The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

Executive Function Life Skill: Making Connections
Making Connections is at the heart of learning—figuring out what’s the same and what’s different, and sorting these things into categories. Making unusual connections is at the core of creativity. In a world where people can Google for information, it is the people who can see connections who are able to go beyond knowing information to using this information well.

Suggestions for Promoting Making Connections

**TIP:**
While you read this book, you can interact with your child by asking:

- “Where is the baby who was born far away?”

Point to the baby in the book, and then ask: “Where is my baby?” and point to your child.

**SKILL:**
Making Connections includes figuring out what’s the same and what’s different, which calls on Executive Function skills. These back and forth conversations without words that are triggered by this book involve 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:**
You can count or touch your child’s toes and fingers. Point to the book and then to your child.

**SKILL:**
Making Connections is promoted by repetition and interaction.

**TIP:**
You can give your child three little kisses on the nose, just like in the book.

This book is an ideal one to use in your everyday interactions with your child. When you are dressing him or her, you can say:

- “I see ten little fingers and ten little toes.”

**SKILL:**
Making Connections among words, pictures and objects promotes this skill.