



PARENTS CONNECT @ ADPS ISSUE 5 2024

Dear Parents,

Greetings to one and all.

This issue of Let's Connect aims to start the year with gratitude and optimism. As parents both juggling the responsibilities of raising your children and instilling the proper values can be a mammoth task. Being equipped with the necessary skills is imperative as it is an entirely different world today as compared to a few years ago and societal expectations are fast evolving. Hence raising children to be resilient, empathetic and compassionate is imperative as they navigate a rapidly changing world.

Merely asking a simple question each day; 'How has your day been?' A hug goes a long way and looking out for visible signs of anxiety is a good way to establish a positive relationship with your child. I am sure as parents you are doing the best for your child by taking a passionately keen interest in your child and always believing in the intrinsic worth of your child.



As parents, you have an immense role in helping your child understand that their individual actions will impact their social responsibility.

Make every minute count as you spend invaluable time with your child. Read to them, talk to them, and most importantly listen to them. Make it a point to know your child's strengths and how your child is handling his or her emotional aspects. As parents you have an immense role in helping your child understand that their individual actions will impact their social responsibility.

Whatever the far future holds, there are plenty of reasons to be positive about 2024 and beyond.

We warmly wish everyone a wonderful and gratifying start to 2024.

Warm Regards

Counselling Team

Admiralty Primary School



Helping Your Child To Work Towards Excellence

Do your children seem contented just coasting through life? Do they do just enough to get by, while never making the most of their potential? As a parent, do you try to help your children see the importance of doing their best and yet they don't take your words to heart?

If you have answered 'Yes' to most of these questions, then this issue is an important read for you. In this issue, you will get tips to navigate and guide your children to work towards excellence. It will help you change your children's attitude of 'being laid-back is cool'. All of us: parents, teachers, and school leaders, wish our children to work towards excellence and success instead of mediocre performance. It is about tapping on their potential, their best ability. This of course varies from person to person so there is no room for comparison. It has to do with doing their best and celebrating their successes. What is needed to achieve this success then is a paradigm shift in the mindset of the children (and perhaps us too).

Just to reiterate, when we say "excellence", we are not referring to getting straight As or racking up accomplishments. However, it's perfectly fine if your children are motivated to working towards these kinds of achievements. But the pursuit of excellence is much more than that.

It's about:

- becoming the best that you can be.
- cultivating a deep love for learning.
- continually learning and growing.
- making a difference in the lives of others.
- maximising your talents and abilities.

The difference between Excellence and Perfection:

1. Excellence prioritises continuous improvement, whereas Perfection seeks an unattainable, flawless state.
2. Focusing on Excellence fosters a growth mindset while striving for Perfection can lead to stress and anxiety.
3. Excellence allows for flexibility and adaptability, while Perfection demands rigidity and inflexibility.
4. In Excellence, a task is completed in the best possible way, while in Perfection, there is only one right way or an absolute way that the task is meant to be completed.
5. While Excellence is solution-focused, with opportunities to think out of the box, Perfection is problem-focused, narrow, and limiting.

Achieving excellence in work, studies, and skills highlight an individual's talents and skills. It is a factor that qualifies the capabilities of an individual, and thus it is something that can be used to distinguish the individual from the crowd.

Perfection, however, is something that is inconceivable to a person. Being perfect is an abstract thought and not a reality. Thus, it is more of a concept than something that qualifies the effort or skills of a person in doing something.

One of the most important tasks as a parent is to teach your children skills that will help them excel in life. Parents play an integral part in determining if their children will succeed—not only in school, but in life as well with regards to their future careers and relationships. Knowledge with action is the key to bringing about this positive change in your children. Below are tips for you to choose from to work with your children to achieve this Excellence towards their success.

1. Teach Your Children to Become Quality Producers

Quality involves taking a competency or skill and improving on it. Teach your children the importance of doing above what is expected. For example, when taking out the kitchen garbage, encourage him/her to empty all the trash cans in house. When they rise to the occasion and give that extra effort, reward them.

2. Teach Your Children to Become Independent Learners

Teach your children how to be self-directed and to think for themselves. Encourage them to set goals and monitor their own progress. Although difficult, allow your children to fail. Let them face the consequences of half-hearted effort or procrastination. The younger they learn this lesson, the better. The consequences get more intense as they get older.

3. Teach Your Children to Become Creative Thinkers

According to Caruana, “Creativity is the power of the imagination.” Creative thinkers are able to define and solve a problem by evaluating choices and considering possible outcomes. Teach your children how to creatively solve problems by having them:

- define the problem
- evaluate the possible solutions
- develop a plan of action
- adjust the plan when necessary

4. Teach Your Children to Become Critical Thinkers

Discernment and reasoning play a large part in critical thinking. Encourage your children to apply the scientific method to daily problems. For example, in determining the best way to walk to school, your children would first state the question, form a hypothesis (i.e. Woodlands Ave 6 to Woodlands Circle is best), test it through experimentation (timing how long that route takes), and then draw conclusions.

5. Teach Your Children to Become Information Managers

Children need to know how to find, evaluate, store, and use information. There is as much bad information out there as there is good. Our kids need the necessary skills to sift through and retain the correct information.

6. Teach Your Children to Become Cooperative Learners

Cooperative learners participate in group learning experiences and are helpful to fellow students. They can negotiate with a balance of assertiveness, consideration, and flexibility. And they show patience and empathy with those who do not learn as quickly as they do. Essentially, these students get along well with their fellow classmates. In your home, be sure to instill this important lesson by teaching and modeling respect for others.

