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.

Suggestions for Promoting Communicating for Infants and Toddlers

**TIP:**

This book provides an opportunity to have your child listen to what the animals in the book say.

Ask your child:


If your child says, “La La La,” you can ask what pigs really say.

**SKILL:**

Communicating involves listening to what others say.

**TIP:**

Children appreciate a sense of humor. See how your child reacts to the three singing pigs saying, “La La La!” Keep the joke going and ask your child to make up other silly things that animals might say.

**SKILL:**

As your child gets older and if she or he wants to pretend or make jokes about what animals say, enjoy the humor.

**TIP:**

You use this story to begin a conversation with your child about what your child wants to say. When your child is younger, repeat the sounds your child makes. When your child is older, you can ask:

- “What do you say when you are hungry? What do you say when you want me to pick you up?”

**SKILL:**

Communicating involves thinking about what you want to say. Use what child development researchers call “serve and return” to have this conversation—you or your child does something (serves) and the other responds (returns), back and forth like a game of ball. Watch your child’s response to the book and your questions and build on what your child says (with sounds, with looks, with movements) and extend it. If your baby makes a noise like, “bbbbb,” you can say, “bbbbb” back. When your child uses words, continue the conversation. This is a vitally important brain-building activity.