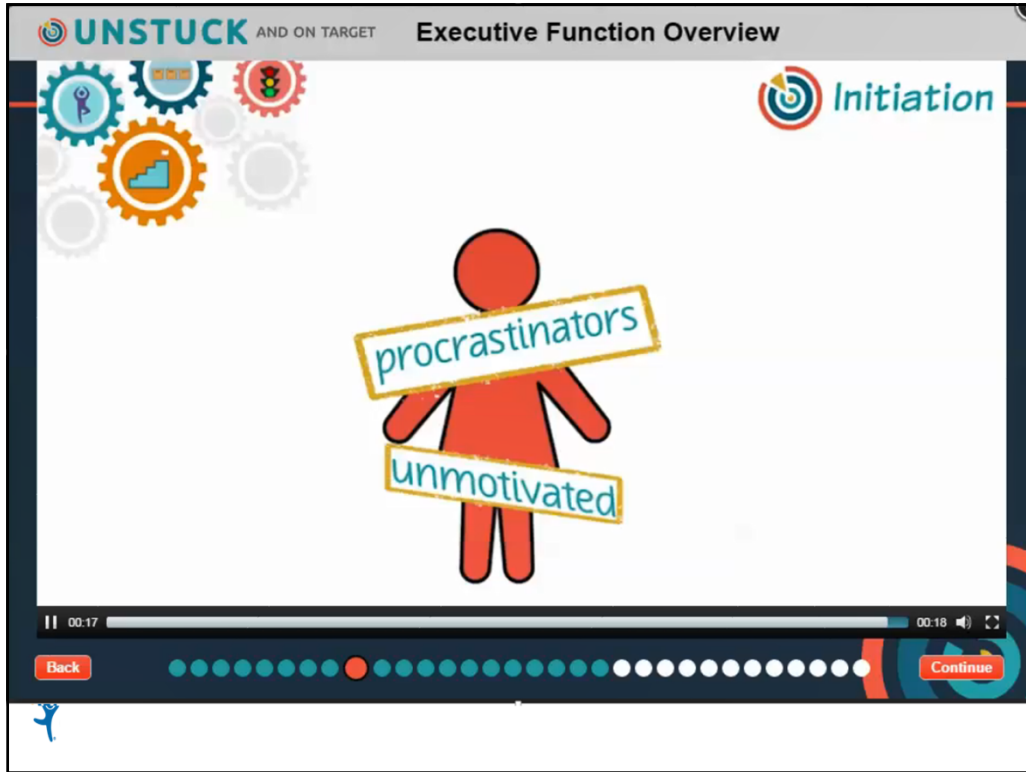


EF Overview Executive Function Profile

This profile uses your answers about your child to rate their executive function skills. The Frequency of Difficulty column indicates their level of struggle with the executive function. Though your child might be struggling with several executive function skills, we recommend that you focus on one at a time to give you and your child an opportunity to make progress. There's an action tip for each executive function to support your problem solving.

Executive Function	Description	Frequency of Difficulty
Flexibility	The ability to shift from one thing to the next without getting stuck, adapt to new situations, and adjust to unexpected changes in routine.	High
<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  ACTION TIP: </div> <div> Start talking to your child today about "Plan B." Anytime something doesn't go as expected, say, "We need a Plan B," Create a Plan B anytime you expect Plan A might not work out. Say, "Let's come up with a Plan B before we leave the house." </div> </div>		



E-Unstuck Parent Training Program
(for parents of children with ASD
ages 7-11) available at:

unstuckontarget.com



What's the evidence?



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Pre-RCT Development Process

CBPR; Needs assessment with experts and stakeholders

Classroom observations of experts in action

Focus groups with school staff, parents, and children to define key elements

Feasibility and acceptability trial with direct feedback from students with ASD

Skip efficacy altogether



The test of any intervention is the test of that intervention in a context.

