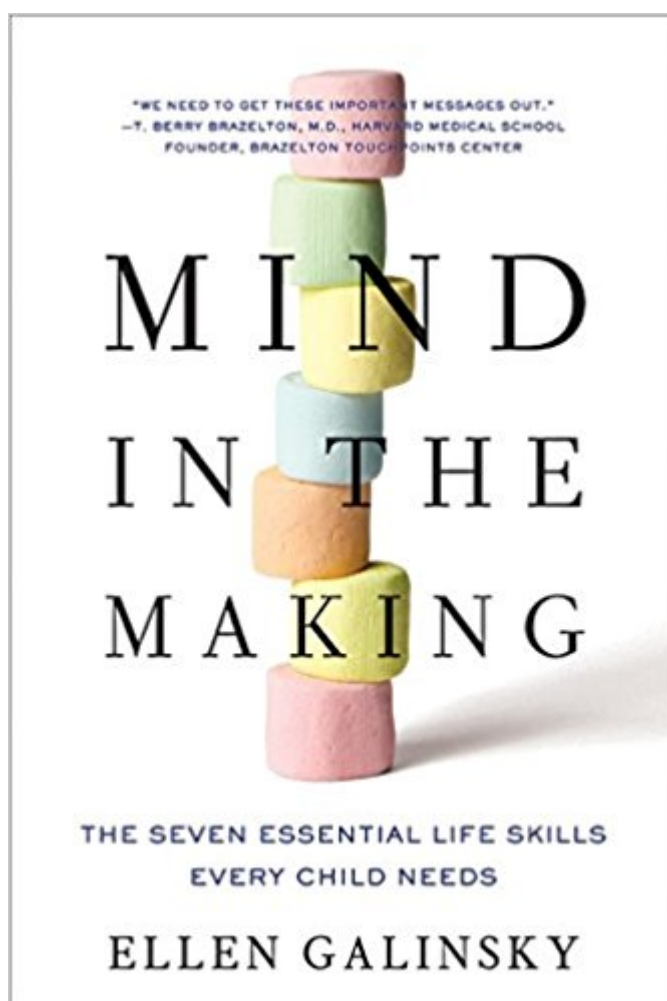


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# Mind In The Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs



## Synopsis

“Ellen Galinsky already the go-to person on interaction between families and the workplace draws on fresh research to explain what we ought to be teaching our children. This is must-reading for everyone who cares about America’s fate in the 21st century.”  
—Judy Woodruff, Senior Correspondent for The PBS NewsHour  
—Families and Work Institute President Ellen Galinsky (Ask the Children, The Six Stages of Parenthood) presents a book of groundbreaking advice based on the latest research on child development.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Galinsky (Six Stages of Parenthood; Ask the Children) has spent her career observing and analyzing how children learn. Collaborating with top researchers in the science of childhood brain development for the past decade, she identifies seven life skills that help children reach their full potential and unleash their passion to learn. The skills are presented in a readable and accessible volume enlivened by parents’ narratives about what works and what doesn’t, hints and tips, and over a hundred suggestions (games and family activities) for involving kids in the pursuit of learning. Each of seven chapters focuses on one skill, most of them involved with the executive (or management) function of the brain, such as focus and self-control, communicating, and critical thinking. Galinsky urges parents to instill in their children a grasp of different kinds of knowledge to best tap inborn sense and foster self-motivation. The big message is simple: teaching children to

