

**Bon Jour... Hola... Ni Hao... GutenTag.. Konnichiwa..**



## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Greetings from SIES Institute of Comprehensive Education.

*“The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught. The teacher is not an instructor or task master, he is a helper and a guide. He does not call forth the knowledge that is within; he only shows him where it lies and how it can be habituated to rise to the surface”*

– Sri Aurobindo.



This principle stated above has a key role to play in the genesis of *Adhyaapanam*, the e-newsletter from SIES Institute of Comprehensive Education. The vision of this institution is to train teachers, counsellors and special educators in a holistic manner. Through this newsletter, we aim to connect individuals and organisations related to teaching, counselling and special education. Knowledge when shared becomes more meaningful. As a training institute, we endeavor to assist and aid the society. All the professional courses that we conduct at the institute are need-based and can be called humane and touching professions. It thus becomes imperative that we not only connect individuals but disseminate relevant field knowledge which is very vital for growth and development.

The articles in the first edition are varied. We have attempted to cover a few themes such Teaching, Early Childhood Education, Poor School Performance, Use of technology and Disciplining. In the current scenario, the topics covered are very contemporary and relevant. Through these articles let us understand, dwell, deliberate the knowledge that we are about to internalize. Once we have internalized let us become harbingers of knowledge and application. In this manner, we not only impact the stakeholders with whom we deal with, but also work towards making our nation progressive and ready for global challenges.

Happy reading.

**Dr. Vidhya Satish**

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*Congratulations!*



**Message – Joint Hon Secretary**

**S.V.Viswanathan**  
Joint Hon Secretary, SIES

Congratulations to the SIES Institute of Comprehensive Education for bringing out Adhyaapanam, this new “**e-Newsletter**” that will connect all teaching professionals, counselors, special educators, alumni and well-wishers.

With SIES-ICE introducing a Nerul chapter we will be seeing many need based teacher training programs in Navi Mumbai that will cater to the ever growing population of primary teachers, budding counselors and housewives in Navi Mumbai and beyond. In Nerul, we are exactly in a similar situation as we were in 1980 at Sion, when it all started. The strength of this institution lies in its innovative strategies, practical training, hand holding, diverse activities and expertise of some of the best experiences of visiting faculties.

We have autonomous courses, diploma as well as post graduate diploma courses. SIES-ICE’s PG Diploma in Counseling and the Diploma in Early Childhood are affiliated to Mumbai University and are most sought after. Our past programs included various counseling courses viz. Effective Parenting, Pre-marital Guidance, Making a success out of a marriage, ‘In-service programs for professionals, Remedial Education programme for teachers & counselors, PG Diploma in Special Education, Early Childhood care and Education etc..

On this occasion, I would like to congratulate Dr. Vidhya Satish and her team on their approach to start many programs, including a strategic beginning in Nerul as well as a much needed push in Sion. I, on behalf of the SIES Management wish them the best for this first e-Newsletter release.

## ARE WE REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS??



*Dr. Vidhya Satish*  
*Director, SIES Institute of Comprehensive Education*

### Who is a teacher?

The one who is a teacher is **T**enderly **T**ouching, **E**nthusiastically **E**nlightening, **A**lways **A**ppreciating, **C**heerfully **C**aring, **H**appily **H**elping, **E**ver **E**ncouraging and **R**eadily **R**eaching. An important question for all teachers to ponder upon is “Do we all have these ideal qualities as a teacher”? The more we ponder on these qualities, an important trait of a teacher that merges is that of becoming “Reflective Practitioners”. The etymology of the word “reflection” stems from the Latin word “reflectere” which literally means to bend backwards or turn back one’s thoughts on some subject. A reflective person is a person with a meditative or deliberative disposition. Reflection also means to give serious thought or consideration. Reflective teaching practices involves *reflection on the methods adopted, evaluating processes, using research* to develop one’s own practices and most importantly *sharing* good practices with others.

Reflection is purposive, organised, structured, deliberate, links theory to practice and promotes change and development. It is a process of self-examination and self-evaluation that effective educators regularly engage in to improve their professional practice. Educators must continuously study their practices if they are to grow. Teaching is all about learning, growing and changing. “One who dares to teach must never cease to learn”. Today’s learning scenario has moved on from “delivering or covering’ the curriculum to “setting the stage” for students to find and solve problems relevant to the topics in the curriculum and to better themselves as learners. Good teaching is more of giving the right questions than giving the right answers.

### How does one get started?

Teaching can be compared with for example, learning to drive. Mastering clutch control at the very beginning is difficult, leads to repeated trials, sometimes leading to failure, then developing confidence and later mastering it and finally becoming an unconscious act. An unstructured model suggests that teaching can progress through the following stages:

- Unconscious incompetence – we are unaware of what we can do and don’t know.
- Conscious incompetence – we are aware of our developmental needs and start doing something about it.
- Conscious competence – develop the mastery and skills, use them and watch how it affects.
- Unconscious competence – the skills become “naturalised” that it transforms into what we can call “second nature”.