Efficacy → **Effectiveness**

Traditional RCT

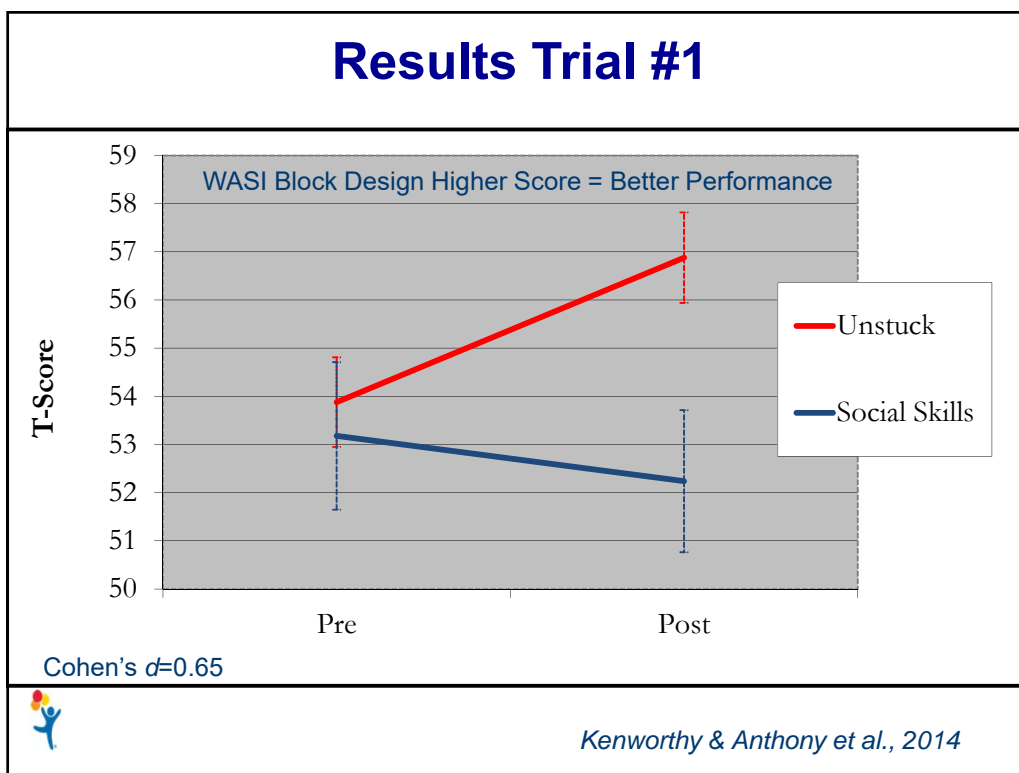
- Grant funding insures tx delivery at desired intensity and duration
- Highly trained and supervised in tx
- Restrictive inclusion and exclusion criteria