7. Teach Your Children to Become Effective Communicators

Make sure your children understand the concept of tone and that the way something is said can be just as important as what is said. A good communicator also focuses on respectful listening. Caruana suggests teaching your children how to sit still and listen by having them listen to books on tape. Start at 5 minutes a day and gradually work up to 30 minutes per sitting. Although Active Listening is practised in school, it is important to encourage it at home as well.

8. Teach Your Children to Become Confident Leaders

Confident leaders know how to listen to the opinions of others, are comfortable in their leadership style, and have a defined vision. Be sure to model good leadership in your home and to always treat others with respect. Give them opportunities to showcase their leadership abilities at home as well, i.e., get them to place the family's order for a meal at the food court or restaurant.

9. Teach Your Children to Become Efficient Time Managers

Help your children create a timeline with goals for completing tasks on time instead of waiting until the last minute. Teach your children the value of being prompt and set consequences if they run late for school. Use your children's chores to teach them about deadlines. Make sure your children are also effectively using their free time by engaging in a variety of activities i.e., reading or playing outdoors instead of just sitting in front of the television or computer.

10. Teach Your Children to Become Self-Assessors

Self-assessment skills will help your children know and improve on their weaknesses and build their strengths. They may find journaling helpful in identifying areas in which they struggle. Have occasional parent/child conferences during the school year to check on their progress and to help your children identify areas needing improvement.

<https://sg.news.yahoo.com/blogs/singaporeshcene/15-ways-to-inspire-your-children-to-pursue-101022388.html>

<https://www.allprodad.com/10-tips-for-teaching-excellence-to-your-kids/>

SAMPLE SCENARIO

James, a Primary 5 student, was full of energy, eager to please, polite, attentive and diligent. He described a take-home project he was assigned the week before to his mother. As he detailed the elements of the project, the strain spread across his face. When she asked how much he'd done already, he burst into tears. Despite having completed about 75% of the tasks, he was simultaneously stressed about his belief that what he'd done wasn't good enough, and that there wasn't enough time to finish the remaining 25%.

One of James' work patterns was that he would begin an assignment, panic partway through about not having enough time, and end up wasting even more time in that panic zone. Thus, his fear of not having time was self-fulfilled as he squandered a lot of his afternoons stressing out. Knowing this pattern, his mother gave James 10 minutes of "Time Check", during which he focused entirely on listing the specific aspects of this assignment he was stressed about. When the timer went off, "Time Check" would be over, and work would begin.

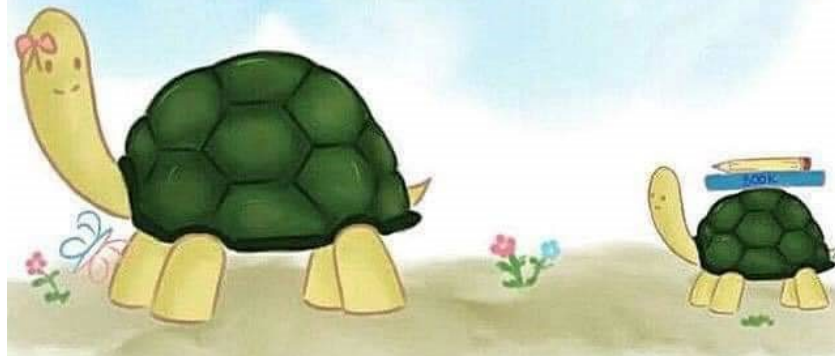
Once they had the list of fears, his mother told James it was time to investigate each one. By shifting their attention towards an investigation, James' tears halted, and he became intensely curious about what evidence they might uncover. They started with his biggest fear: that what he had wasn't good enough. Looking through the project criteria and rubric, they discovered that James had completed at least 90% of the work and the work he had done so far scored quite well, based on self-evaluation. Once that fear was crossed out, James was able to confidently work through the other fears and his self-assessment showed that he had a good start to the project. With his newfound confidence and knowledge to evaluate his work based on actual standards of the assignment rather than his own standards of perfectionism, he was able to continue and complete the task.

James learnt to use "Time Check" effectively because of his mother's support. Her guidance gave him the confidence to work through the fears and look for solutions to the challenge of needless worry. Sometimes, "Time Check" was followed by guided meditation or breathing exercises when James needed an extra boost of emotional regulation.

These new management habits did not completely stop James from ever doubting the quality of his work, or himself. Rather, **these tools and strategies armed James with options for coping with perfectionism, a move from perfectionism to a healthy pursuit of excellence.**

It shouldn't matter how slowly
a CHILD learns
as long as we are encouraging them
not to stop

Robert John Meehan



Reframing Negative Thoughts

INSTEAD OF SAYING...

- ✗ IT'S TOO HARD.
- ✗ I GIVE UP.
- ✗ THEY'RE BETTER AT THIS THAN I AM.
- ✗ I'M NOT GOOD AT THIS.
- ✗ I CAN'T DO THIS.
- ✗ I'M SCARED TO MAKE A MISTAKE.

TRY SAYING...

- ✓ THIS WILL GET EASIER WITH TIME & PRACTICE.
- ✓ I'LL TRY TO DO THIS A DIFFERENT WAY.
- ✓ HOW CAN I LEARN FROM THEM?
- ✓ HOW CAN I LEARN TO GET BETTER AT THIS?
- ✓ I'M LEARNING & I WILL KEEP TRYING UNTIL I CAN.
- ✓ MISTAKES ARE PROOF THAT I'M TRYING.