

Mentor Minute

Supporting teachers as they incorporate 21st Century Skills (Part 2 of 2)

For the 2nd part of this two part Mentor Minute series, 21st Century Life Skills will be emphasized.

Learning Skills	Literacy Skills	Life Skills
Critical Thinking	Information Literacy	Flexibility
Creative Thinking	Media Literacy	Initiative
Collaborating	Technology Literacy	Social Skills
Communicating		Productivity
		Leadership

Children need to learn these skills in a safe environment. They need to feel appreciated, valued, and successful as they make efforts to complete things on their own. Teacher should keep in mind that these life skills more easily develop when focus is placed on the process and not the product. Again, exploration of [NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development](#), in particular the Approaches to Play and Learning section, will guide teachers on ways to promote life skills. Additional strategies include:

- Providing long periods of unstructured play both indoors and outdoors
- Encouraging children to do things on their own with scaffolded support from adults based on each child's needs
- Planning authentic learning scenarios (i.e grocery store, doctor's office, clothing store, etc.)
- Encouraging children to take care of their classroom through use of a classroom job chart
- Facilitating children's solutions for a *Problem of the Week* such as determining ways to better care for classroom books, considering how to avoid pushing when in the hallways, etc.
- Sharing with families activities that can promote life skills at home



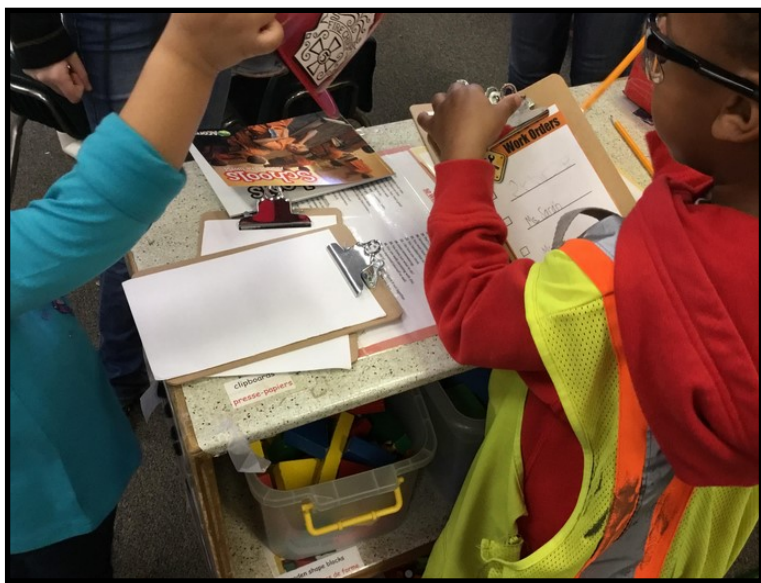
Children talking out a solution to a problem in the "Peace Corner"



Children preparing a class garden

Mentor Minute (cont.)

Promoting 21st Century Life Skills Through Authentic Learning Scenarios



On the construction site



At the grocery store



While engaging in a Department Store study, a teacher asked a child whom often expresses herself through detailed drawings, "What might be found in a toy department and how might the toys may be displayed?" Those open-ended questions led to the above picture the child described as her and her mom at the toy department in Walmart.

Additional 21st Century Skills resource links:

- [Mind in the Making-Book by Ellen Galinsky](#)
- [How Planning and Reflecting Develop Young Children's Thinking Skills -Article by Ann S. Epstein](#)
- [Supporting Children's Development -Extract from Putting Children First by NCAC](#)
- [Building Blocks of Learning -Video from Zero to Three Website](#)

Please click on each item listed above for more information

*Special thanks to Lead Mentor, Martha Berry,
for contributions to the Mentor Minute.*