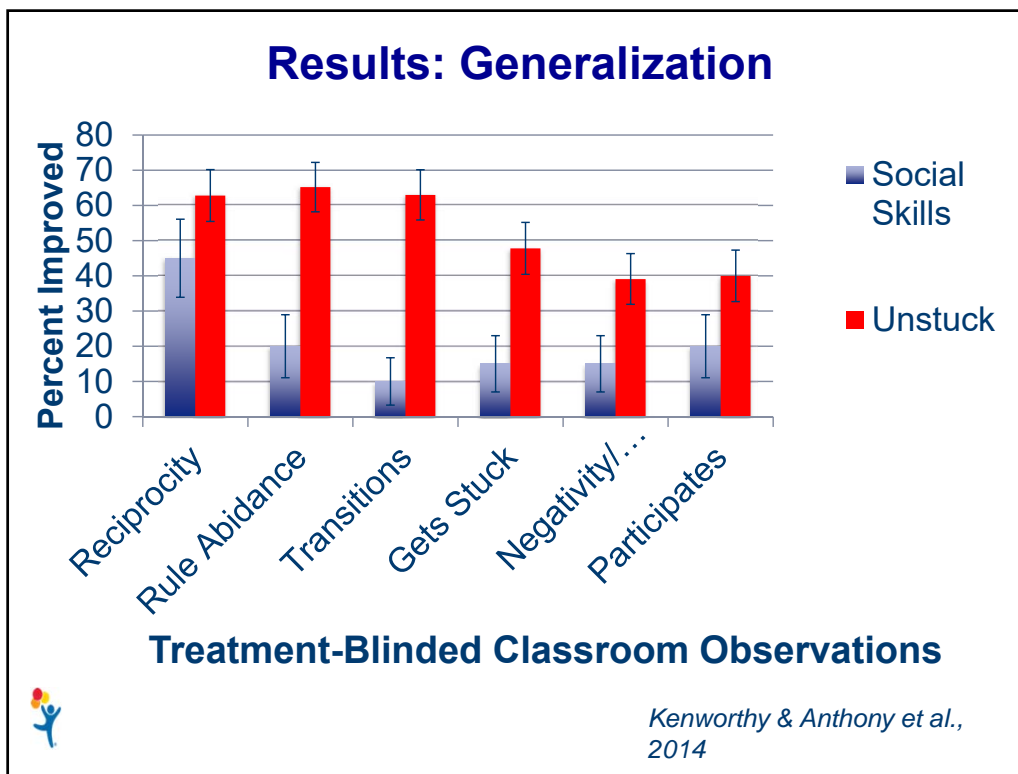
Community Practice

- tx subject to programmatic and funding priorities
- Variable training, supervision, motivation and caseload
- Whoever shows up

System
Clinician
Participant

Slide Courtesy of David Mandell, DPH





Study #2: Disparities Comparative Effectiveness Trial

- 3rd – 5th graders (48 with ASD and 98 with ADHD) from three school systems in 21 Title 1 schools.
- Random assignment to revised Unstuck and On Target or adapted Contingency Behavior Management
 - Both target EF/Flexibility
 - Both must be effective
- Adapted interventions for use with (all at once!!):
 - Title 1 schools
 - Either ADHD or ASD
 - Spanish or English speaking families
 - Greater family involvement
 - Strengths-based, student-centered
- School personnel administer tx in school, + parent and teacher training

PCORI AD-1304-7379

Student Demographics	
Age/sex	Mean age 9.7 years; 82% male
Ethnoracial category (student)	
Latino	32%
White, Non-Latino	31%
Black/African-American, Non-Latino	22%
Multi-racial	11%
Asian	3%
Family income range	\$8,796-\$400,000, Mean of \$86,164
Highest reported parent education per household	3-25 years, Mean 15.14 years
Language spoken in the home	
Only English	59%
Only Spanish	14%
One or more of 12 other languages	27%
Attended Parent Training in Spanish	21%

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Group Leader Demographics	
Profession	Percent (N=127)
Counselors	27%
Social workers	23%
Teachers/other teaching staff	20%
Special educators	11%
School psychologists	6%
Question not answered	13%

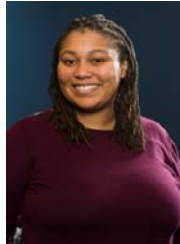


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Community-Based Participatory Research

Stakeholder Advisory Board

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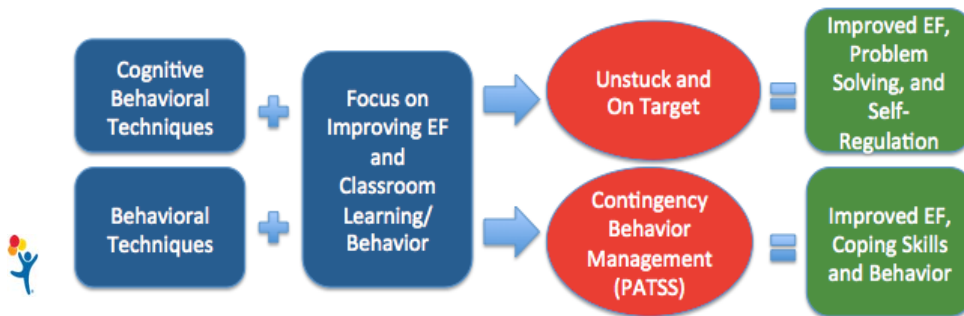