Teaching can become one's second nature. But care must be taken to see that it does not make one complacent. Hence the need to be reflective and review our skills from time to time. It is never too early to learn to become a reflective teacher. Teachers must start by *writing a mission statement, devise an action plan* and *set goals*. Once the plans are made about enhancing the teaching-learning process, the teacher has to ask himself or herself "How am I doing"? "Is there anything to adjust"? "How to proceed to reach one's goals"? As the year progresses, the teacher has to evaluate her progress and that of her class. "Could they expect more of themselves or their students"? "What would they change or make different"?

The notion of reflection linking theory to practice underlies the work of Kolb and Gibbs (1984). The four stage theory of experiential learning can be linked to reflective practices. The four elements are a) **concrete experiences** b) **reflection** c) **abstract conceptualization** d) **active experimentation**. The teacher can begin at any point but must follow these steps. For example, if the teacher wishes to use role playing in the classroom (*concrete experiences*) and she is partially successful. On reflection she considers ways of improving it (*reflection*). She reads more, discusses with senior colleagues and formulates an improved version of the activity (*abstract conceptualization*). The next time she plans to use role play, she incorporates new ideas in the planning (*active experimentation*). This leads to a new concrete experience and repetition of the cycle.

### **What are the areas one needs to reflect on?**

Rosenshine (1971) developed a list of effective teaching behaviours. Despite the fact that this research is old, this list is nevertheless valid even in today's times. The characteristics exhibited by good teachers are as follows:

- 1) Introducing and structuring topics or activities clearly.
- 2) Explaining topics with relevant examples and illustrative materials.
- 3) Organising lessons in a systematic and business-like manner.
- 4) Using a variety of teaching aids.
- 5) Questioning students especially to promote higher-order thinking skills.
- 6) Using praise and other verbal and non-verbal reinforcement techniques.
- 7) Encouraging learner participation.
- 8) Making use of learner's ideas, clarifying and developing them further.
- 9) Showing warmth, rapport and enthusiasm often non-verbally.

**Conclusion:** What makes a good teacher is the ability to reflect. A reflective teacher develops optimum teaching qualities. He/She is open to new learning, researches topics and teaching styles, constantly improves teaching methods and shares both success and failure with colleagues. The more we reflect on, we begin to become objective, unbiased and clear. Once reflection becomes part of one's own nature, success and progress are bound to follow.

## The Magic in me – I can make a difference

*Nalini Chhugani  
President,  
Association for Early Childhood Education and Development (Mumbai branch)*

Seema entered the preschool with a spring in her feet, dreams in her eyes and hope in her heart. This was her first job after receiving a Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education which involved a full year's hard work to prepare for her profession as a teacher of young children.

As she greeted each child who entered the class, she felt a slight feeling of panic – “How will I manage a group of 30 children?” “Will they listen to me?” “What will I do if they fight or get hurt?” **“It is a huge responsibility.”**

These are natural doubts of the beginning teacher in her first job. Let us ponder on the various tips given by professionals based on their theoretical knowledge and experience. As the teacher gains competence and confidence by observing, practicing and reflecting, her performance will be more organized, empathetic and sensitive. She will be a nurturer and facilitator of children's learning and holistic development.

- **Observation is the best tool**, it helps to find clues to children's behaviour and situations. Keep a note book handy and make quick jottings as teachers hardly have time to write full sentences while they are with children. She will observe and record objectively, later go over those notes to increase her understanding of the children's behaviour and her own abilities.
- **Offer suggestions in a positive form** – The teacher says to a child, **“Hold the glass with both hands”** instead of the warning, **“Be careful, don't spill the water”**. When suggestions are given in precise form, telling the children what to do they listen and know what is expected of them.
- **Clear and precise choices** given to children help them to make decisions. **“Do you want to play with blocks or do the puzzles?”** The teacher knows that certain situations do not warrant choices such as at meal times the teacher will say, **“It is time to eat lunch”** and not ask, **“Do you want to eat now?”**

**Make effective use of your voice.** The most effective speech is low in volume, slow, simple and direct. Quiet firm voice attracts children's attention also moving



closer to the group and looking at each one while talking, helps children listen to the teacher.

Shouting across the room increases the noise level and encourages children to do the same. Speech conveys feelings and ideas and children are sensitive to the tone and quality of adult's voice. The teacher who uses a pleasant tone of voice will find herself to be more effective and her confidence improves with each success.

- **Let the children do tasks by themselves.** Teacher can be around to extend a helping hand when children ask for it. Otherwise, she provides minimum assistance so children learn to solve problems by themselves. At one preschool when a child complained about being hit by another child, the teacher would tell the child, **“Tell her I do not like it”** or in another instance the child was guided to say, **“I am angry that you snatched the doll from me .”** Gradually the children started using a firm voice and dealing with the situation. Initially they wanted presence of the teacher as assurance which made them feel protected and valued, later they proudly related the incident and their success with handling the situation.
- **Build the child's confidence and self respect.** After parents and family, teachers are the most important persons in young children's life and early childhood is the crucial time to build self esteem in children. “Confidence in self is based on a foundation of trust in others and a feeling of being valued by others” writes Catherine Read Baker in her book, 'The Nursery School & Kindergarten.'

