

Is Your Child Real World Ready?

In recent years, parenting has undergone a shift and has become hyper-focused on the child. And while care, attention, and love are necessary for forming healthy **attachments** and helping children reach developmental milestones, an over-protective or coddling type approach can also hinder them. Rest assured, this parenting tactic comes from a place of love but to allow children to achieve autonomy, we must allow them the freedom to make choices and learn daily life skills. This will set them up for the most success in the future.

It's no doubt our world has changed, and our lifestyles are more hectic and fast-paced than ever before. Coupled with the failures, **peer problems**, disappointments, etc., that children run into along the way, it makes it hard for parents to sit on the sidelines and just let things happen. And often, parents feel a sense of guilt for not having more time with their children, so doing more gives them a sense of relief and creates what they think is a moment of connection with their child. However, when children do not have to face everyday life **challenges** and are not given opportunities to learn daily life skills, they will be forced to depend on their parents even into adulthood. Dr. Mel Levine, author of "Ready or Not, Here Life Comes," refers to this as the gateway to "work-life unreadiness."

To find the right **balance**, parents should consider their child's stage of development, individual maturity, and situation. While responsible **parenting** involves providing all the necessities and love to children, it doesn't mean doing everything for them. As children grow and develop, practicing newfound abilities will allow them to get better at daily tasks while also learning new life skills to build their **confidence**. Taking time to **teach** children life skills, such as tying their shoes, doing laundry, or communicating their feelings, while guiding them through the process will foster more independence and resourcefulness and strengthen the parent-child bond.

In the SKILLZ Child Development Program, the Certified Pediatric Ninja Specialists provide a safe and supportive environment for fostering autonomy. By utilizing Teaching SKILLZ techniques such as “choices” and “intrinsic motivation,” instructors provide opportunities for children to make their own decisions, which gives them a sense of pride and builds their confidence. And when something doesn’t go as planned, instructors are there to help them get back on track. The Parent SKILLZ curriculum also provides parents with methods to implement in everyday parenting that allows for time for connection while also building life skills at home that are necessary for a successful future.

Parenting should always involve love and support, but understanding that this also involves allowing children to tackle the “firsts” of life at the developmentally appropriate age is essential. The constant process of finding the right balance of caring for and protecting children while allowing for the achievement of necessary life skills is vital. Supportive parenting should always move children closer to independence and **stability** to navigate the world solo and prepare them for adulthood.