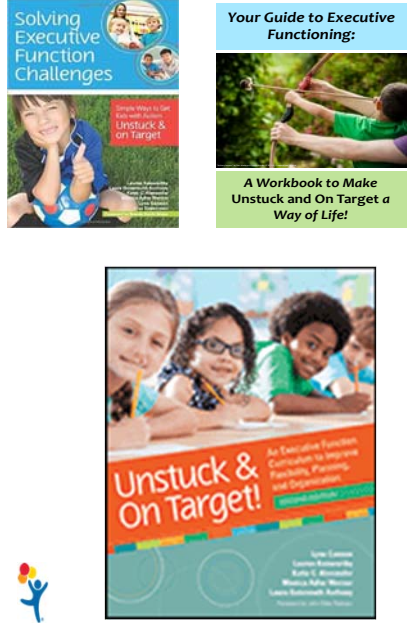
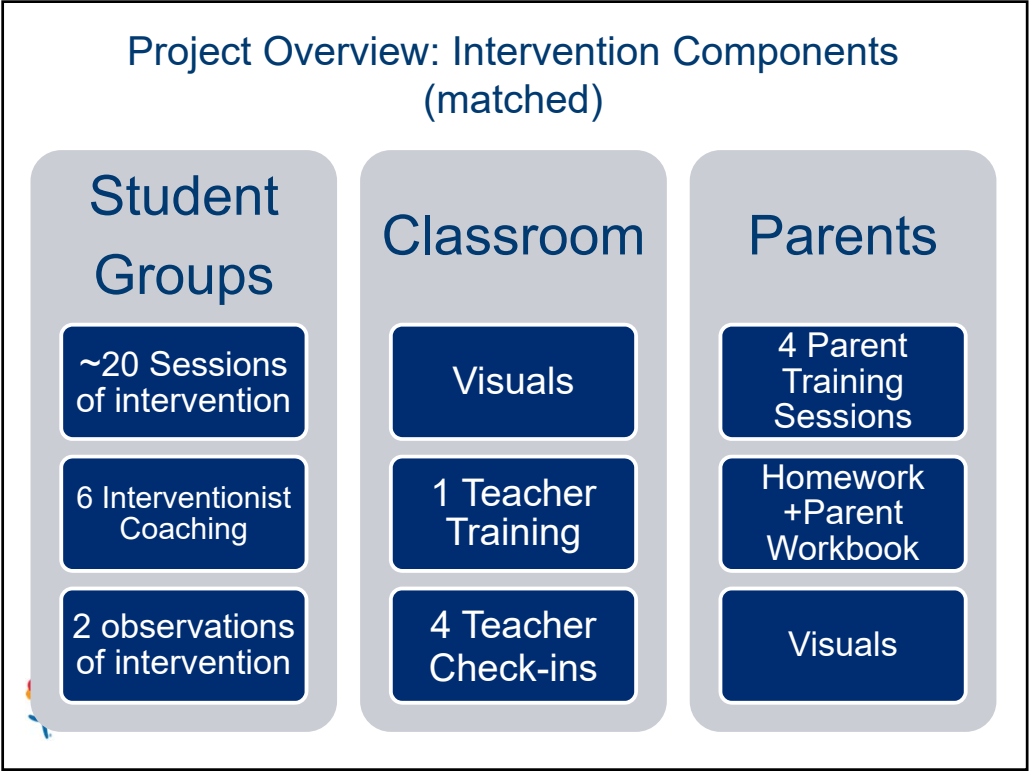
System

Project Overview

A randomized, clustered, parallel comparative effectiveness design:

- **Randomized** – Schools will be randomly assigned (not kids)
- **Clustered** – Treatments will be delivered by school staff and will be matched for “dose” of intervention and training. **(Also pragmatic).**
- **Parallel** – Follow-up 9 months after they complete treatment to evaluate the maintenance of any gains, thus preventing a cross-over design.
- **Adaptive** – To meet the needs of our community (not parallel after all)





Solving Executive Function Challenges
Unstuck & on Target

Your Guide to Executive Functioning:
A Workbook to Make Unstuck and On Target a Way of Life!

Unstuck & On Target!
An Executive Function Curriculum to Improve Flexibility, Planning, and Organization

#1 Foundational Skills	#2 What is Flexibility
#3 How to be Flexible	#4 Why be Flexible
#5 Your Goals: Getting what you want	#6 Flexible, Goal-Directed Futures

“Ser Flexible”

Ser flexible significa que puede cambiar sus ideas, hacer algo diferente de lo que pensó iba a hacer, pensar en algo diferente, y mantener una mente abierta.

La “Práctica en Casa” 5 incluye un juego que se puede jugar para ayudar a su hijo/a con ser flexible.

