

STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Dr. Danielle Ploetz, PhD
Pediatric
Neuropsychologist

GENERAL PATTERNS OF DYSFUNCTION BY LOCATION OF INJURY IN TBI

Right Side of Brain

Impairments in visual-spatial perception

Left-neglect, or inattention to the left side of space or body

Decreased awareness of deficits

Altered creativity and music perception

Loss of the gestalt, or “big picture”

Visual memory deficits

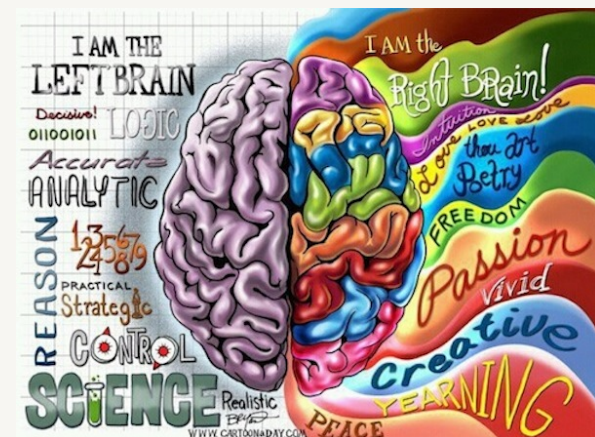
Decreased control over left-sided movements

Left Side of Brain

- Difficulties in understanding language (receptive language)
- Difficulties in speaking or verbal output (expressive language)
- Catastrophic reactions (depression, anxiety)
- Verbal memory deficits
- Decreased control over right-sided movements
- Impaired logic
- Sequencing difficulties

Diffuse Injury

- Reduced thinking speed
- Increased confusion
- Reduced attention and concentration
- Increased fatigue
- Impaired cognitive functions across all areas



ATTENTION AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTION STRATEGIES



A, B, C'S FOR ATTENTION

Accommodations

- Reduce distractions, reduce complexity, use pictures, provide notes, reduce demands

Behavioral Intervention

- Breaks, BIP

Consistency

Direct Instruction

- Teach “attention”
- <http://www.understood.org/~media/5c05e59b4dc14a27bd0b1daf1a694359.pdf>

Environmental Cues

Functional Strategies

- Motivational, pair with overlearning, multi-sensory learning

Goals

Help

DEFINITION — EF

Executive function can be conceptualized as an umbrella term that includes a collection of interrelated functions that are responsible for purposeful, goal-directed, problem-solving behavior.

BRIEF Professional Manual

ORGANIZATION - STRATEGIES

Agenda book, phone calendar, organizational apps

Month: _____ Year: _____ honesty • respect • responsibility • fairness • caring • Character Trait: _____

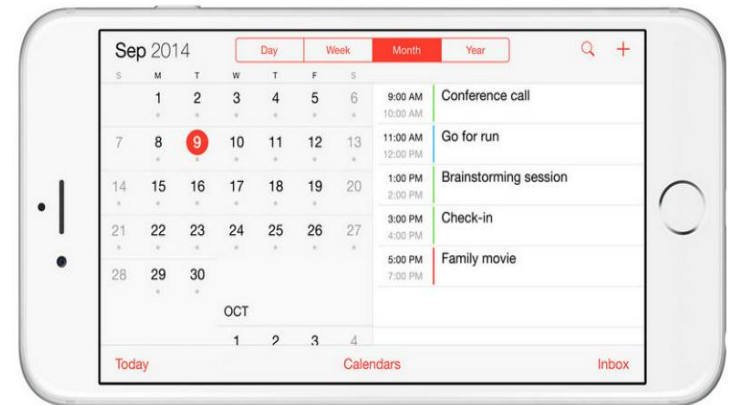
My Good Habits: _____ My Favorite Book Title: _____

Date	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Plan					
Science					
Social Studies					
Reading / Language Arts					
Spelling					
Plan					
Science					
Social Studies					
Reading / Language Arts					
Spelling					
Plan					
Science					
Social Studies					
Reading / Language Arts					
Spelling					
Teacher's Note					

