

MIND in the Making

The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

Life Skill That Promotes Executive Function (EF):

Taking on Challenges

Life is full of stresses and challenges. Children who are willing to **take on challenges** (instead of avoiding them or simply coping with them) do better in school and in life.

Suggestions for Promoting Taking on Challenges for Infants and Toddlers

Tip:

It is important to be able to ask for help when we need it. You can comment on this to your child:

- “That was a good idea for the truck driver to ask for help.”

Skill:

Taking on Challenges often involves asking for help.

Tip:

You can point out that the truck driver and all of the other helpers keep trying to reach their goal of getting the truck unstuck.

Skill:

Taking on Challenges includes believing that we can do things even when they are hard. Executive Function skills are driven by goals.

Tip:

You can acknowledge the helpful characters in the story by saying to your child:

- “Wow, they are really trying to help the stuck truck go.”

Skill:

Taking on Challenges involves having others be helpful to us.

Tip:

The book concludes with the truck getting unstuck—being pulled out of the hole. Ask your child:

- “What happened to the bones the truck was trying to deliver?” You can go back and look at the pictures of the bones to answer that question.

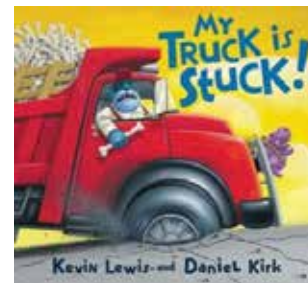
Skill:

This back and forth conversation between you and your child about this book is what researchers call “serve and return.” Like a game of ball, one of you says or does something (serves) and the other responds (returns). The importance of these everyday interactions to brain building is a key finding from child development research.

My Truck Is Stuck!

By Kevin Lewis and Daniel Kirk

With rhyming text and bright illustrations, young children and their caregivers will enjoy finding out just how stuck one big red dump truck is. As more and more passing travelers pitch in to help out, readers will appreciate the subtle plot twists and counting lessons.



High-quality books and educational resources from First Book supporting research-based Life Skills from *Mind in the Making* by Ellen Galinsky



Find more books and materials on the First Book Marketplace, a resource available exclusively to educators and programs serving children in need. www.fbmarketplace.org.

You will notice that these tips promote two child development principles: **Serve and Return** and **Executive Function** skills.

Serve and Return, like a game of ball, involves a back and forth conversation between you and your child where you listen, then build on and extend what your child says or does to promote learning.

Executive Function skills are skills you use to manage your attention, your feelings, your thoughts and your behavior to reach your goals.

They include being able to pay attention, remember information, think flexibly and exercise self control.

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Tip:

You may want to share a time you asked for help or recall a time when your child needed help to do something challenging.

Skill:

This gives young children ideas about how to take on challenges and promotes this skill.

Tip:

As you read the story, enjoy the rhymes.

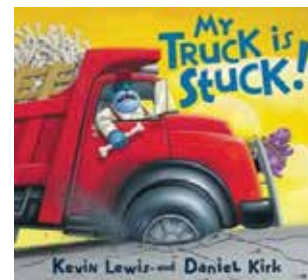
Skill:

Rhyming promotes the skill of Communicating. Thinking of words that sound like other words promotes the skill of Making Connections.

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