Cuando los niños son flexibles, ellos tienen muchas opciones. **Puede usar frases cómo:**

- *“Vamos a pensar de una manera que podemos ser flexibles en caso de que nuestro primer plan no funciona.”*
- *“No siempre puedes conseguir lo que quieres, así que tienes que ser flexible.”*
- *“Puedes ser flexible, lo has hecho antes.”*
- *“Cuando compartiste tu juego, estabas siendo flexible, y ¡funcionó!”*


Autism
1-13
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DOI: 10.1177/1362361316650394
www.sagepub.com
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Special Issue Article


Lessons learned: Engaging culturally diverse families in neurodevelopmental disorders intervention research

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Blinded Outcomes Pre-Post Paired Sample t-tests ASD

	CBM			Unstuck		
	N	t	Cohen's d	N	t	Cohen's d
Block Design	25	2.67**	.53 (Med)	19	2.77**	.60 (Med)
CT Flexibility	24	1.24	.25 (Small)	18	1.82*	.43 (Med)
CT Plan	24	1.67	.34 (Small)	19	1.88*	.43 (Med)
Class Obs	24	0.78	.16 (Small)	21	1.93*	.42 (Med)




Blinded Outcomes Pre-Post Paired Sample t-tests ADHD

	CBM			Unstuck		
	N	<i>t</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>	N	<i>t</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Block Design	39	1.68	.27 (Small)	49	3.18**	.45 (Med)
CT Flexibility	34	4.00**	.69 (Med)	40	4.43**	.70 (Med-Lg)
CT Plan	34	3.53**	.60 (Med)	48	3.55**	.51 (Med)
Class Obs	40	3.32**	.52 (Med)	51	4.41**	.62 (Med)



Unstuck & CBM are feasible and can be delivered with fidelity in low-income schools and with Spanish or English speaking families

- ▶ **Most school staff could complete both interventions.** 79% of the interventionists completed at least 90% of the curriculum (Completion rates: Unstuck= 80% CBM= 79%)
- ▶ **School staff could deliver both interventions effectively.** Fidelity was good for Unstuck (mean =8.4±1.3) and CBM(mean = 8.6±0.9)
- ▶ AND! 70% of families attended at least 1 family meeting
- ▶ **ADHD kids got better with both interventions, ASD kids responded best to Unstuck**



Student and Parent Feedback

	Unstuck	CBM	Statistic
Child: "I enjoyed the group a lot"	85%	69%	t=2.018, df=128, p=.046
Parent: "The group was really helpful for my child"	44%	25%	t=2.767, df=117, p=.007
Parent: "Very satisfied"	57%	45%	t=3.015, df=116, p=.003
Parent: "Very likely to use techniques in the future"	65%	34%	t=2.055, df=90, p=.043



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These student or family factors do not relate to classroom outcome:

- 1
IQ
r=.165 p=.055
- 2
Age
r=-.033
p=.69
- 3
Income
r=.062
p=.495
- 4
Race Ethnicity
White non-Latino (30%) change the least
- 5
Language spoken in the home
English only (51%) changes the least on CBM



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These implementation factors do not relate to classroom outcome:

1

Treatment fidelity

2


of sessions

3

Role of school-based group leader

4

Parent knowledge gains



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Unstuck Fast Facts

What is the goal of Unstuck?

To improve executive functioning (EF) in students at school to help them be more flexible, regulated, problem-solvers.

- Executive functioning skills include planning, flexibility and organization
- Executive functioning problems include trouble transitioning and completing multiple-step tasks

What is Unstuck?

- 21 easy-to-lead school-based group sessions that last 30-40 minutes each
- Can be implemented in any setting: mainstream or special education classrooms, pull-out group, or after school club.
- Needed materials are either provided or items that are already available in schools (glue, scissors, etc.).
- Simple classroom and home practice guides for each lesson are included.
- Parent resources are available in both English and Spanish.
- Includes visual supports and posters for abstract concepts.

Who is Unstuck for?

Unstuck and On Target (UOT) can be used with anyone who has EF problems and the verbal ability of a 7 or 8 year old.

Who is qualified to teach Unstuck?

All types of professional school personnel, including teachers, special educators, school social workers, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, counselors, or school psychologists, can teach Unstuck effectively.

How did we develop Unstuck?

A team of teachers, psychologists, occupational therapists, parents and students were all involved in the development of Unstuck.

Does Unstuck Work?

We tested Unstuck in Title I schools with racially and ethnically diverse families who spoke a total of 14 different languages, and compared it to an empowering behavior management program (Contingency Behavior Management; CBM).