Young child is especially dependent on adults' thinking and reactions to her behaviour. Labelling a child naughty, lazy, stupid, whiner etc. means we are passing a judgment on them, which can prove damaging to their sense of self esteem.

- Aditya had a habit of whining when he could not complete a task, once while doing a puzzle a piece did not fit and he complained and threw the piece. The teacher said, "It makes you angry that the puzzle piece does not fit" and she gave him the piece. The teacher's comment gave Aditya the attention he needed and conveyed the message that his teacher cares about him, Aditya smiled and completed the puzzle. The teacher said, "You did it Aditya."
- Competition and comparison damages the child's sense of self. In any competition someone always loses and feels hurt and resentful. The winner may get the feeling of superiority and may also get the fear of losing the next time. It takes away the fun and enjoyment from the activities which children naturally experience while playing. Young children are not emotionally ready for competition as their ego strength is still in the process of development. In fact even adults know that cooperation is a better option than competition in any venture.
- One of the fundamental principle of development is that, "All human beings are unique and all individuals are different." Then why do we compare one child with another? Comparison does not improve the child's behavior. On the contrary it damages the child's feeling of self worth and relationship with other children specifically with the child who is held up as a better example.
- **Children are imaginative and have a unique sense of art.** Observe the way they use art materials but do not make models for them to copy or suggest changes in their art products.  
Young children are spontaneous and creative in use of art materials such as paints, crayons, clay, play dough, paper, glue etc. Initially they enjoy the process of exploring the materials and as they grow the children's creations are based on their perceptions, experience and imagination. The sensitive teacher will respect and appreciate the child's efforts.

- **Plan the environment** so that there are few opportunities to say 'NO' to children. Organise the class room in such a way that there is less furniture and plenty of place to move around. The materials meant for children are kept at lower levels and are easily available.

Rules and limits to be followed in the school need to be few and clearly explained to children. The teacher takes the responsibility of reminding children as often they do not grasp the reason for the limits such as safety of children or preventing destruction of property. Children feel more secure with reasonable limits and an assurance that the adults will keep them safe from harm.

The teacher as a nurturer and the facilitator needs to remember that young children should be active and learn by directly working with materials, people and ideas. Her role is not to direct but support children's learning and development. In the words of Swami Vivekanand, "A child teaches itself. But you can help it to go forward in its own way".

At the end of the day reviewing the day's happenings, children's behaviour, her reactions and response will help the teacher to discover the magic of her own strengths to be an empowered person.

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## POOR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN CHILDREN

**Rukshana F. Sholapurwala**

*Consultant & Special Educator- KEM Hospital & DPYA High School*

***“A child who fails or gets poor marks on the school test is always a source of anxiety for parents and teachers.”***

Education is one of the most important aspects of human resource development. Poor school performance not only results in the child having low self-esteem, but also causes significant stress to the parents. In today’s scenario at least ***one in five students*** has trouble keeping up academically at some point during their school years. The root of the problem may often be school related and nothing more. A drop in grade can be a warning sign and many causes of failure are related to the following:

- 1) CHILD:** Child is a child first and we need to accept the child as a whole as she/he may be. A child may have difficulty with vision, hearing loss, low intelligence (Borderline IQ), Specific Learning Disability, child with ADD/ADHD, Slow maturing, Language Barrier and may also be an emotionally insecure child who exhibits behavior problems. All these can be attributed as causes for poor school performance.
- 2) HOME:** A home is a place where a child feels the warmth and is comfortable. Here the parents play a very important role in the child’s life along with the acceptance of the child’s sibling and grandparents. Parents should not indulge in harsh treatment, aggressive behavior and favoritism. Discord between the parents, financial difficulties negatively impacts the child and her/his school performance is affected.
- 3) SCHOOL:** School is a place where the child not only acquires her/his education by way of academics but is also a place where his/her social development takes place. Schools which are unsympathetic or have harsh teachers can become a major cause for poor school performance.
  - Teachers are mandated to care for the children. They need to be very careful with the vocabulary that they use in the class room. They should not ridicule the child in front of her/his peers. They should not compare the child with her/his siblings and peers in the class as all these result in poor school performance.
  - Peers in the school also play an important role in the life of a child. Peers who are a bully in the class, peers who make fun of the child, peers who ridicule the child affect the child emotionally and academically.
  - The examination system also plays a crucial role contributing to poor performance. A child’s fear of examination interferes with the ability to memorize and recall facts thereby affecting his overall performance in examinations. Many children with low self-esteem and confidence have a negative attitude towards exam as they feel ***“I am going to fail anyway, so what’s the point in trying”***.
  - Children with an inferiority complex or children who are over confident give up on studies. This is seen more often when they are compared with their siblings and peers.
  - Changing schools too often also hinders the education of the child. Every time a new school is approached child has to adjust to a new atmosphere, build new friends, and get the feeling of acceptance from new

4) LEARNING DISORDERS like lack of sleep, inadequate food, poverty, poor health, bad family atmosphere and social factors attribute towards poor school performance.

