

A New wave in Education **EdCLAN**

Empowering Educators, Nurturing Young Minds

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Conflict Resolution

a journey in developing problem solving skills

**Making Pre-School Classrooms
Emotionally Safe Place of Learning**

**Developing
Fine and Gross Motor Skills
in little children**

**Importance of
Storytelling in
ECE**

**Raising a Total Child:
Right from the Foundation**

Importance of **PLAY THERAPY**
and **CIRCLE** of **WELLBEING** in ECE





An Initiative of DN Acharya Foundation for Children and Women Welfare

The Early Childhood Development Forum (**ECDF**) launched in 2019, is an initiative of the DN Acharya **FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN WELFARE (DNAF)-2014**. **ECDF** endeavours to work towards empowering children from all cross sections of the society and create a bonhomous environment for children in their early childhood years, so that they grow up to be sensible, happy and confident individuals. Early Child Development Forum family believes that it can be done only, if all the stakeholders work in a synchronised way towards this goal.

VISION

To bring all Preschools, NGO's, Children Activity Centres, Parents, Educators, Balwadi's, Anganwadi's, Corporate entities, Media Houses, Companies dealing in Children Products and anyone related to children in their early years of growing, to come together to Brainstorm, Advocate, Interact, Exchange Ideas and to bring about a coherent change in the domain of Early Childhood Care and Education. It is a platform where we ideate, initiate, innovate and implement the best practices in ECCE. The Forum essentially endeavours to assist children from the economically challenging sections of the society, both from the urban and rural areas, in attaining quality early childhood education and care.

MISSION

To empower **EDUCATORS, PARENTS, CHILDREN and OTHER STAKE HOLDERS** by sensitising them and then facilitating them with training programs, awareness campaigns, leadership programs, Workshops, seminars and webinars and community activities that would enable them to become positive contributors in the domain of Early Childhood Care and Education. We work towards capacity building of individuals, organizations and communities in delivering early childhood development and care programs.

GOAL

Early childhood education can be defined as "...warm, nurturing care and enriched learning experiences designed to simulate a child's development in all key developmental areas."

Early Childhood Development interventions include sensitising, educating and supporting parents, delivering services to children, developing capacities of caregivers, teachers and children, using mass communications to enhance parents and caregivers knowledge, practices and by counselling the stakeholders. Our programs for children are center or home-based, formal or non-formal, and also include parents' education.

MEMBERSHIP

Any Preschool, NGO working in the domain of early years, Children Activity Centres, Parents, Educators, Corporate entities, Media Houses, Companies dealing in Children Products and anyone related to children in their early years of growing can be a member of the forum. For further details contact us at ecdinfo2019@gmail.com or visit www.ecdforum.org



DN ACHARYA FOUNDATION
FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN WELFARE

EdCLAN

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ED CLANNING

Dear Readers

Welcome to the 3 rd Volume Issue 1 of the Ed CLAN Journal. We are glad to come up with this new volume and I thank each valuable contributor for their contribution towards this issue.

As the world emerged from the deadly grip of the Corona episode that had vastly affected children's education besides hitting all other areas of human life for almost two valuable years, another major crisis has struck once again and this time it is the war between Russia and Ukraine. There has been an unprecedented loss both to human life and resources since this tragic outbreak. This has indeed been shocking and these are times when world leaders need negotiation and conflict resolution skills more than anything else.

Children need to be introduced to these skills right from the early years so that they grow up to become more responsible citizens and future world leaders.

Children also need to be introduced to the SDGs right from the start so that they develop a keen sense of justice and love of nature. It is important that children recognize the importance and uphold these 17 SDGs that would enable one to shape a more equitable, sustainable, empathetic world in the true sense of the term.

Each parent and educator should work towards raising a total child by giving them the most positive experience in these most crucial years of their life.

This issue of Ed CLAN covers some very important aspects related to the holistic development of children. I am sure this is going to be an interesting read for all our readers.

With the hope that the world becomes a healthier and more peaceful place to live, I sign up. Wishing you all a blessed year ahead.

Adieu until next time....

