

Mind in the Making

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN – AN OVERVIEW

Mind in the Making: The Science of Early Learning, developed by Families and Work Institute in partnership with New Screen Concepts, is an unprecedented and unparalleled collaborative effort to share the science of early learning with the general public, families and professionals who work with children and families.

Over the past eight years, we have filmed researchers “in action” — showing actual experiments and presenting the science of early learning with children from birth through eight years old in an accessible, engaging and inspiring way. We are creating a wide array of multimedia materials that are designed to help diverse audiences bridge the gap between knowledge and practice.

The official “launch” of the national *Mind in the Making* initiative will be in the spring of 2010. The campaign will include:

- Mind in the Making, a new book by Families and Work president Ellen Galinsky, to be published by HarperStudio in April, 2010;
- Network television appearances;
- Learning Modules for Early Childhood Teachers (in English and Spanish);
- Learning Modules for Families;
- A series of web-based videos for families;
- A DVD of 25 important experiments in child development research—from the classics to the cutting edge;
- Practical “how-to” information for families; and
- Community mobilization efforts.

Our launch activities include:

- A preview event that took place on March 30, 2009 in Washington, DC: *Linking Ready Kids to Ready Schools*, sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Education Commission of the States, the Children’s Leadership Council, Voices for America’s Children and select members of the Learning First Alliance;
- A meeting in Washington, DC of national organizations where we will offer up to 10 mini-grants for national organizations that would like to partner with Mind in the Making to promote engagement in learning and essential, learning-related skills;
- Monthly Mind in the Making conference calls for national and community partners to discuss plans for the campaign;
- A Congressional launch event (This will be a bipartisan event hosted by members of Congress. Highlights will be made available to the general public via web clips and/or podcasts); and
- A National Press Club media event and satellite media tour to announce Mind in the Making.

Mind in the Making

AN OVERVIEW

Americans have become all too familiar with crisis in recent years—the economic crisis, the energy crisis. But there is one crisis where we remain stuck, a crisis that perhaps underlies the rest. And that is our crisis in learning.

The learning crisis is multi-pronged. All children are born engaged in learning—they are unstoppable learners. But for some children, that fire dims before they start school—they start school behind and never catch up. For others, a gradual process of disengagement with learning adds to our nation's high dropout rates. And then there are those who don't drop out of school, but drop out of learning.

For the past eight years, we have conducted an extensive review of the research on how children learn best. We have interviewed and filmed more than 70 researchers, looking at:

- What makes young children stay *motivated and engaged* in learning, to see themselves as ongoing, life-long learners?
- In addition to content knowledge, what are the essential skills children need?

In *Mind in the Making*, we explore:

- How babies' brains are wired to help them understand things about language, numbers, space, objects, and people—well before they can be taught this knowledge.
- How learning builds on these core capacities.
- How important learning-related skills are in helping children succeed now and in the future, and how all of these skills involve executive functions of the brain.

These skills are:

Skill 1: Focus and Self-Control

Skill 2: Perspective Taking

Skill 3: Communicating

Skill 4: Making Connections

Skill 5: Critical Thinking

Skill 6: Taking On Challenges

Skill 7: Pursuing Ongoing Learning

The Mind in the Making Learning Modules for Early Childhood Teachers

New: In 2010, the Learning Modules will be updated to include new modules that focus on the seven essential skills that are described in Ellen Galinsky's groundbreaking new book, *Mind in the Making*.

The Mind in the Making Learning Modules for Early Childhood Teachers are a facilitated learning process consisting of 12 modules that are designed to bridge the gap between research and teaching practice. The Learning Modules are intended to add first-hand experience, using the best research on “minds in the making” —that is, on how young children learn best—to other early childhood education, training and professional development experiences.

The Learning Modules are designed to complement existing early childhood teaching curricula, with a focus on helping teachers (defined as an adult who teaches and cares for young children) in schools, centers and home-based early childhood settings become more *reflective and intentional* in their work with young children and families.

Although the research referenced in the Learning Modules focuses on birth through school-entry, states and communities have also used the Modules for teachers in the early elementary years. In addition, the Modules have been and can be used to teach students in community colleges, colleges and universities.

The Modules are now being used by many states to help teachers come to appreciate the value of research to them as teachers and learners—not just by reading about research or accepting it at face value, but through “evidence-based practice:” connecting the research with evidence from their own experiences, and with their own values and the values of their families and communities.

The Learning Modules incorporate several core principles and features, including:

- giving teachers an experience with their own learning that parallels the research on children;
- viewing videos of leading researchers conducting experiments to show how children learn best;
- helping teachers think about and synthesize the lessons from these experiences;
- trying out what they have learned with children; and
- getting feedback and continuing to apply what they have learned.

According to a University of Pittsburgh study evaluating the Mind in the Making Learning Modules for Early Childhood Teachers in Pennsylvania, teachers who completed the MITM learning modules “contributed to positive, meaningful changes in classroom practices that promote children’s social, emotional and intellectual development.” Furthermore, teachers with different educational levels, and years of experience of teaching and from programs of different levels of quality were equally likely to improve.

MIND IN THE MAKING: FUNDERS

Lead Campaign Funders:

W.K. Kellogg Foundation
AT&T Family Care Development Fund
MetLife Foundation
Johnson & Johnson
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
A family foundation
The Heinz Endowments

Additional Campaign Funders:

The Procter & Gamble Company
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Citigroup Foundation
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Learning Modules for Teachers Funders:

The Heinz Endowments
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Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Pritzker Early Childhood Foundation
Vivendi Universal
The Prudential Foundation
The A.L. Mailman Family Foundation
American Business Collaboration

Learning Modules for Families Funders:

The Marks Family Foundation

Developing a Model for Dissemination and Outreach Funders:

The Heinz Endowments
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