As a Special Educator we are trained to observe our student's learning over the time. We gain insight into what causes student's poor academic performance and teach them tools and strategies to increase their effectiveness. Also of importance is the congruence between the teacher and student personalities. We need to work with the child's strength rather than their weakness. The material and aids used should be appropriate to the child. A lot of encouragement and motivation that "you can do it" is a must. There needs to be a deep understanding by the teacher about the child. The motto of the teacher should be

**IF CHILDREN CAN'T LEARN THE WAY WE TEACH  
THEN WE MUST AND MUST  
TEACH THEM THE WAY THEY CAN LEARN.**



## BUILDING READERS



*Manjula Warriar*

*Coordinator, AVM Institute of Early Childhood Education, Juhu*

Ajay loves reading books. His mother knows this because whenever she reads to him at night, Ajay jumps up and down with excitement. He screams and tries to reach the book every time he sees it. When his mother is done with reading, she lets Ajay hold the sturdy book, which he promptly sticks into his mouth. Ajay is just nine months old, but he is already on his way to becoming a reader.

The ability to read unlocks the doors to information, and stimulates literacy proficiency, creative thinking, and comprehension skills. Reading involves making sense of written text, vocabulary building, speaking and imitating words. Reading is an interactive process that encourages the reader to form new thoughts, ideas and develop imagination skills. It allows the listener or reader to interpret pictures, to ask and answer relevant questions (Schwartz, 2008). According to President Obama (2009), reading provides endless enjoyment, helps to release the creative abilities of children and is an important component for future personal accomplishment.

Children are not born book learners, they are born learners. The love for reading can be cultivated and nurtured at a very young age. The more children are read to, the more they learn. Nurturing positive reading habits in young children helps to make them readers for life. It would be a joint effort of both parents and teachers in introducing books to children and developing a love for reading.

There are a lot of distracting options today like the gaming consoles, internet and television. It is common to notice neatly stacked books laden with heaps of dust because children are not bothered to read books in their free time.

### Encourage Reading at Home;

While there is no doubt that reading breeds smart child, developing a reading habit is a challenge in itself. After all, reading won't happen in a day. Once children develop their reading ability, it also makes it easy for them to understand concepts taught in school.

### Teacher as Role Model:

The teacher is a facilitator, who communicates with children and who provides the time and materials that invite them to listen and speak to the teachers and also with each other. The teacher, as the reading and writing role model, makes it obvious to the children how print operates for communication purposes. Certain "Reading Instructional Methods" teachers can use are:

- Multi-sensory Reading Method – Children learn best when content is presented in several modalities. This is frequently kinesthetic and tactile stimulation along with the traditional visual and auditory experience. These are often called VAKT (visual-auditory-kinesthetic-tactile).
- Oral Reading Fluency Methods – Select an age appropriate book or story. Introduce the book or story to the students and review potentially new and difficult words. Read the story to the students.

Have two students paired together taking turns reading the book or story. This method uses neurological impress method through repeated readings

- **Peer-Assisted Reading Method:** Students are paired with one low achieving reader and one high achieving reader and the reading material should be at the lower level.

- **Keyword Method** – This method relies on memorization based on visual imagery i.e.

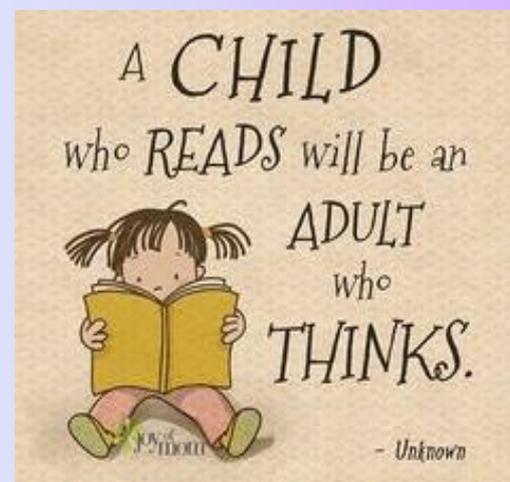
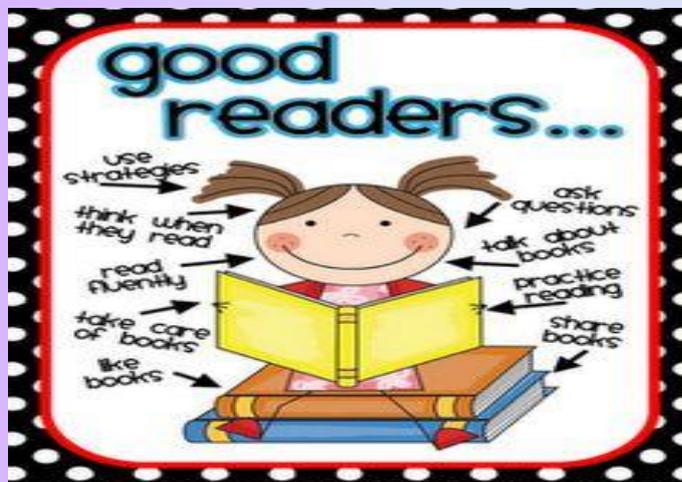
Retrieving or recalling the definition by thinking of the keywords and relating it to the picture.

