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.

**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.
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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.