We found that:

- Students and parents liked UOT more than CBM.
- UOT worked better than CBM for students with ASD and both programs worked well for students with ADHD in improving classroom behaviors (social reciprocity, transitioning, rule abidance, participation, getting stuck and being less negative).

	ASD		ADHD	
	UOT	CBM	UOT	CBM
Improved classroom behavior	✓	x	✓	✓
Better problem-solving	✓	x	✓	x
More flexible	✓	x	✓	x
Improved planning	✓	x	✓	✓
Higher student & parent satisfaction	✓	x	✓	x

✓ greater or improved, x less or not improved


(AND these improvements were maintained 1 year later!)

This study was supported by The Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI AD-1304-729).

What kids say they learned:

"Being able to have multiple plans because if I don't have multiple plans I get stuck. If I have multiple plans I can get a little of what I want, rather than not at all. In most situations that's better."

"When I get really mad at a teacher or friend, I try to think about is it really necessary to get mad. I try to stay calm and be flexible and cope with what's going on."



Effectiveness Summary

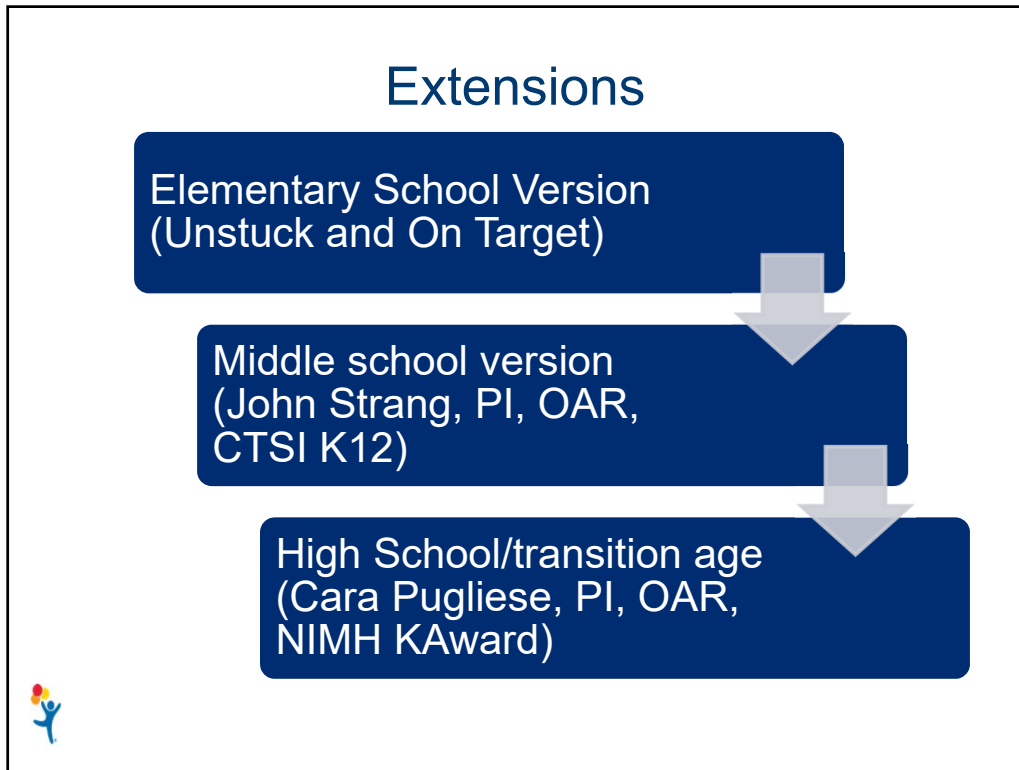
- Medium to large effects
- Stakeholder input protects us from mistakes, increased acceptability
- Diversity of sample=increased power
- Committed participants (90% Post testing rate; 70% of parents attended a live training)
- Good generalization?
- Easier dissemination and implementation?



Now You're Ready!



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GOAL: Increase your understanding of how to teach executive functions

PLAN

1. Describe the importance of executive functioning
2. Teach flexibility, organization & planning skills using specific scripts or vocabulary and other tools

CHECK

1. Did I get done when I said I would? ✓
2. Do you have questions?

The Unstuck Research and Development Team



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THANK YOU

To our funders and the dedicated school staff, children and families who made Unstuck and On Target possible

