Motivation is an often misunderstood construct. While we often assume it is something individuals have willful control over, in fact, motivation is a highly complex self-regulation skill that first relies on the development of other, more foundational regulatory processes, including emotional management. Unfortunately, garnering motivation in students has become increasingly challenging as they now contend with significantly higher rates of anxiety than ever before.

This presentation will discuss the impact of anxiety on a student’s cognitive resources, such as executive function and attentional control. It will also address how these challenges impact academic, social, and emotional functioning. Methods for better understanding the “unmotivated” student and assessing their relative challenges will be shared. In addition, ways to support the development of self-regulation skills to bridge school and home will be provided.

About the presenter: Dr. Currie is a pediatric neuropsychologist at Neuropsychology and Education Services for Children and Adolescents (NESCA) in Londonderry, NH and Newton, MA. She conducts neuropsychological and psychological assessments with children, adolescents, and young adults. In addition to the evaluation of learning disabilities and attentional disorders, Dr. Currie specializes in the diagnosis of psychiatric disorders. She has particular interest in the differential diagnosis of learning and self-regulation challenges, including anxiety. Dr. Currie has extensive experience in the evaluation and treatment of anxiety and is the founder and director of NESCA’s cognitive-behavioral treatment services, which specialize in the treatment of children with co-occurring anxiety and learning challenges.