

## THINKING SKILLS REFERENCE SHEET

### Language and Communication Skills

- Understands spoken directions
- Understands and follows conversations
- Expresses concerns, needs, or thoughts in words
- Is able to tell someone what's bothering him or her

### Attention and Working Memory Skills

- Stays with tasks requiring sustained attention
- Does things in a logical sequence or set order
- Keeps track of time; correctly assesses how much time a task will take
- Reflects on multiple thoughts or ideas at the same time
- Maintains focus during activities
- Ignores irrelevant noises, people, or other stimuli; tunes things out when necessary
- Considers a range of solutions to a problem

### Emotion- and Self-Regulation Skills

- Thinks rationally, even when frustrated
- Manages irritability in an age-appropriate way
- Manages anxiety in an age-appropriate way
- Manages disappointment in an age-appropriate way
- Thinks before responding; considers the likely outcomes or consequences of his/her actions
- Can adjust his/her arousal level to meet the demands of a situation (e.g., calming after recess or after getting upset, falling asleep/waking up, staying seated during class or meals, etc.)

### Cognitive Flexibility Skills

- Handles transitions, shifts easily from one task to another
- Is able to see "shades of gray" rather than thinking only in "black-and-white"
- Thinks hypothetically, is able to envision different possibilities
- Handles deviations from rules, routines, and original plans
- Handles unpredictability, ambiguity, uncertainty, and novelty
- Can shift away from an original idea, solution, or plan
- Takes into account situational factors that may mean a change in plans  
(Example: "If it rains, we may need to cancel.")
- Interprets information accurately/avoids over-generalizing or personalizing  
(Example: Avoids saying "Everyone's out to get me," "Nobody likes me," "You always blame me," "It's not fair," "I'm stupid," or "Things will never work out for me.")

### Social Thinking Skills

- Pays attention to verbal and nonverbal social cues
- Accurately interprets nonverbal social cues (like facial expressions and tone of voice)
- Starts conversations with peers, enters groups of peers appropriately
- Seeks attention in appropriate ways
- Understands how his or her behavior affects other people
- Understands how he or she is coming across or being perceived by others
- Empathizes with others, appreciates others' perspectives or points of view