

PARENT FOCUS: Helping Students Succeed

PARENT Focus is an 8-week coaching program designed specifically for parents of high school students, college students, and young adults (ages 14–25) who are struggling with executive functioning.

While your young person may be the one facing EF challenges, these sessions equip parents with the tools, language, and strategies to support them effectively—without rescuing, nagging, or burning yourself out.

Every session emphasizes the “Focus on Fewer” parenting approach: scaffolding independence, reducing your mental load, and helping your child build lasting EF skills instead of temporary compliance.

Session 1: Curiosity & Self-Awareness

Objective: Shift from frustration and judgment to calm, curious observation of your child’s EF patterns (and your own parenting triggers).

Key Topics:

- Why curiosity is the most powerful parenting tool for EF struggles
- Common parental blind spots (over-helping, assuming “laziness,” comparing to siblings)
- The CORE FOCUS Parent Self-Assessment: your own EF style and how it interacts with your child’s
- Recognizing the difference between “fixing” and “supporting”

Coaching Activities:

- Guided reflection: “What does my child’s EF look like when they’re at their best?”
- Real-time EF observation log for one week (no interventions yet)
- Identifying your top “parenting focus thief”

Homework: Complete the CORE FOCUS Parent Self-Assessment and bring three neutral observations about your child’s EF patterns.

Session 2: EF Skills: What Are They?

Objective: Understand exactly which EF skills your child is struggling with so you stop mislabeling behavior and start targeting the right support.

Key Topics:

- The six core EF skills translated into real-life teen/young-adult scenarios (homework, college applications, part-time jobs, daily living)
- How EF weaknesses show up differently by age and stage (HS vs. college vs. young adult)
- Why “they just need to try harder” is rarely the issue
- Mapping your child’s EF profile using the shared CORE FOCUS framework
- Coaching Activities:
 - Interactive EF Skills Sort tailored to your child’s current challenges
 - Case study discussion: “A week in the life of a student with EF friction”
- Homework: Draft a one-sentence “EF Support Intention” for your parenting role and choose the top two skills you want to help strengthen.

Session 3: Time and Place

Objective: Help your child create environments and routines that make focus easier—while protecting your own time and energy as a parent.

Key Topics:

- Time blindness in teens/young adults and how to respond without frustration
- The “Focus on Fewer” family calendar system (shared family view + private student blocks)
- Designing a student “Focus Zone” at home or in dorm
- Transition rituals you can suggest (without dictating)
- Coaching Activities:
 - Live audit of your family calendar and your child’s current schedule
 - Brainstorm and role-play one environmental change conversation
- Homework: Collaboratively implement one small focus-block or zone change with your child and observe (without correcting) what happens.

Session 4: Information Storage

Objective: Teach your child to build an external brain so you stop being the family “search engine” and they stop losing assignments, deadlines, and ideas.

Key Topics:

- Why students drown in information debt and how parents accidentally become the backup system
- The CORE FOCUS Capture → Process → Store system adapted for school, college, and young-adult life
- Choosing age-appropriate tools (digital + physical) that your child will actually use
- Scripts for handing over responsibility without taking it back
- Coaching Activities:
 - Hands-on demonstration of building a simple “Second Brain” template together

- Role-play the conversation: “Let’s move your stuff out of my head and into yours”
Homework: Guide your child through migrating one major information stream (school emails, assignments, or life admin) into their new system.

Session 5: Setting Goals

Objective: Help your young person set EF-friendly goals that feel motivating rather than overwhelming—while learning when and how to step back.

Key Topics:

- Outcome goals vs. process goals for students and young adults
- Why most parent-set goals fail the EF test
- The CORE FOCUS Goal Framework adapted for school, college, and life transitions
- Breaking big goals into “next physical actions” your child can own

Coaching Activities:

- Goal stress-test workshop using one of your child’s current goals or college plans
- Guided conversation script: “What would success look like to you?”
Homework: Help your child finalize 1–2 goals using the CORE FOCUS template and identify the very next action—then practice letting them own it.

Session 6: Establishing Priorities

Objective: Model and teach the skill of saying “no” so your child can protect their time and energy instead of people-pleasing or overcommitting.

Key Topics:

- The Focus on Fewer Decision Filter for students and young adults
- Upgraded priority tools that work with school deadlines, extracurriculars, and social life
- Weekly and daily priority conversations you can have (without controlling)
- How to stop rescuing last-minute crises and build accountability

Coaching Activities:

- Live priority sorting of your child’s current commitments
- Role-play boundary-setting conversations (e.g., dropping a club, saying no to extra shifts)
Homework: Conduct a family “Stop/Start/Continue” review together and support your child in removing or renegotiating at least one commitment.

Session 7: Challenges and Flexibility

Objective: Prepare yourself and your child for the inevitable setbacks so you respond with calm coaching instead of panic or criticism.

Key Topics:

- Cognitive flexibility for both parent and child
 - Common derailers in teens/young adults (perfectionism, all-or-nothing thinking, social media urgency)
 - The CORE FOCUS “Plan B Protocol” you can teach and practice together
 - Rebuilding after a meltdown or missed deadline without shame spirals
 - Coaching Activities:
 - Scenario planning using recent real-life challenges from your family
 - Flexibility drills and parent self-regulation techniques
- Homework: Use the Plan B Protocol together on one actual disruption and debrief what worked.

Session 8: Review and Update Process

Objective: Install a sustainable family review system so EF support becomes a natural rhythm instead of constant crisis management.

Key Topics:

- The CORE FOCUS Monthly Review & Quarterly Reset adapted for families
 - Celebrating progress while gradually fading your scaffolding
 - Creating your child’s personalized “Focus Maintenance Manual” (with your guidance)
 - Your own parent “maintenance plan” to prevent burnout
 - Coaching Activities:
 - Full program retrospective using the original parent self-assessment
 - Live creation of a 90-day family focus plan
 - Graduation ceremony and commitment statement (parent + optional child share)
- Homework/Final Deliverable: Complete your CORE FOCUS Companion Playbook and schedule the first monthly family review date.