- **Mapping Strategies:** This is a schema-building technique using a pictorial storyboard, map or a graphic organizer. Children fill in the map as they read, including things like: setting, problem, goal, action, and outcome.
- **Life Skills Reading** – Life skills reading focuses on words and phrases that students must know in order to function effectively in real life situations viz. while shopping, being employed, even enjoying recreation at home. Examples: danger, men, woman, restroom, up, down, exit, telephone, poison, police, first aid, stop, walk, do not enter etc.

Reading is fun and the habit of reading should be formed as early as possible. Teachers should thoughtfully and purposefully interact with children and plan experiences that support emergent literacy. A print-rich environment that provides children opportunities for developing reading skills, real-life experiences, combined with explicit teaching of key concepts enhances reading capacity of children. Adults should take into account the individual and developmental characteristics of children in the learning process.

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## POOR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE – STOP BLAMING THE CHILD



*Dr. Smita Desai*

*Educational Psychologist, Founder-Director, Drishti, Hon. Secretary, Bombay Psychological Association*

Why do children perform poorly in school? Why do they fail? These are frequently asked questions by parents and teachers. However, I wonder what children feel about it. Are they able to articulate their failure to perform? What questions or statements might they possibly come up with...

1. Why does Ms. P always fail me in her subject? I write all the answers...
2. Sometimes I don't understand what the teacher in Math class is saying, so then I start thinking about the next games period....
3. The Geography maps are very confusing, and no one seems to be able to help me; if I go back to the teacher, she just asks more questions. Finally, I do not study them at all...
4. Most of the study periods are so boring; only Ms. K who teaches English is fun. She has activities for all of us and I always get a chance to speak up in her class. I understand everything she teaches. She is very kind...

Many children in school fail; fail to perform. However, they seem to fail in a more important sense than facts and numbers. They fail to develop that tremendous capacity to understand, create and learn that they have been born with. We see babies growing and learning every day. How does this happen? Attention, caring, our confidence and belief that the child is capable of doing many things....do we see these play a role?

According to J. Holt in his classic *How Children Fail* (1965), and as evident from the student statements above, they fail because **they are afraid, bored, and confused**. Afraid of displeasing or disappointing parents & teachers; bored because the curriculum and pedagogy in class is so dull, irrelevant and monotonous; confused because it may often be beyond their level of comprehension, there is an overload of information which their brain cannot process fast enough, or information that contradicts what they may have learned previously!

What is going on in the classroom? Why are children performing poorly? It is important for both, the schools as well as the parents to first understand the underlying reasons for poor school performance, before rushing in to remediate it. **Poor school performance (PSP)** can be understood as school achievement that is below the expected for a given age, cognitive skills and school grade. It is thus, also termed as scholastic underachievement.

It would be beneficial to view PSP as a symptom which may be related to many etiologies. For children with PSP, it is essential to investigate the underlying causes, current levels of functioning and consequently outline the best treatment for each individual. A review of relevant research will show that causes are varied; however, these can be loosely grouped as being extrinsic (environmental) or intrinsic (individualized).

At this point, it is also important to distinguish between Learning difficulty in school and Learning Disability (LD). The difficulty in Learning is usually seen to be related to curriculum, pedagogical and/or sociocultural issues. There is no organic impairment. It is extrinsic to the individual. On the other hand, LD is related to problems of neurobiological development and functions involved in learning (such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia). In addition to LD, Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Global Developmental Delays, other neuro-psychiatric & medical disorders are also conditions which are strongly related to poor school performance. All these conditions have a neurobiological basis, i.e., they are intrinsic (and specific) to the individual. Extrinsic & Intrinsic factors, each have their own treatment approach. The extrinsic factors of Pedagogy and Curriculum management has huge implications for the learning (difficulties) in the classroom and should be our focus. As a community, educators should be working on *alleviating rather than elevating* the difficulties that students face in the classroom. Also, this is more possible to manage than complex socio-cultural factors like SES, home environment (which would include nutrition, linguistics, emotional climate) etc. Intrinsic factors mentioned above have to be referred to and managed by specialists.

Finally, let's ask ourselves- how many of us liked to go to school (PSP is seen to be strongly related to the concept of Motivation)? Of those who did, how many liked to do so because we were excited about the curriculum to be taught? What would we have wanted to experience in class which would keep us interested and learning? Could some of these make a 'happy' classroom....

- Realistic academic goals
- Learning in groups (promoting self-learning & social skills)
- Alternate ways of responding (no one right answer/rote learning)
- Occasional Individualized attention (when required)
- Public praise
- Respectful correction of behaviour



All of the above should go a long way in managing the many fallouts of PSP, as well as ensure realistic academic performance. But, above all it will grow the self-esteem of every individual. What more could one ask for!!