Spelling Words

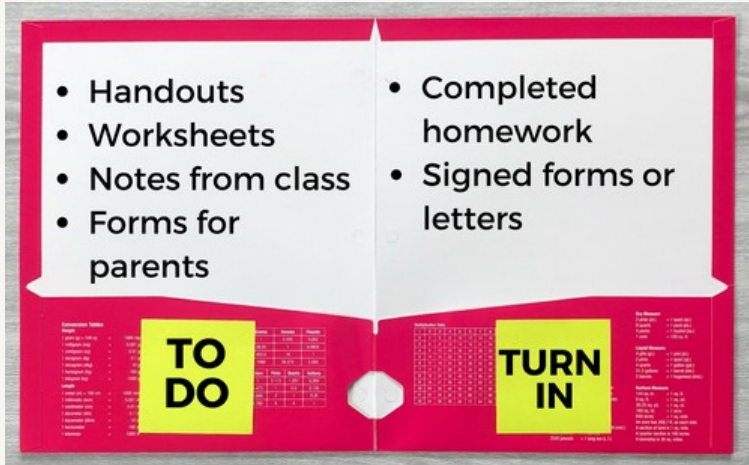
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

www.mindtools.com



ORGANIZATION - STRATEGIES

Daily check-in



Homework Checklist					
I need these things to do my homework	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Planner					
Filled out					
Checked by teacher					
Textbooks					
Workbooks					
Worksheets/handouts					
Notebooks					
Special notes, permissions, forms to be signed by parent/caregiver					
(What else?)					
(What else?)					
(What else?)					

WORKING MEMORY — SCHOOL IMPACT

Process

- Difficulty listening to lecture and taking notes
- Difficulty listening to instructions/directions and then carrying them out correctly.
- Difficulty with engaging in give and take conversation

Content

- Reading (i.e., recalling information from selection)
- Math (i.e., holding onto the information in a word problem)
- Written expression (i.e., recalling all the parts of writing a paragraph/essay/report)

WORKING MEMORY - STRATEGIES

Need: Reduce working memory load

How:

Provide a copy of notes in advance of the class for the student to follow along lecture.

Provide written directions

Chunking - Reduce the reading demand when answering questions or sequencing events
– stop and review and provide summary sentence

Provide a checklist and rubric

Use visualization, verbal rehearsal, melodic intonation, act it out

Help make associations

PROBLEM-SOLVING – SCHOOL IMPACT

Process —

Difficulty answering questions such as:

How do you think you will do on the test?

What was the hardest part of the assignment?

What strategies will help you complete this assignment?

Content —

Checking work for accuracy

Prioritizing assignments

Figuring out what to do when don't understand what to do

PROBLEM-SOLVING - STRATEGIES

Requires a lot of modeling and errorless learning

Plan-Do-Review

Goal-Plan-Do-Review Worksheet

Goal:

What do I want to accomplish? What is the goal?

Plan:

How am I going to accomplish the goal? List the steps.

Do:

Execute the plan.

Review:

How did I do? What worked? What didn't?

EMOTION REGULATION STRATEGIES

DEFINING EMOTION REGULATION

Emotion regulation can be defined as the ability to modulate and regulate your emotional responses

Emotion regulation ability is interconnected to the broader domain of executive functioning

- Inhibition/Impulse control

Poor emotional control can be expressed in different ways.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

She cried for no apparent reason.

Emotional regulation difficulties might look like overreacting or they may look like...



He was disproportionately upset when he was told to put his paper away.

“mismatch between context and emotional display”

They can go from zero to 100 very quickly with any emotion

DISRUPTION TO LIFE

Emotion regulation can be helpful in day to day life

Disruption to this function can make it difficult to engage in academic and social activities



MANAGING THE TRIGGERS?

Using the ABC approach to challenging behavior, we can manage the antecedents, or triggers, to reduce the chances of a behavior occurring.

Develop a positive rapport

Establish consistent routines

Provide rules/education about appropriate ways to communicate

Involve the person in discussing behavior issues

Avoid or minimize known triggers

Use distraction or redirection away from the trigger

Discuss these triggers with the person

Know what they are using as possible coping strategies (deep breathing, mindful activity, switching to a preferred activity, etc.)

Suggest and encourage these strategies when a trigger occurs.

