

# MIND in the Making

## The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

### Executive Function Life Skill: Self-Directed Engaged Learning

It is through learning that we can realize our potential. As the world changes, so can we, for as long as we live—as long as we learn.

- Establish a trustworthy relationship with your child.
- Help children set and work toward their own goals.
- Involve children socially, emotionally and intellectually.
- Elaborate and extend children's learning.
- Help children practice, synthesize and generalize.
- Help children become increasingly accountable.
- Create a community of learners.

### Suggestions for Promoting Self-Directed Engaged Learning

#### TIP:

When reading this book, try each movement with your child. For example, when you and your child turn your heads, ask your child if she or he can turn to one side and then the other. Or, you can ask your child to suggest other movements for you to imitate.

#### SKILL:

Studies show that children are most likely to **remember what they've learned when they have first-hand experiences**—not by listening. 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:

*From Head to Toe* offers many things to do together that are joyful and that promote **Executive Function** skills.

#### SKILL:

**Involving children socially, emotionally and intellectually** happens when children **are having fun.**

## From Head to Toe

### By Eric Carle

This wonderful interactive book gets children up and moving as they imitate the motions of favorite animals and respond to “Can you do it?” with “I can do it!” They'll stomp, bend, wiggle and giggle their way to greater health and confidence.



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](http://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 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.

Find more about Families and Work Institute's *Mind in the Making* at [www.mindinthemaking.org](http://www.mindinthemaking.org).