## The Entwining Arms of Technology



*Prochi Turel, Preprimary Teacher, J.B. Vachha High School*

The ever changing technological landscape is one of the greatest challenges modern parents face. We are living in the “Age of Gizmos” where we all are addicted to our artificially intelligent gizmos like – Mobiles, Tablets, Laptops, Desktops etc.

With the arrival of “Super moms and dads” where both the parents are working and the child is left at the mercy of servants, nothing better to do than to sit in front of the TV or the latest smart phone. Children have virtually isolated themselves from the “real” world and are constantly in the make belief world of different games and apps. The mobiles have become the modern day “pacifier” for the growing youth of today. Right from the time the child understands the world around it the first thing it sees is the mobile, thus even before it learns to walk/talk it knows how to operate the mobile. The proud parents feel their child is a “genius” when it is able to open the phone lock on its own and randomly turns on the apps.

Today’s parents are constantly on the lookout for schools and nurseries where a lot of play and fun is involved, but the smartboard is a must as they feel ‘play’ is not as important as the smartboard – where the child will learn a lot about the world around it.

Why are we depriving our children from the emotional cocoon of their parents love, care and affection and throwing them into the entwining arms of technology? Why are we becoming so insensitive towards their emotional needs? Why are we encouraging their greed and hunger for more materialistic pleasures? Reminds me of an episode where the teacher while correcting essays on “Who I want to be”, child wrote that I want to be a mobile phone because at least then his parents would look at him and take care of him.

Technology has brought strangers close, but relations have disintegrated into nothing. Our children learn a lot from technology, it takes them into a whole new unimaginable world where little is left for them to imagine.

Every other day kids come home from school talking about the next new thing in technology. It is upon us adults and parents to consider technology and its usage in our day to day life and ask ourselves a few questions before we introduce a new gadget into our ever-changing life. Each parent needs to ask themselves the following questions:

Is it age appropriate for the child?

- What will the child learn/understand from it?
- Can the child handle the device emotionally and mentally?
- Has the child’s behaviour, personality or mood changed in any way?
- Has the child lost interest in other activities or relationships since the device was given?

Parents, in spite of their busy schedule should have at least one meal a day with their family and children. Even if the phone is given to the child the time limit has to be set and followed. After that the parents could ask the child what they learnt/understood from the game they played or just surfed. Wait for their response and listen.

Be an example! Parents influence their children more than anything else.



## POSITIVE DISCIPLINE VERSUS PUNISHMENT



*Lakshmi Shivakumar*

*Faculty, SIES institute of Comprehensive Education*

Positive discipline does not include punishment. Punishment is making children pay for what they have done. Positive discipline helps children compliment each other. Children can choose what to do and find solutions to problems.

If a child comes about 15 minutes late to class ask him/her to come up with a solution to the problem. This could be a circle time activity to brainstorm how to make up for the lost time. The child could be made to stay late for 15 minutes, or help another child during break time.

How often do we say, "You are bad, you hit your friend." No child is bad. It was just the action that was bad. Make the child aware that you like him but do not approve of his action. Create closeness and trust instead of distance and hostility.

Let us analyze, which of these statements would have more of an impact on a child:

- a) No silly, you just don't know how to do it.
- b) Let me show you how to do it.

In the first statement the child is completely wrong and has no scope to justify. However, the second statement is positive and gives the child an opportunity to attempt to build on his shortcomings.

Imagine a scene in the Disney film Jungle Book, where Baloo, the Jungle bear, wants to teach Mowgli a lesson. Baloo, trying to show Mowgli basic jungle survival techniques, twirls Mowgli around and throws him flying in the air, causing him to land on a log. Bagheera, the Panther, observing the lesson asks the bear: "After you knock your students senseless, how do you expect him to learn the lesson?"

The words we use with our children can build their confidence or shatter their self esteem. Saying "no", and adding "You silly" "you don't know", isn't helpful. We need to be aware of the messages we convey and the language we use.

"Most adults are used to thinking that firmness means punishment, lectures, or some other form of control.  
**Not so!**  
Firmness, when combined with kindness, means respect for the child, for you, and for the situation."  
~Dr. Jane Nelsen.



Say "No" only in the event of a life threatening situation because saying "No" to a child has a demoralizing effect and lowers the child's self esteem. Adopt positive ways to reinforce discipline in a child.

Conventional strategies in disciplining a child emphasize on what should not be done. If a child is found talking in class he/she is given a time-out and told to sit out of the class thus missing the lecture. It would only create 'fear' or 'anger'. Positive discipline focuses on teaching children what to do, when they feel restless. Here the child needs to find out strategies to calm down and is even allowed to take a break or move out and get back.

Positive discipline enhances a child's self-esteem. Self esteem is the way children think, see and feel about themselves. Developing positive self esteem is the key to raising individuals who can adapt better.