STRATEGIES

These challenges do not typically occur in isolation

May be helpful to utilize strategies for other areas that the child may be struggling with for example executive functioning or memory



HOW DO I SUPPORT MY STUDENT?

1. Stay calm
2. Allow for time to regroup
3. Hear them out
4. Respond positively and provide feedback/support as warranted
5. Gently redirect them to another activity or topic

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

This is generally the most effective strategy. An incentive is given immediately when a desired behavior occurs. For example, Kevin usually becomes quiet when anxious then suddenly starts shouting at everyone. He is learning to tell family members when he is getting anxious and do his deep breathing exercises. Every time he remembers to do this, his actions are praised.



POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT CON'T

Positive reinforcement is not bribery - reinforcement comes after a task is completed, bribery is offered before. Try to make sure the reinforcer is practical, ethical and valid for the behavior being targeted. Timing is critical - ensure the positive reinforcement happens immediately after the desired behavior.

- Keep in mind that lengthy “behavioral contracts” may not be appropriate if the individual has problems with working memory or awareness.

GIVING FEEDBACK

With brain differences (especially to the frontal lobes), a person may be unaware of what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior. They may also have trouble interpreting facial expressions or non-verbal language that others are upset. We need to provide immediate clear verbal feedback on behaviors.



REDIRECTION

Redirection can involve distracting a person when a trigger for behavior occurs, or redirecting them when a behavior is occurring. It is often used for repetitive behaviors such as constantly talking about the same topic. It is often effective when combined with positive reinforcement as well.



IGNORING THE BEHAVIOR

In some cases, behavior occurs to get attention, so the best strategy may be to ignore it. As with many of these techniques, tactical ignoring is best linked with positive reinforcement. For example, a child is ignored during an angry outburst, but is rewarded with praise, a treat or favorite activity once the outburst is over.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER - EXAMPLE

Child “Kevin” gets anxious and has a hard time communicating his concerns. He will sometimes yell or rip up assignments for seemingly no reason.

What do we know about Kevin’s triggers?

What are strategies we learned Kevin was working on to cope?

How can you support him in a moment of stress?

CASE EXAMPLE

What do we know about Kevin's triggers?

- Well we know he can become overwhelmed easily with large assignments
- We can ask him to do every other problem on the page, or to write one response at a time – maybe we chunk his assignments or help with prioritizing tasks
- Maybe Kevin also gets frustrated more easily because things take longer to do – thinking and motor planning
 - So we give him extended time or an alternative way to complete the task that accommodates his processing speed and fine motor weaknesses

CASE EXAMPLE

What are strategies we learned Kevin was working on to cope?

- We know Kevin has a chart with strategies written on it for reference
- We know from talking with his parents that he is working on deep breathing, activity pacing, and learning to communicate his needs
 - We also know that Kevin struggles with communicating, especially when faced with a challenging task and doesn't always think about asking for help first

CASE EXAMPLE

How can you support him in a moment of stress?

- First, stay calm – speak in a neutral voice
- For Kevin, we know that he has a chart to refer to – we know that he needs a verbal cue to look at the chart or he won't be able to independently choose how he can be helped – so we gently state “Kevin, I can see that you are getting frustrated. Let's take a look at your chart to help you.”
- This visual cue can be helpful to allow the child to name their feelings, to take a mental break from whatever they are doing, and to allow them the opportunity to use some of their coping strategies or even ask for help if that is needed.
- Finally providing feedback/reinforcement for engaging in these can be reassuring and increase the likelihood of them using strategies again

EMOTION REGULATION SHEET

Strategies for feeling CHALLENGED

- STOP. Name your feelings. Calm down.
- More time/Take a break
- “Look Back” (self-reflect)
- Ask for help
 - Choices
 - Hint
 - Say it a different way
 - Repeat it
 - Write it down
 - See a picture
 - Show me

