

# PARENTS: How to End this Crazy Semester on a High Note

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

child, semester, teachers, executive function, kid, coming, hail mary, work, reflective listening, support, papers, struggles, accommodations, advocate, students, supportive, attachment styles, final, call, teach

## SPEAKERS

Seth Perler

**S** Seth Perler 00:00  
Parents, if you are trying to help your child finish this fall semester in this crazy pandemic year, with all this uncertainty, and you want to help them finish successfully, but your child has executive function struggles. They have missings, incompletes, late work, zeros, they're swimming upstream. This video is to help you understand six of the key components that I teach that will help you help your child. Now, if you're a teacher watching this, I'm making you a specific video speaking to you about how to support your students. But parents, you may want to watch the teacher video and teachers, you may want to watch this parent video. Even though the content is very similar it will help both of you to understand how I would guide either of you in this situation.

**S** Seth Perler 00:45  
So how can we end this semester and support our students to be most successful when they still have executive function struggles? Well, first of all, I'm going to tell you what's coming up. This part of the semester for my students that I coach, and I'm coaching families currently, like I have a group of families and I'm coaching them currently, the thing that I'm telling them now is that it's what I call 'Hail Mary' time. Hail Mary time in the semester is usually after Thanksgiving break and before winter break in the United States.

I know some of you are from other countries or maybe homeschooling or on other schedules. But typically speaking what I call Hail Mary time is the last two to three weeks of the semester. Why do I call it Hail Mary time? Because three things are going on. (1) your child is working with current work. (2) They have to do makeup work, these are students who are doing have a lot of incompletes, late work, zeroes, they forget to put the names on papers, they forget to turn things in. So they're dealing with current work, makeup work, they're also dealing with what I call PEPR at the end of the semester. P-E-P-R, and that is papers, exams, projects and readings. That means that there are long term things like they take a long time to write a paper, a long time to study for final exams, a long time to do final projects, a long time to do final reading projects. These are the students, the ones that I work with are the ones who wait till the last minute and often don't finish at all, don't turn it in, and they can really make their grades tank. So we want to know what's coming up. And this is Hail Mary time. Why do we want to know what's Hail Mary time and know what's coming up? Because then you can be proactive rather than reactive and support your child now, rather than waiting till everything starts falling apart.

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Seth Perler 02:24

So how do we do that? If we know that that's coming up, how do we help them? And how do we help them now with all the pandemic stuff and all the craziness and the uncertainty. And as I get into this next phase, I want to talk about two types of teachers, and some of you teachers are watching, you'll be able to identify which one you are. There are teachers who are (1) empathetic, compassionate, supportive, they make accommodations for kids, they're very understanding that kids with executive function struggles that there's a legitimacy to the struggles that there's something going on, that these kids really need support. And then there are the other type of teachers who are (2) rigid, very rule based, not very compassionate, or flexible or understanding of these things. And those are the classes where these kids are like doomed to fail those classes. There's just not much. I will tell you what to do in that situation anyway. But there are sort of those two types of teachers. So what we're doing here is we want to anticipate that we have two types of teachers, parents, that we're dealing with, and that we are going into the Hail Mary time and that we're gonna have to deal with the current, missing, and upcoming long term assignments in order to help them succeed.

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Seth Perler 03:27

So what do we need to do? Well, one thing if you want to support your child is you need to help them with executive functions. Now of course, your child is going to be resistant to your help. That's very common with the families that at work with. Your kid doesn't want your help, you have to work with that, of course. But what you need to do is help them

with the executive function stuff that I teach in all my other videos. So how to plan, how to check the portals, how to advocate, how to organize their papers or their online files, or all of these sort of executive function things. Now the most important thing you're going to want to do to support your child with executive function stuff right now at the end of the semester, is you're going to want clarity. That means you want to email or contact or read through the teachers portals and you want clarity What do you want clarity about? You want clarity about what's going on currently, what kind of missing work do we have to deal with, and what kind of PEPR is coming up? What projects, final exams, final papers, or final reading assignments are coming up? So email that teacher say "Hey what up teach? I want to get some clarity. My kid has some missing work we have to work on. What's going on currently that we need to know about? And what about upcoming projects or final things that are big, that are long term at the end of the semester?" because you do not want to wait till the night before those things are due to be struggling to help your child finish those things. So you want to advocate, you want to ask the teacher those things.

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Seth Perler 04:45

Next thing you want to do is you want to advocate to those teachers for accommodations and for empathy. In other words, you're going to say "Hey, what's up teach," and you're going to have the teachers who are supportive and the teachers that aren't. And the ones that are supportive, you're just gonna be able to say "Hey, what's up? Looking for some help with understanding these things. Can you please make accommodations for my child or tell us what we can do and work with us." And then you're going to have the ones that aren't as supportive, and you're gonna have to really push and be like, "Look, I really need you to understand what's going on with my kid and executive function and we really need your support here." You're gonna speak to them differently because with the rigid ones, you're going to want to really advocate for that flexibility and understanding.

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Seth Perler 05:23

The next thing that I want to say, parents, is this. Don't take things too seriously. So on the one hand, yeah, of course, you want your child to succeed. On the other hand, it's not the end of the world if they don't have a really successful semester. It's okay. It's gonna be fine. Like, you just got to really question where do you want to prioritize your energy? What example do you want to set for your child? Just reset yourself, take a step back and really look at the big picture here. Yes, your child is learning, losing, losing learning that is true. And that is horrible. But it's okay, your kids gonna be okay. It's about how you love them and care about them and connect with them and the relationship. Those are the more important things.

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**Seth Perler 06:03**

And then the last thing that I want to say after 'don't take everything too seriously,' is the number one most important thing of all. The number one most important thing of all, is the relationship, your relationship with your child, what's called secure attachment, or healthy and secure attachment. Research, attachment styles, I recommend that to all my families, it's one of the most important concepts I teach. But research that. Focus on connection, focus on having fun, connecting with a child, enjoy being with your child. Use what I call the 3:1 rule, where you're trying to give your kid three positives to everyone perceived negative. Use reflective listening, where you're really trying to hear your child. I don't have time to get into all this in this video. But I'm giving you some ideas, you can Google these things on your own: reflective listening, the 3:1 rule, attachment theory, polyvagal theory if you want. But just focus on loving your kid and I want you to focus on the golden rule. 'Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you,' like really try to work with your kid during this very difficult end of the semester or final push in the way that if you were them. Not if you were you, but if you were them, how would you want to be supported and approached? And maybe even asked them.

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**Seth Perler 07:16**

So teachers who are watching, that's what I would say to parents. Teachers, I'm making a video for you. Parents who may want to watch the video that I'm advising teachers in for this time as well. I hope you have a fantastic day. I hope that the Hail Mary time goes well for you and child and that the semester ends fine. And that you have a really great, peaceful, fun, connected winter break because it's well deserved. We all need a break. It's been tough.

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**Seth Perler 07:44**

Oh, I don't even know if I told you I am. My name is Seth Perler. I'm an executive function coach out of Maui and I help struggling students navigate this thing called education so that they can have a great future. I have a blog at [SethPerler.com](https://SethPerler.com). Sorry, I forgot to tell you all this. And go ahead and sign up, I have a bunch of freebies and stuff like that. Support me, give me a thumbs up, leave a comment. What do you think about this stuff? What advice do you have for people and what questions do you still have? Take care, be well.