"The language we use has its roots in our ways of thinking and being". Education is the most powerful tool we can use to change the world. We can teach the language of love, and make it part of our thinking and being when handling children.

"A child needs encouragement like a plant needs water. Serve them unconditionally and be excellent role models".

## EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION – EXTENSIVITY AND SIGNIFICANCE



*Ms. Rashmi Pradhan*

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The term ‘Early Childhood Care and Education’ did not provoke any significant thoughts until a few years back when I enrolled myself for a Post Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education with SIES-Institute of Comprehensive Education.

Today, the same term means so much more to me. It inspires to explore the subject beyond its boundaries. It means the study of a child’s physical, cognitive, emotional, social and linguistic development in the child. It involves early as well as recent researches in human development in general and child psychology in particular. It is also the active and passive involvement of parents and of surrounding adults that influences the holistic development of the child. The term involves the vision of different philosophers who have contributed and enriched through their philosophies, the lives of little ones. It is also the involvement of Government and its policies, the agencies and NGO’s which work for the betterment of children. The term also brings to mind the global scenario in the field of early childhood and the importance, significance and recognition and respect for child’s rights.

These are a few facets of the multidimensional term ‘*Early Childhood Care and Education*’ (ECCE) and yet sadly, the only facet that comes to foreground or is focused on are the preschools and their respective curriculums. For it is believed that a child starts his education once he starts going to a playgroup or a kindergarten. Yes, the structured education begins then, but the child starts acquiring skills as early as from the time it is in the mother’s womb. It is therefore of utmost importance that the environment in which the child comes into existence and attains his natural growth is conducive for his holistic development.

It is easy for an early childhood educator to understand and therefore accept the importance of the early years in shaping the child into an adult and the early experiences into the child’s future personality. However, very few apart from early childhood professionals, spare few moments to understand the child. The enriched experiences and structured inputs help develop better connections between the neurons in the brain to enable memory, processing and cognition. These inputs develop physical, cognitive and linguistic skills which are the real foundations for lifelong learning. Early childhood education importantly focuses on the emotional well-being of the child. The kind of emotional experiences the child has in his early years will determine the kind of individual he or she develops into as an adult. It focuses on, intrinsically motivating the child, to instil in him the respect for fellow human beings, and to develop good moral values.

To develop these skills and qualities in the child, we must think from his/her perspective, respect their feelings, give the child choices, and develop conflict resolution skills. Children will thus need our time, patience and understanding and to achieve this. Thinking from child’s perspective, respecting their feelings, is often misunderstood as over pampering and is generally put as – ‘spare the rod, spoil the child’. This is a misconception about Early Childhood Education and thus, it finds very less recognition and significance, especially in countries where authoritative parenting persists.

However an important fact that we overlook here are a few life skills such as perspective thinking, respect for others, decision making and the skill to harmoniously co-exist in a society.

All these are life skills are very essential for an individual to lead a peaceful life especially in today's changing global scenario. Another aspect that equally, if not more, needs to be focussed on is the care to be taken during early childhood years. With the diminishing rate of joint families resulting in lack of experienced elderly support, it is increasingly necessary that this void is filled in by the people who are equipped with the knowledge of Early Childhood Care and Education. The rural population as we know is struggling to satisfy basic needs. Care during early childhood thus becomes a low priority for them. Various reasons like poverty, ignorance regarding child rearing practices, lack of basic health amenities, gender discrimination are amongst the few factors that contribute to the low level of health and care in the early years of a child.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) plays a central role in ECCE activities in India. Through its various initiatives like the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) through ECCE centres called 'Anganwadis', and other programmes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, provide support in the areas of health, nutrition, and education to children in rural areas, minority groups, slums, and underdeveloped areas. The contribution of Non-Governmental organisations to ECCE programmes is significant. Approximately over 20 million children are benefited under different programmes run by various NGOs across the states in India.

The number of private educational institutions offering early childhood education is also on the rise. Though majority of the institutions focus on basic preschool education, only a few have adopted curriculum and research based philosophies that target holistic development of the child. However the role and scope of an Early Childhood Care and Education Centre should not be limited to teaching the preschool curriculum but should be extended to cover all the aspects that influence the child's development. It is essential that all the people involved are conscientious about its vision, goals and objectives. Institutions with expertise in the field can extend it to not only to train the professionals in the field but also educate the other stake holders such as parents and caregivers.

The children are our future and to shape a bright future, nourishing it to gain a strong foundation is very essential. ECCE sets the foundations for one's learning and development and it should be viewed as an investment into building competent citizens for a progressing nation. ECCE acts a catalyst to make a difference in shaping a child, a society, a nation and in turn, the entire world. Hence it is paramount that effective measures should be adopted to strengthen the Early Childhood Education by defining a policy framework so that the individual scattered efforts of the ECCE centres combine under the purview of specified norms to become a unified force to raise the quality and standard of Early Childhood Care and Education in India.



## APPLYING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES THEORY IN A PRIMARY CLASS



*Rebecca E Joshua*  
*Second year Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education*

*“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all”* said Aristotle.

