Success is at the summit of the project management ethos, attainable with skills that cut a clear and direct path up mountains of opportunity. As a project manager, you are an expert in communicating, scheduling, managing and completing tasks, both simple and highly complex. And you are already aware that the organizational thinking necessary for project management can be applied anywhere, by anyone—whether planning a family picnic or coordinating IT implementation in a new hospital wing.

Most people don’t learn to utilize a project management skill set—or even understand what it is—until they reach maturity, well into their twenties. Just imagine if every individual learned project management as a youth. How might their lives be positively transformed? What successes might they have accomplished to fuel confidence, goals and future achievements?

The PMI Educational Foundation (PMIEF) believes in the motto “the sooner the better” when teaching project management to youth. Learning and applying project management early in life is crucial to helping youth build key life skills and succeed in whatever their endeavors may be.

Following are four of the most important skills gained through the practice of project management that help prepare youth for the 21st century.

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The Life Skills Youth Learn Through Project Management

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- **Collaboration** — *The action of working with someone to produce or create something*

  No matter what your age, collaboration is critical in every environment. For youth, it’s used in the classroom, on the field or really in any aspect of day-to-day life. It’s empowering for young people to learn to work well in a team early on, before they are expected to be competent team members or leaders in their daily work environment. Learning and applying project management through a well-organized, age-appropriate project helps youth develop, refine and excel so they are better prepared to apply project management skills in their daily lives today and later in the workforce.

- **Critical Thinking** — *The objective of analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment*

  Take a minute and think of a young person in your life. Does he or she ask a lot of questions? Does he or she sit quietly thinking? When introduced early in life, critical thinking is a fundamental skill that encourages open-mindedness and helps young people find alternative solutions to problems, in turn giving them the confidence to speak their minds. Through learning project management basics, young people are able to think more deeply, plan better and identify barriers. The popular PMIEF resource, Project Management Skills for Life®, provides a basic introduction to project management in a fun way and can be downloaded here at no cost.

- **Creativity** — *The use of imagination*

  One of the best questions you can ask a young person is: “What do you want to be when you grow up?” It’s something we’ve all thought and reminisce about, even as adults. Fostering an environment that encourages creativity not only helps youth develop mentally and socially, but helps them think about their future and how they can execute their projects and ideas. Whether identifying a project, writing the scope statement or creating the work structure, youth are using their imaginations to bring projects to life—while at the same time building confidence in their ability to provide creative, valuable input to the project along the way.

- **Communication** — *The imparting or exchanging of information*

  In today’s highly digital world, it’s possible to communicate across the globe with the click of a button. But project management helps encourage effective communication. At home, in school, at work or in your local community, there isn’t a day that goes by when communication isn’t an essential component. Youth can practice and effectively improve this skill while participating in a project team, while strengthening their relationships with their peers, classmates, teachers and parents, and preparing for success later in life.

  These skills are critical for youth to succeed in an increasingly competitive world. They help youth learn the importance of self-confidence, leadership and teamwork, and build a solid foundation for everyday success and future endeavors.

  Want to learn more on introducing project management skills to the youth in your life? Be sure to visit [www.pmief.org](http://www.pmief.org) for no-cost resources, articles and testimonials on how to bring project management to youth. While you’re there, don’t forget to sign up for our newsletter to learn all about what’s happening at PMIEF, delivered directly to your inbox.

  PS—Don’t forget to join the conversation on social media! You can follow us on Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook.

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PMIEF’s Evolving Strategy — An Important Update

Over the past few months, many of you have probably heard about PMIEF’s increased focus on youth around the globe to help them build life skills through project management. You may also have some questions, but aren’t sure where to find the answers. We now have a helpful update to share with you!

PMIEF’s strategic plan offers a more in-depth guide and includes answers to the most frequently asked questions we’ve collected, a timeline to follow and a partnership example. Plus, if you only have a few minutes, you can go to page 5 for a quick “At a Glance” review.

As a project manager, you play a key role in PMIEF’s future. We know your dedication, passion for social good and knowledge of project management can have a tremendous impact on youth around the world. To learn more about PMIEF’s mission to enable youth to realize their potential and transform lives through project management, go to [PMIEF.org](http://www.pmief.org).

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Educational Foundation