think may be the most important thing a parent can do. It doesn't take a village and it doesn't require fancy courses or equipment. Galinsky's everyday, playful, parent-child learning interactions offer a place to start. Some of the advice may seem self-evident, but it is a valuable, worthwhile resource. (Apr.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"[Mind in the Making] may well be the next iconic parenting manual, up there with Spock and Leach and Brazelton, one that parents turn to for reassurance that all is more or less okay, reminders of how to make it better and glimpses of what's to come." (New York Times) "A valuable resource! Ellen Galinsky's extensive research reveals important insights into the science of early learning." (Adele Faber, co-author of How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk) "We need to get these important messages out, and parents are clamoring for it." (T. Berry Brazelton, M. D., Professor of Pediatrics, Emeritus Harvard Medical School and founder, Brazelton Touchpoints Center) "A readable and accessible volume enlivened by parents' narratives about what works and what doesn't. Galinsky's everyday, playful, parent-child learning interactions offer a place to start...a valuable, worthwhile resource." (Publishers Weekly) "As a working parent, I was grateful for every new nugget of insight to help me assess my kids' development and progress in school. I wish I had had 'Mind in the Making,' a recent book by Ellen Galinsky that offers a gold mine of information. (Wall Street Journal) "[Ellen Galinsky's] latest book, Mind in the Making just put her in the Child Development Expert Hall of Fame. Mind in the Making is one of those rare and glorious books that will make a difference on our children's lives and future." (Michele Borba, Ed.D., author of The Big Book of Parenting Solutions) "Ellen Galinsky is already the go-to person on interaction between families and the workplace and draws on fresh research to explain what we OUGHT to be teaching our children. This is must-reading for everyone who cares about America's fate in the 21st century." (Judy Woodruff, Senior Correspondent for The PBS NewsHour) "Mind in the Making is the central component of a creative, multi-faceted initiative that clarifies paths to lifelong learning related to discoveries about brain development and how learning builds on the structure and function of the brain. It is a valuable contribution based on solid research that yields practical benefits." (David A. Hamburg, MD, Weill Cornell Medical College and President Emeritus of the Carnegie Corporation of New York) "Mind in the Making is a tour de force. In Galinsky's hands, the latest

scientific discoveries about how children learn are carefully molded into seven seemingly simple but profound skills that predict success in the 21st Century. — (Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Professor of Psychology, Temple University, and coauthor of *A Mandate for Playful Learning in Preschool*) — “A book of incomparable quality about what is best for children and why in today’s world. *Mind in the Making* helps you assemble the ingredients in your own kitchen for rearing children who are intelligent, emotionally secure, and equipped to succeed. — (Roberta Michnick Golinkoff, Professor of Education, Psychology and Linguistics and Cognitive Science, University of Delaware, and coauthor of *A Mandate for Playful Learning in Preschool*) — “*Mind in the Making* presents some of the most important research that will help every parent teach their children the fundamentals of life. Ellen Galinsky has figured out some of the great mysteries to raising caring, compassionate, well-rounded children. This is a — must read — operating manual for any parent! — (Laurie David, author of *Family Dinners*, and Producer, *An Inconvenient Truth*) — “The future of our society depends on how we treat our children and this remarkable book, richly illustrated with examples from the latest scientific research, provides an engaging and well-informed characterization of the developmental challenges children face. It will be of enormous value to parents, educators and policy makers, and serious students of child development. — (Philip David Zelazo, Professor, Institute of Child Development, University of Minnesota Philip David Zelazo, Professor, Institute of Child Development, University of Minnesota Philip David Zelazo, Professor, Institute of Child Development, University of Minnesota) — “*Mind in the Making* shows why early learning and development matter more than ever. A highly cogent, remarkably accessible, and important book. — (Michael Levine, Executive Director, Joan Ganz Cooney Center) — “Education goes far beyond the subjects we typically teach in school. Life skills like focus and perspective taking are essential to building human potential. *Mind in the Making* will be a powerful new resource for teachers and families. — (Gaston Caperton, President of the College Board) — “Ellen Galinsky has been one of our most thoughtful as well as passionate advocates for children. In this book she assembles the latest fascinating research from the very best scientists in the field and presents it clearly and accurately, in a way that parents and others will find most valuable. — (Alison Gopnik, Professor of Psychology, University of California at Berkeley and author of *The Philosophical Child*) — “This book is the antidote for anxious, busy parents who have limited time. It shows them where to put their effort and focus to ensure their children are prepared to thrive today and in the future. — (Cali Williams Yost, author of *Work+Life: Finding the Fit That’s Right for You*) — “Imagine a combination of an extremely knowledgeable and

compassionate child psychologist and the parent you most respect advising you on the best way to raise your child. That's what you get with Ellen Galinsky's insightful new book, *Mind in the Making*. (Judy Molland, Care2.com)