Aristotle & Howard Gardner may have used different words, but both stressed on the significance of learning over education; an understanding of the power of the mind to learn beyond and above the familiar three general categories of visual, auditory & kinesthetic learning. Amongst the many theories & approaches developed towards human potential is the theory of multiple intelligence, developed by Howard Gardner, PhD, Professor of Education at Harvard University.

Gardner’s multiple intelligence theory can be used for curriculum development, planning instruction, selection of course activities, and related assessment strategies. Instruction which is designed to help students develop their strengths can also trigger their confidence to develop areas in which they are not as strong. Students’ multiple learning preferences can be addressed when instruction includes a range of meaningful and appropriate methods, activities, and assessments.

Gardner himself asserts that educators should not follow one specific theory or educational innovation when designing instruction but instead employ customized goals and values appropriate to their teaching and student needs. Instructors should personalize their instruction and methods of assessment. Understanding the value & expanse of Gardner’s theory & its value for the children, I conducted a 10 days project on the Living World (Plants & Animals) with students of the first grade at Don Bosco International School, Dadar under the guidance of Dr. Vidhya Satish.

The project began with the explanation on how plants and trees are nourishing resources. We moved on to discussing, conservation of trees, herbivores, carnivores, omnivores, mammals, reptiles, amphibians & the food chain over the rest of the 10 days. During these interactions, we explored several methods like explanation, observation & even dance, targeting to enhance & stimulate the 9 intelligence types: Logical, intrapersonal, interpersonal, linguistic, visual spatial, naturalistic, musical, and bodily kinesthetic

### **The teaching aids included:**

- Plant chart
- Black board
- PPT
- Video
- Pictures
- Paper cups
- Real turtle

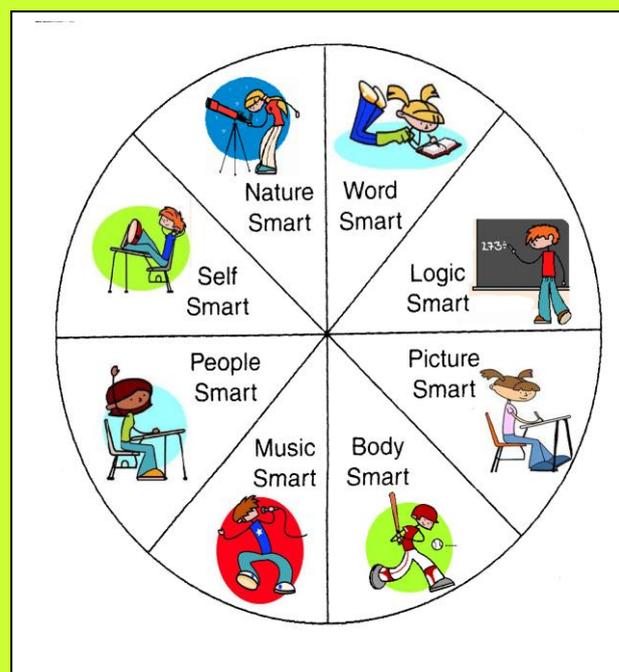
The activities ranged from discussions on how important trees are and what the world would be without them to observing a real turtle, touching, feeling, labeling its body parts and giving it a new name altogether. The kids also remained engaged & entertained with finding the odd one out, solving crossword puzzles, Venn diagram, quiz, filling in the blanks and making their own food chain with paper plates.

On the first day, I gave them a group activity on assessing the importance of trees to man. I made a cut out of a tree, and, gave a leaf shaped paper to each group to write the importance of the trees and display it on the branches. After a detailed discussion in their group, they came up with a whole range of benefits like, “Helps us breathe”, “Gives us oxygen” etc. While the discussion stimulated their interpersonal skills, this thought provoking activity, also enhanced their intrapersonal skills. Their linguistic skills were also put to test by asking them to pen down the advantages of trees. In order to help them explore their visual/spatial skills I conducted activities like solving a Venn diagram, puzzles & crossword. While learning about reptiles, I even got a live turtle to the class to make their experience extremely authentic and enriching. This also proved helpful in enhancing their naturalistic skills.

One of the group activities which the kids enjoyed the most was making their own food chain with help of paper cups. Having explained to them what a food chain is, I handed over paper cups with every link of the food chain for them to arrange it in the order I explained. Applying their logical skills, the kids did a wonderful job in accomplishing the task. While elaborating on the mammals, reptiles & amphibians, on the final day of the project, I conducted a texture oriented art activity in which different groups were given sand, felt paper & a smooth paper. They were asked to match these textures to skin types of animals like iguana, whale & frog.

This entire exercise was an enriching learning experience not only for the children but also for me. The children became more sensitive to nature and they learnt the significance of conservation. They also realised how each living creature is dependent on the other.

I concluded this 10-day project with the hope that I had opened up newer avenues of learning for children and done justice to Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences. As an instructor, I can vouch for the utility of his theory. I hope to continue exploring newer techniques to keep enriching the minds of my students.



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