



Indiana AgrAbility partner

Improving Mental Health and Cognitive Abilities with Apps

Easterseals Crossroads Disclosure



Brian Norton, ATP, CEAS
Director of Technology Services
Easterseals Crossroads
bnorton@eastersealscrossroads.org



taking on disability together

www.EasterSealsTech.com

Disclosure:

I have no Relevant Financial Relationships or Relevant Non-Financial Relationship to any of the companies or products mentioned in this presentation.

Goals for Improving Mental Health and Cognitive Abilities with Apps

- Learn types of cognitive disabilities
- Learn the effects of aging on the brain
- Use smartphone apps to overcome deficits
- Use your phone to monitor/minimize feelings of overwhelm, depression & anxiety
- Learn about apps that aid in executive functioning



Some Causes of Cognitive Disabilities



- Genetics
- Diseases
- Aging
- Injuries
- Medications
- Exposed to chemicals over time



Some Types of Cognitive Disabilities



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- Disabilities, such as:
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - ADHD
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - Learning Disabilities
 - Traumatic or Acquired Brain Injuries
 - Migraines
- Aging
- Diseases / Conditions such as:
 - Strokes
 - Dementia or Alzheimers
 - Multiple Sclerosis
 - Parkinsons
 - Epilepsy

Types and Effects of Cognitive Disabilities



- ✓ Short term memory loss
- ✓ Working Memory loss
- ✓ Self Regulation & Self Control
- ✓ Executive Functioning
 - ❑ Organization
 - ❑ Focus
 - ❑ Sequencing
 - ❑ Multitasking
 - ❑ Time management
 - ❑ Planning
 - ❑ Initiation

How can this effect the farmer or farm worker?



- ✓ Planning is critical for working in agriculture! What step comes next?
- ✓ Did I order what I need?
- ✓ Are my supplies/seed/feed going to be here in time? I missed the deadline for ordering.
- ✓ Did I fill the water? I ran out of hay!
- ✓ Who did I test in the herd?
- ✓ What is next?
- ✓ What else?
- ✓ I feel overwhelmed and cannot remember what to do next. How can I get this done?

Effects of aging on the brain

- Processing speed
- Short term and working memory
- Easily distracted
- Everything requires more effort
- Learning takes longer and more practice
- Sequencing

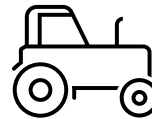


Using smartphone apps to overcome deficits

Get things done and stay on task using your phone!



No Cost, Low Cost and the Cadillacs! You don't have to spend a lot to get a lot!



Can also help socially, showing others how well an app helps!

How do you unplug, relax & refocus?

Plan ahead	Schedule it!
Practice	Practice, Practice!
What works for you?	Music? Faith? Prayer? Connections to family & friends? Meditation? Deep breathing? Audiobooks? Yoga? Tai Chi? Exercise? Gardening? Coloring? Puzzles? Games?



Meditation/Calming Apps to increase Cognition

Many studies have shown that meditation and other mindfulness programs may:

- Reduce insomnia
- Lower blood pressure
- Improve attention
- Aid with executive function
- Enhance working memory
- Restore serotonin
- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Increase cognition



In patients with mild cognitive impairment, a study showed that meditation improved cognition and self-reported mindfulness.

Meditation is easy and inexpensive and can improve your general health and well-being.
























Apps for Executive Functioning

How do you fix poor executive functioning?

- Make a Daily To-Do List. Creating a daily list of tasks and projects can help to improve the challenges of executive function disorder
- Use a Calendar
- Learn How to Manage Your Time
- Take Notes
- Use Reminders
- Keep It Simple
- Relax and Breathe
- Stay Organized
- Remember medications

What apps can help?

Apps for Executive Functioning

To Do Lists	Calendar	Timers / Time Chunking	Note Taking	Reminders	Calming / Meditation	Sequencing	Flash cards
Microsoft ToDo 	Google 	Multitimer 	AudioNote 	Puzzle Alarm 	Calm 	I modeling 	Quizlet 
Todoist 	Tiny Calendar 	Multi+timer 	Otter Ai 	Math alarm 	Headspace 	Fabulous 	Quizizz 
Trello 	Cozi Family Organizer 	Many Others...	Voice Recorder 	Kiwake 	Flow Free 	Sleep Crusher 	Study Smarter 

Get things done and stay on task!



Create a list of what difficulties are and identify possible apps to help

Talk to friends and family to see what they use

Only learn one new app at a time, start with the most needed or maybe the easiest

Habits take time, at least 40 days and lots of practice

Give yourself a break, if you forget, start over, keep going!

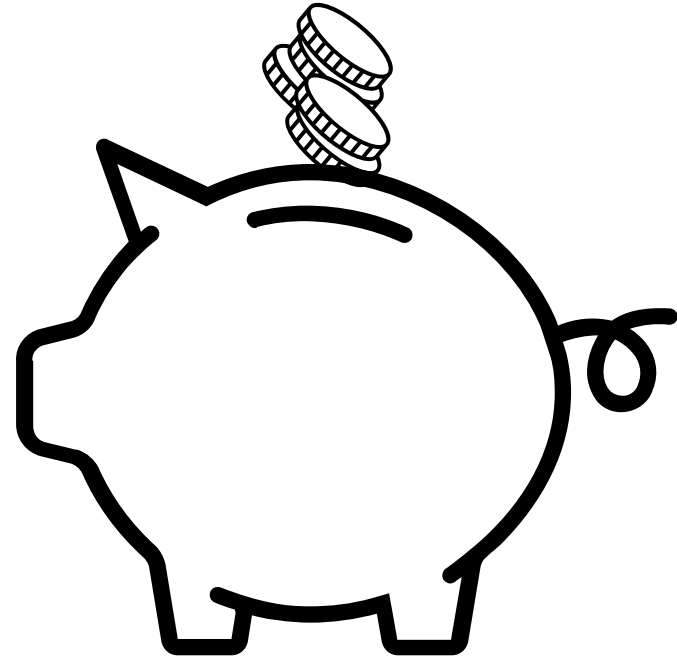
No Cost, Low Cost and the Cadillacs

- Try to use what you have already
 - Many smartphones have useful apps preloaded at no extra charge
 - Voice Recorder
 - Camera/video
 - Calendar
 - Task list
 - Alarms
 - Find My Phone
 - Health apps
 - Notes



No Cost, Low Cost and the Cadillacs

- Kick the tires with a trial subscription
 - Many apps offer a short trial period to try it out
- Use the free version of an app
 - Most apps will offer a scaled down version of their app with many helpful features for free
 - Once you decide if you like the app and use it, you can explore whether the premium features are worth the added expense



No Cost, Low Cost and the Cadillacs

- Some apps are just worth the cost!
 - If you will use it and you need the premium features...
 - If it is saving you time or helping you accomplish something, you cannot do without it....
 - If the premium version gives you more flexibility, allows you to use it longer, uses easier to understand voices, allow for several options for playback speeds...and those are features you need or really want...

...treat yourself and...



QUESTIONS?



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