The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

Life Skill That Promotes Executive Function (EF): Communicating

Communicating is much more than understanding language, speaking, reading and writing. It is the skill of determining what you want to communicate and realizing how our communications will be understood by others. It is the skill that teachers and employers feel is most lacking today.

Tip:

As you read, *Bark, George*, ask your child:

- “Is George barking now? What animal does he sound like?”
- “How does George’s mother feel when her puppy doesn’t bark? What do the pictures tell you about her reaction?”

Share the answers with your child and point to what is happening in the pictures. As your child gets older, encourage him or her to come up with answers.

Skill:

This conversation about misunderstandings will help your child understand how to overcome barriers in how we communicate. This back and forth interaction 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.

Tip:

Act out this story with your child. Shake your head no, laugh or act surprised with each sound George makes.

Skill:

When you use different voices and facial expressions, you are showing your child different ways to communicate. Pretending calls on Executive Function skills, because you have to put aside your own reaction and “become” someone else.

Tip:

Talk about the end of the story when George doesn’t bark, but says “hello” to the people.

Skill:

This book shares the joy and humor of communicating in different ways!