Dr. Vasavi Acharya

Editor

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EXPERTS SPEAK ➤➤➤



CATHY TURALINSKI

Cathy Turalinski is the founder and CEO of Child Care Solutions Inc. An Early childhood Specialist as a Consultant with a BA in Early Childhood Education and Certificate in Adult Education and Governance, she has over 35 years of experience in early childhood education as an educator for children infants- school age, a family support consultant in high-risk neighborhoods in Toronto, a Community College Instructor with George Brown College, Sheridan, Humber and Seneca in both the ECE and ECA programs, home daycare called Kids Deserve the Best for 12 years, parent educator, ECE, and Supervisor recruiter, speaker and creator and presenter of virtual professional development interactive workshops for both parents and Early Childhood Educators and Professionals. She has dedicated her whole career to the Early Childhood Field as her passion is children and families. She believes change happens through awareness and knowledge and will bring amazing outcomes in all aspects of a child's development.

Cathy believes by supporting staff and Child Care Centers in their educational journey in becoming the best educator they can be, children and families will benefit as a result.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A JOURNEY IN DEVELOPING PROBLEM- SOLVING SKILLS

Most educators and parents want the best for their children. We want them to learn to be accountable for their behavior, to think for themselves, to be problem solvers in life.

We know by developing these skills and learning, children will become adults who are well equipped to deal with whatever life throws at them in terms of challenges and problems.

So how do we help them reach this outcome?

As an educator, parent, and lifelong learner in this field of early childhood education, I have discovered amazing learning outcomes from children as young as 3 years old who show readiness to learn how to be accountable for their behavior, think for themselves, and solve conflicts with minimal intervention.

What is the Secret Formula?

Self-regulation skills + questions you ask children + 6 steps of conflict resolution= children become thinkers, problem solvers, manage emotions and are able to resolve conflicts productively

All these three categories lead me to my AHA moments as an early childhood educator and

parent. Let's break down each area to illustrate how each works in tandem to create the outcome we are looking for.

To help children in developing problem-solving skills, we need to first understand that they cannot solve problems if they are dysregulated. Their brain needs to be in a calm state to solve issues they face. Most problems often result in an emotional response such as anger, frustration, or stress. We need to deal with emotions first before addressing the problem-solving piece. This is the first step in the 6 steps of conflict resolution.

What does this look like in a typical conflict situation between two preschool-age children fighting over a toy?

1. **Approach Calmly:** (*A dysregulated adult cannot regulate a dysregulated child- the adult needs to take deep breathes and calm their own emotions before they can help children in learning problem solving skills*)
2. **Address emotions:** (this is the regulation part- helping children by acknowledging their feelings- "I see two angry faces. We need to release our angry feelings before we can solve this problem. Depending on how intense the emotions are, you may need to redirect anger if they are hitting to get the toy or hitting as a reaction to having another child grab their toy.

As an educator, I would bring the child who is acting on their anger through hitting to another part of the room and have them show me how angry they were by having them hit a pillow or release the anger by punching playdough or coloring on a large sheet of paper to show how angry they are.

Teacher language to use: "It is ok to be angry, it is not okay to hit or punch to release that anger."

Action: Redirect to how they can release those

feelings without hurting themselves or other children or adults.

3. **State the Problem:** “I see Billy wants that toy and Johnny wants the same toy. That is called a problem. How are both of you going to fix or solve this problem?”

This question allows the children to think for themselves, to do their own problem-solving.

4. **Allow children time to think and come up with a solution.**
5. **If they cannot think of a solution, give them 3 choices to choose from.**

Teacher language to use: “Would it work if Billy has a turn with the toy and when I clap my hands, it will be Johnny’s turn? OR would it work if you both play with the toy together (depending on the toy) and model what that might look like? OR would it work if Billy plays with the toy and Johnny finds another toy or activity to do with the teacher’s help until Billy is finished with the toy?”

6. **Let children decide which solution works best for both:** (that is the resolution piece) facilitate them in carrying out the solution.

As an educator in a classroom with 2.5-6 years old children, I practiced these steps in every conflict situation with amazing outcomes. Children were starting to solve their own problems by the end of the year by following through using these steps.

This is just one example where educators can support children in thinking for themselves and solving their own conflicts

What about supporting children in becoming accountable for their behavior?

In the situation where a child dumps toys and walks away or plays with toys spread out everywhere and

walks away, use the 6 steps for accountability.