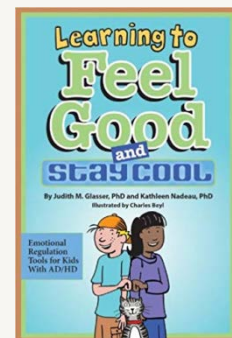
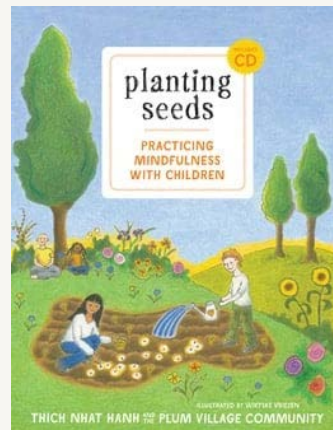
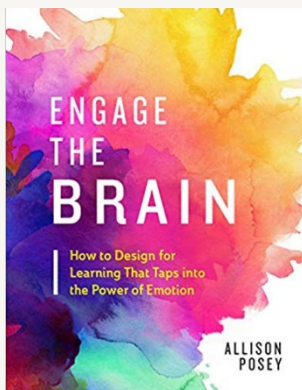


RESOURCES

Book about emotion and instructional design: Engage the brain: How to design learning that taps into the power of emotion by Allison Posey

Book about teaching mindfulness to young children: Planting seeds: Practicing mindfulness with children by Thich Nhat Hanh

Book about Emotion Regulation tools for kids with ADHD: Learning to feel good and stay cool by Judith M. Glasser, PhD



MEMORY STRATEGIES



MEMORY PROBLEMS

A memory deficit might look like trouble remembering or it might look like.....

▪ (Capuco & Freeman-Woolpert)

- She frequently misses appointments-avoidance, irresponsibility.
- He says he'll do something but doesn't get around to it.
- She talks about the same thing or asks the same question over and over-annoying perseveration.
- He invents plausible sounding answers so you won't know he doesn't remember .



CONSIDERATIONS

Severity of impairment

What needs to be remembered?
Appointment? Facts?

Preferences, meaning

Trial and error from clinician



STRATEGIES

Orientation/External Aides

Errorless learning

Spaced Retrieval

Chaining

Association/Keyword retrieval

Mnemonics

External Aides

-



JULY 2013						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				
		MichelZbinden.com			not to be used without all rights reserved	

DAILY TASKS/HOMEWORK

Monday <i>date:</i>		Thursday <i>date:</i>
Tuesday <i>date:</i>		Friday <i>date:</i>
Wednesday <i>date:</i>		Saturday <i>date:</i>
		Sunday <i>date:</i>

ERRORLESS LEARNING

Cue freely as needed

Frequent repetition

Present information in actual context/setting

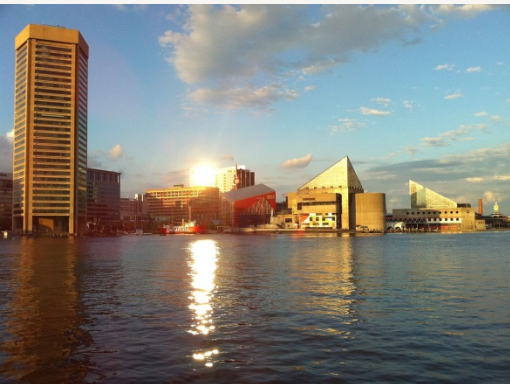
Avoid quizzing

Do not allow guessing or trial-and-error

ERRORLESS LEARNING

Most basic: make statement & ask student to recall statement without delay

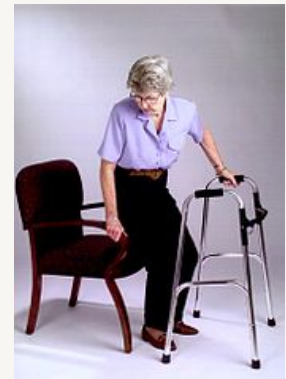
- My name is Dr. D. What is my name? OR Did I say my name was Sally or Dr. D?
- You live in Baltimore. Where do you live?



ERRORLESS LEARNING

More complex: simple command with conditional clause attached, indicating when command should be executed

- When you pick up the phone, say, “Hello, my name is Kevin.” What should you say when you pick up the phone?
- Before you sit down, feel for the back of the chair. What should you do before you sit down?