*Mind in the Making* by Ellen Galinsky focuses on the seven essential life skills that children need in order to grow into successful adults. Each skill is backed up with examples and research, as well as various ways to foster these skills. In this book, Galinsky expands many of the skills beyond general knowledge. In the skill of communicating, for example, she talks about how important communication is, even in infancy, and how it isn't necessarily verbal. Also, in the skill taking on challenges, it is mentioned that children should be praised for their effort rather than their smarts. Research in the developmental field backs up Galinsky's writings, allowing us to know that infants, while nonverbal, can still communicate, and that receiving praise for a job well attempted can influence children to take on new challenges with greater effort. I would recommend this book, especially for those with a background in education or child development. I feel that these skills should be fostered in children, and that children who develop these skills will grow into well-rounded and successful individuals. It was an interesting read that had many take-home points that I will use in my work with young children.

I think that most of the content of this book is excellent and I would recommend that all educated parents, graduate students, teachers, and coaches read it. The book gives a detailed description of 7 skills that are critical for a child's development. As someone that has coached and mentored children, I found chapter 6, which focuses on "taking on challenges" especially interesting. If you are old school like me and are disgusted that every child in youth sports receives a trophy you will enjoy this chapter. It demonstrates that these rewards can be damaging and are not beneficial to a child's development. This chapter goes into detail about Carol Dweck's research in which she has found when adults praise children's efforts... "you are working hard"... versus their personal attributes.. "you are so smart or you are so strong," they are more likely to have children who are willing to take on challenges. The other chapter that I found especially interesting was the chapter on "perspective taking". Perspective taking is the foundation for empathy development. Because empathy is such a critical component of any individual's development and there is a critical period in which the development of this skill needs to occur, I think all parents should work on perspective taking with the children. If an individual fails to develop empathy, they will most likely engage in many anti-social behaviors throughout their life-span. At one point the book actually puts forth the

question as to why aren't we teaching "perspective taking" in schools when it is such a critical component of development? Well, why aren't we? But if we aren't ready to do that yet, parents can at least work on this skill with their own toddlers so that they develop empathy later in childhood. My only complaint of this book's content is that its buy-in may be low for those that aren't educated and unfortunately, the children that typically need the most help are children that come from uneducated families of low socio-economic status. Therefore, how can this book be re-written by Ellen Galinsky in order to communicate these complex ideas to parents that may not be well educated?

I like this book. I don't love it. Instead of feeling like I am learning tools to help my child excel, I find it giving me new things to worry about being wrong with him. Each chapter is set up with an informative section, and then suggestions for helping to improve sad skills. I don't find the suggestions to be very useful.

Of the stack of child development books I bought during my wife's pregnancy, this one has been my absolute favorite. **Winning points:**  
**EVIDENCE:** I keep a healthy dose of skepticism when reading anything about psychological development, how the brain works, and pretty much anything telling me how to live based on scientific research. As a researcher myself, I know that the conclusion is only as good as the research that went into it, so the fact that Galinsky goes into the details of the experiments brings a lot more weight to her arguments.  
**INTEREST:** Details of experiments are more than just validation, however. They also made the research more interesting and memorable. It's much more interesting to hear about babies recognizing that the triangle was a jerk, and makes a better conversation piece for later than just "young children prefer helpful people."  
**PERSONALITY:** Some reviewers have complained about the anecdotes and personal stories. I found them a nice break from the research, and as the first of our friends to have kids, an interesting set of real-world stories around child development. If you're not into the "fluff," most of the anecdotes are clearly delineated from the meat, so skipping them is easy.  
**ACTION:** One of the complaints I had with other books was that they pointed out the research, and the pitfalls, but didn't really offer a lot of solutions for a parent. I really appreciated the direct, practicable suggestions in every chapter.  
Overall, I read this from cover to cover, something I can't say for most of the books I bought during this time, will go back to re-read parts throughout my kid's childhood, and will definitely recommend or buy this book for my friends who are having kids down the line.

I wish I had read this book before the arrival of my first child. I learned so much about how babies

learn from the moment they come into this world. As parents, we are our children's primary teachers and this book will open your eyes to just how much we can teach our children long before they start going to school.

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