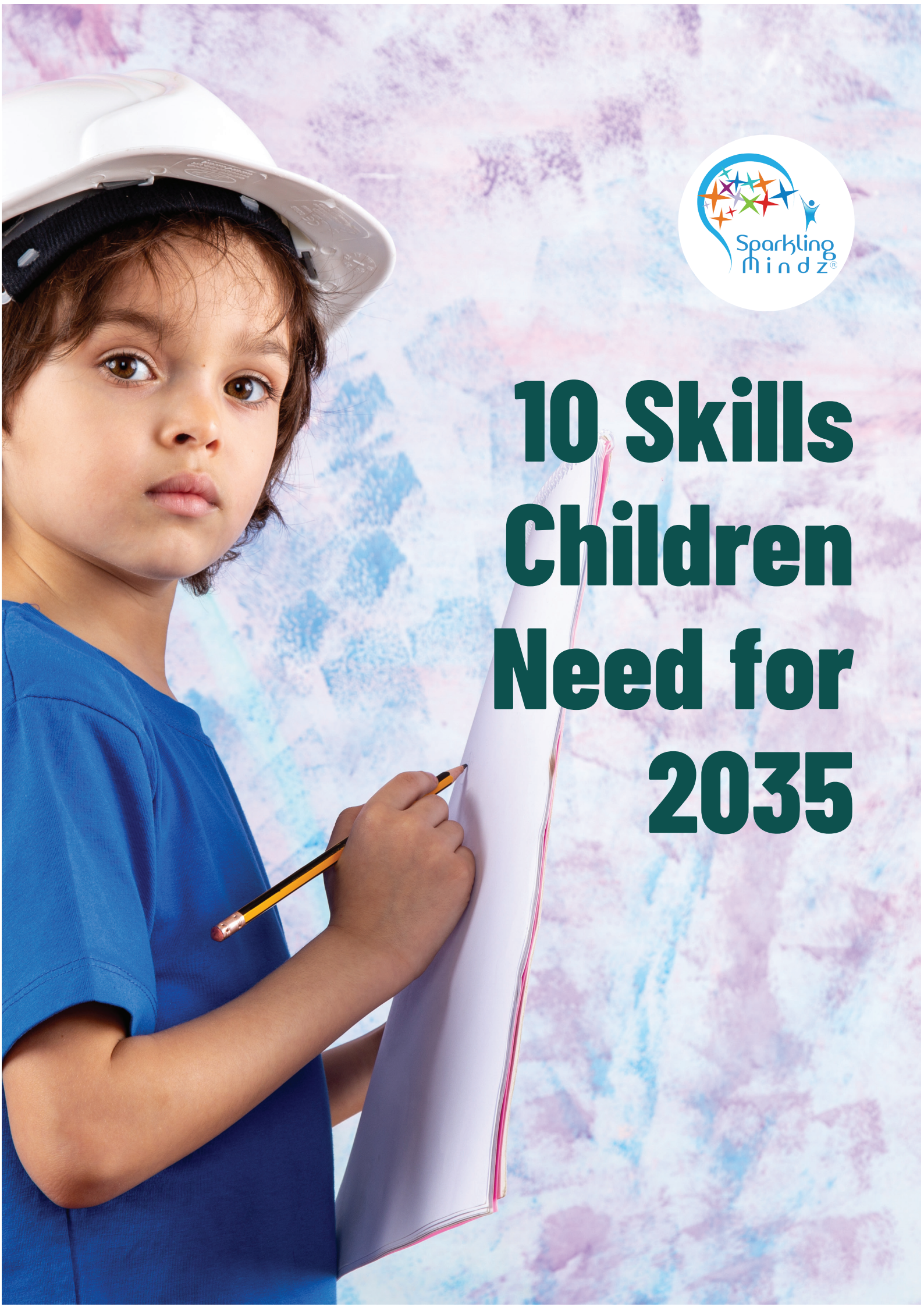




10 Skills Children Need for 2035



10 Skills Children Need for 2035 - That Schools Often Ignore

What do children need more than anything else today?

Children don't need another activity, achievement, or a faster route to becoming "future-ready." They need a deep sense of who they are, why they matter, and how they can contribute to this world today.

Children are growing up in a world that pushes them to do more, have more, move faster, and somehow remain relaxed through it all. Without purpose and wonder, they risk becoming highly skilled but disconnected consumers: constantly occupied, yet unsure of what gives their lives meaning.

The future is not a distant problem. AI, climate change, loneliness, comparison, and consumerism are already entering children's relationships, free time, and sense of self. Preparing them for 2035 must therefore begin by helping them thrive today.

What Skills Will Children Need for 2035?

The World Economic Forum identifies AI and big data, technological literacy, creative thinking, resilience, and lifelong learning among the fastest-rising skills towards 2030. Building on these shifts, children need:

Cognitive

1. Analytical thinking to question information and make reasoned decisions.
2. Creative thinking to imagine possibilities beyond familiar answers.
3. AI and data literacy to use intelligent tools critically and responsibly.
4. Technological literacy to shape technology rather than consume it mindlessly.
5. Design thinking to empathise, define problems, prototype, and improve solutions.

Emotional

6. Self-awareness and identity to recognise their values, emotions, strengths and purpose.
7. Agency and motivation to make meaningful choices and act on what matters.
8. Resilience and future-orientedness to adapt without losing hope or direction.
9. Empathy and active listening to build trust across differences.
- 10 Leadership and contribution to work with others towards something larger than themselves.

A child can be technologically capable and still feel lonely. They can think analytically yet remain disconnected from community and place. Future-readiness without humanity can make children more efficient participants in systems they have never learned to question.

Why Do Schools Often Miss the Deeper Need?

A syllabus-centric system focuses on what can be completed, tested, and graded. When success depends on recognising examination patterns, children search for hacks instead of staying with difficult problems. When marks become identity, they begin to believe that capability belongs only to a select few.

So, what do our children need today more than ever to thrive in the world, way before they get future-ready? The issues our children are facing are not merely out there in the future; they are in here today - in their lives, amongst their peers, creeping into their free time, peeking into spaces where they are learning and playing.

When children learn to learn how to grow as humans first, and already practice living and learning meaningfully, they are then better prepared to adapt to the changing world meaningfully.

They need a larger sense of purpose in life, where they begin to believe that each of them has light within and can meaningfully contribute to the world they live in. That, as they explore deeply about what it means to be human in an AI-driven world, they ask

themselves and wonder about - Who am I becoming? Why am I learning this? How is life interconnected? How can I use what I know to contribute?

At Sparkling Mindz, children explore these questions through P2P Labs (Problems to Projects Labs), LIFE classes, and child-led Changemaker Missions. They reflect on lived experiences, solve real problems, and practise empathy for self, culture, community, learning, and design.

Preparing children for 2035 is not about predicting the future. It is about nurturing deeply rooted, globally aware human beings who can learn, adapt, and contribute with purpose.

Nothing less will do. ■