SPACED RETRIEVAL

Identical to errorless learning except student is asked to retain information for progressively longer periods of time

- Give name and ask to repeat after increasing intervals
 - E.g., 15 sec, 30 sec, 45 sec
- Duration only increases based on performance and until each prior level is mastered

CHAINING

Used to retrain students to perform sequence of steps by procedural memory

Each item learned automatically, as an isolated unit

Then mechanically linked with items before and after

Completion of 1 step in sequence serves to reinforce step that came before it

CHAINING

Verbal or visual; helpful to also incorporate motor movements

Forward

- Teacher provides 1st step; guides student
- Once able, 2nd step introduced; student guided to perform both together
- Once successful, 3rd step introduced; student guided to perform all 3 together
- Continues until all steps are complete

Backward

- Identical, cueing for steps reversed last to first
- Vanishing cues
 - process for teaching new information in which prompts are provided and then gradually removed

ASSOCIATION

Paired Associate (PA) learning

- 2 items (a Stimulus and Response item) paired as stimuli (e.g., CALENDAR-SHOE)
- When items pairs are committed to memory, presentation of first word (the stimulus word) should evoke the second word (the response word)
 - Presenting CALENDAR should elicit a response of SHOE

KEYWORD METHOD

Paired-associate learning

- mediating word (“key” word) is used to associate two items
- Often used to learn foreign language
- English word that sounds like some part of foreign
 - Spanish *carta* sounds like the English *cart*
 - *cart* is the **keyword**
 - link keyword with English meaning of foreign word by forming an interactive image
 - *carta* means *letter*, so visualize a letter inside a cart



MNEMONICS

Acronym-list of initial letters of critical words

- representing the Great Lakes as HOMES

Narrative Story Method

- create story that contains all words in a to-be-remembered list

Rhymes and Alliterations

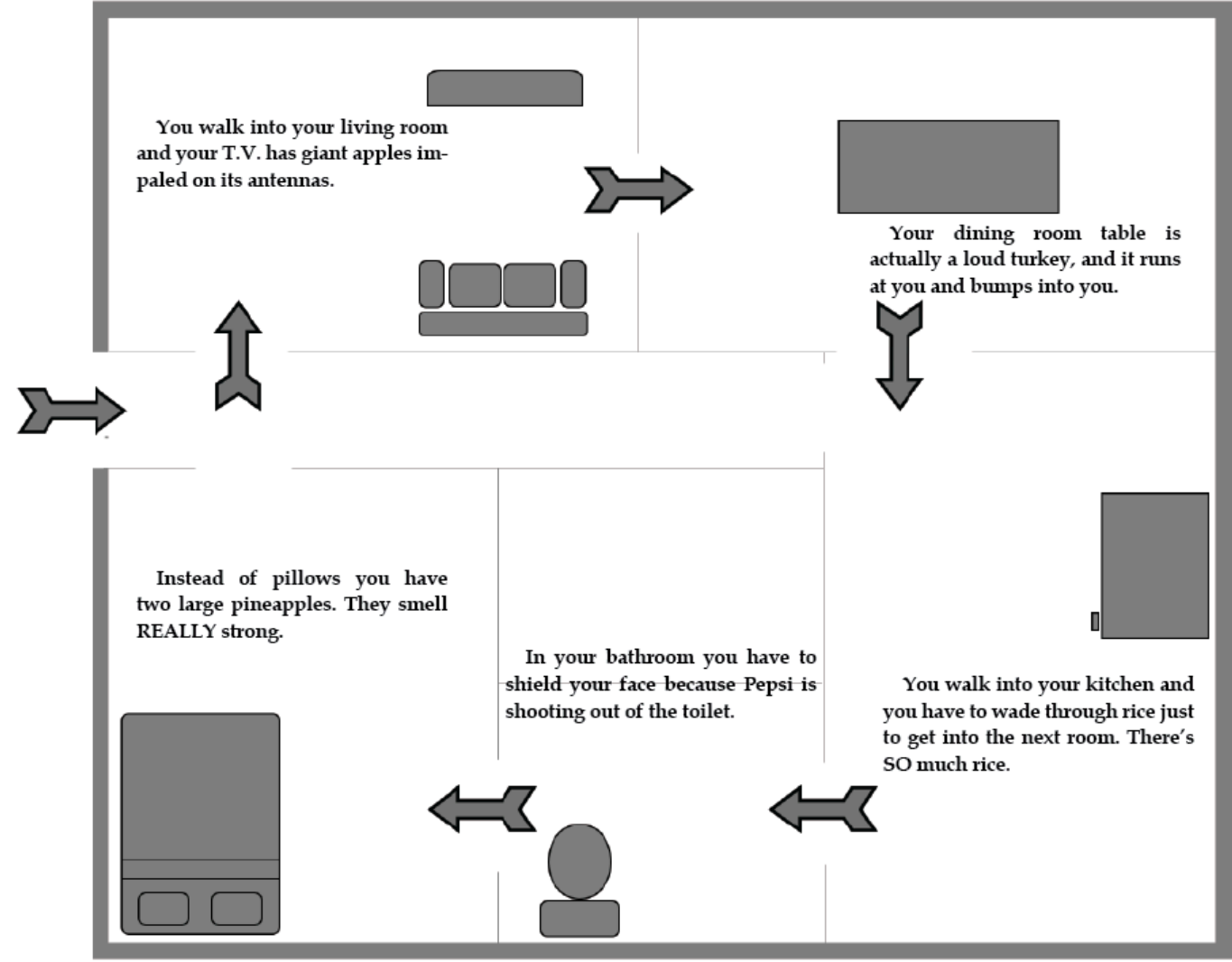
Chunking (phone numbers are great examples of chunking)

