



***EARS** make students successful adults.*

**EARS** train students to manage emotions, problem-solve, to work *smarter* not harder and to get things done – the skills of successful people.

*Rebecca Shafir's EARS program is a brilliant and effective executive function training program focused on emotional regulation and independent problem solving. Results have been life-changing for the students and their parents. Rebecca helps students emerge from academic troubles by teaching them skills and habits of the most successful people I know.* Dr. Edward Hallowell

If your student is underperforming academically, overwhelmed with school work and wanting to do better, maybe *now* your student is “all EARS.”

**EARS** turns failure on its head, making academic problems an opportunity for growth rather than a reason to despair. With the guidance of an **EARS** coach, students acquire habits and skills of success that will sustain over a lifetime.

The **EARS** program is administered by Rebecca Shafir M.A.CCC, speech/language pathologist, author and executive function coach at the Hallowell Center Metrowest and in West Newbury, MA.

### ***Who can benefit from EARS?***

**EARS** is for students *grades 8-10* who are “change-ready.” Students with a diagnosis or symptoms of ADHD, executive dysfunction, post-concussion syndrome, anxiety or learning disability are good candidates. It's good to have a parent or caregiver as a “behind the scenes” support for the student's progress and who can provide “eyes on the ground” updates.

*The EARS grads of today are the successful leaders and entrepreneurs of tomorrow.*

Executive functioning is the bedrock of leadership entrepreneurship. An entrepreneur must rely on him/herself to independently plan, manage stress, initiate and follow through with tasks. EARS helps future entrepreneurs learn the skills now that they'll need later.

### *How does **EARS** work?*

Our work begins with a 90 minute intake session, preferably in person or via Skype. The goal of the intake session is to establish a positive problem solving partnership and to identify specific starting points for change. The intake process begins by identifying the strengths of each student that support change (i.e. sports experience, resilience, achievements, positive traits etc) and the resistances or weak links that have deterred success. A customized course of action with specific objectives is designed by the student, the caregivers and the **EARS** coach.

30 or 60 minute sessions 1-3x a week are set up. The number of sessions or the time spent per session can be extended depending upon several factors, but to keep "the end in sight" we focus on keeping the time commitment to 10 sessions or less. The sessions can be in person, via FaceTime, Skype or by phone. First, attention is given to the student's environment: the physical setting for study, caregiver influence, school accommodations and incentive systems.

Once the above is addressed, we start facilitating change from the bottom up, making adjustments that provide some "almost instant" gratification, have the greatest impact and are easiest to sustain. Enhancing sleep, diet and exercise, and responses to stress can ease functioning overall. When students used to failure start to sense positive changes early on, they are more willing to accept greater challenges.

As the student's self care and environmental supports are in place, he or she will be more enabled to engage in problem solving the logistics of planning and efficiency. These include taking small steps towards establishing routines for

managing homework and study, and for preparing the night before to make the morning smoother. We target study skills based on the most updated research on effective cognitive processing for different kinds of minds. When routines become habits, the automaticity bypasses the dependence upon a high level of executive functioning (and caregivers!). Use of electronics to achieve our goals is limited to avoid distraction.

The student learns strategies that prevent procrastination and encourage more realistic self-talk and reinforcing strategies. Students are taught ways to monitor their progress, independently troubleshoot sticking points and make needed changes. Reporting schedules with the **EARS** coach are set up for consistent and frequent communication. Progress is monitored weekly via student, teacher and caregiver (if appropriate) feedback.

A stellar report card may spell success for many signing up for the EARS program, but for some, the *greater* success will be achieved in the form of self-discovery — understanding and accepting oneself, becoming open to new ways of looking at challenges, and in some situations, choosing a more appropriate educational or career path that could save them time and money down the road.

Fees are \$350 for the 90 minute intake and planning session, \$150/hr or \$75/half hour coaching sessions.

For more information on **EARS** or the **CollegeCore** or **Summer CollegeCore coaching** program for older students, contact Rebecca Shafir at 978 287 0810 or 978 255 1817. Email her at [RebeccaShafir@gmail.com](mailto:RebeccaShafir@gmail.com).