Method of Loci

MNEMONICS

Imagery Mnemonic: The Method of Loci

- Ascertain student recalls a familiar place
 - house
- Think of different landmarks
 - bathroom, kitchen, hall
- Train students to “go around” landmarks in particular order
 - Best for simple words lists, like vocab
 - Imagine items in certain places of house



You walk into your living room
and your T.V. has giant apples im-
paled on its antennas.

Your dining room table is
actually a loud turkey, and it runs
at you and bumps into you.

Instead of pillows you have
two large pineapples. They smell
REALLY strong.

In your bathroom you have to
shield your face because Pepsi is
shooting out of the toilet.

You walk into your kitchen and
you have to wade through rice just
to get into the next room. There's
SO much rice.

It is important to individualize and fade accommodations as necessary

As most are aware, the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provides a framework

- Under the engagement guideline you can find options related to supporting different areas of functioning
- <http://udlguidelines.cast.org/>

Teachers play a key role!



APPS TO CONSIDER

To name a few...

Evernote

Pictello

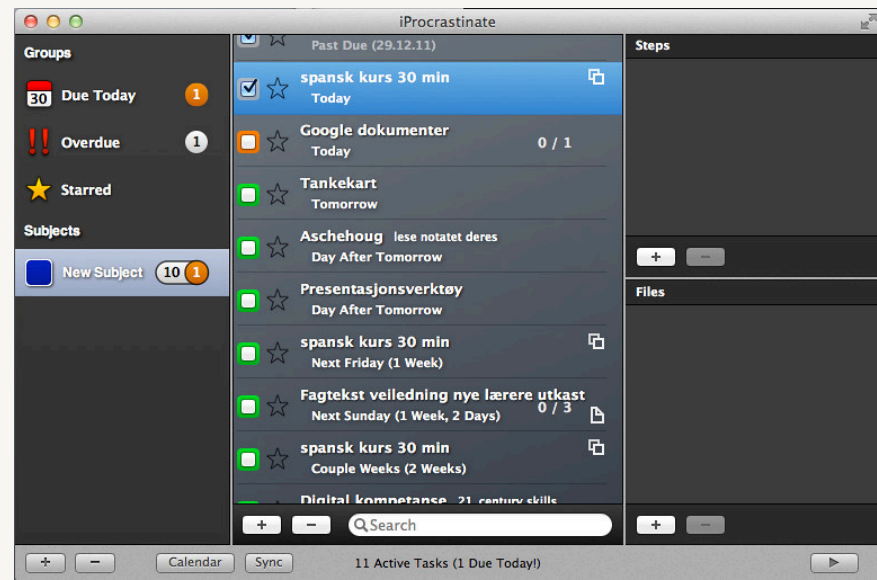
iProcrastinate

inClass

Index Card

Google Calendar

Flashcards Deluxe



CONTACT INFORMATION

Danielle Ploetz, PhD

Pediatric Neuropsychologist

Email: drdanielleploetz@gmail.com

Phone: 410-929-0228