1. **Address emotions first:** If they are interfering with his/her ability to think for themselves.
2. **State the problem:** Bring the child back to the toys on the floor and use I see statements. “I see lots of toys all over the floor you played with, and you walked away without putting the toys away. That is called a problem. Toys can get broken if stepped on or other children can get hurt tripping on the toys.

How are you going to fix this?

3. **Allow the child to think for themselves:** If the child is resistant or does not know what to do, give him 3 choices. Deal with emotions if they are interfering with his/her ability to think for themselves.

“Would it work if I made it into a race and counted to see how fast you can pick up the toys? Or “Would it work if I picked up the trucks and you picked up all the cars if that was what was dumped? Or do you have a friend you can ask to help you?”

4. **The expectation is they would need to choose one of the solutions or have their own solution but need to follow through and toys picked up before playing somewhere else.**
5. **Child chooses a solution** and educator facilitates the child in following through in fixing the problem. Now he/she is accountable for the problem, not the educator.
6. **When the educator fixes children’s problems, they are validating that children need not be accountable for their problems. They then rely on an adult to rescue him/her from problems they create themselves.**

Resource: High Scope Curriculum-6 steps of conflict resolution



LINDA ROSE

Linda Rose is the Chairwoman of SUNFO Global Federation – International Children’s Wing, based in Sri Lanka. With 30 years of experience, 15 years internationally in many countries as a Youth and Community Worker, with particular focus in Sri Lanka, Linda developed her “Love and Laughter” creative healing workshops for traumatised communities, and in 2017 was the recipient of the Award of Excellence from the World Peace and Diplomacy Organisation, for “Excellence in the Field of Social Work and Youth Development”.

She has a Master’s degree in Community Education, and 30 years experience as a youth and community worker and creative healing practitioner for statutory and third sector services in many countries; the UK, Soviet Poland, USA, India, and Palestine but mainly focussing on Sri Lanka over the past 15 years, where she has worked extensively in areas of great trauma – initial the tsunami recovery areas and then the war and post-war regions. Linda has worked with children in every setting from schools, refugee camps, prisons, remand homes, orphanages to street work.

HOW SDG GOALS MAYBE INCULCATED IN CHILDREN FROM THE EARLY YEARS

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals, designed by the United Nations and recognised by all nations, are the roadmap for this decade in order to secure the safe, healthy and happy future of the world for everyone. They can be summed up in four sections: Equality; Health & Wellbeing; the Environment; and the Economy.

Very young children have a keen sense of justice

and love of nature and so are the most natural supporters of the SDGs, which is why we are seeing a rise in the actions of children across the world trying to educate adults. So, the question is not: why teach these to children? But rather, why would we NOT teach these concepts to children? What better education is there for them to learn to live in a way that is sustainable and equal for nature and other people progressively throughout their lives?

Summing up the central tenets of the 17 SDGs are: caring for and about each other’s health and welfare; caring for the planet; only using the minimum of goods to help you live, made in a way that reduces pollution and future waste and gives each person working throughout the chain of production dignity,

a good wage and safe practices – including those who are disabled, child carers (usually women).

Children learn in so many ways, and subliminal messages can be the most powerful; learnt by the way people act, not what they say.

Schools usually use colourful and attractive positive messaging across the school environment, especially in wall posters, but also in assemblies, classroom activities and constant small reminders to respect and treat each other nicely, respect the environment with picking up litter and keeping their areas clean; and the classroom should try and use more sustainable resources and only use plastic as a last resort.

Children need to learn positive regard for those different to them, and you can start very early on teaching appreciation of diversity. Having books with pictures of people with disabilities simply as normal character, helps the child accept that disabilities are part of life, similar to illnesses, problems and death, which all need to be faced without fear.

Equally pictures of different religions, facial features and colours are really important. Books, dolls and toys with different cultures contribute to the idea that we are all equal and worthy. I always feel sad when in Asia seeing the constant posters and advertising only using very pale, often western, children. This contributes to a negative self-image about darker skin which parallels the caste system and propagates inequality. So please, embrace the multi-shaded reality and let's enthusiastically encourage children to value the diversity of people in the world.

To start you off practically, here are some suggestions and reminders for teaching the 17 SDGs in direct and indirect ways, remembering there are many ideas and lesson plans freely available on the internet now, especially from UNICEF's World's Largest Lesson.

- 1) Constant, clear, open messaging through **colourful pictures and posters** in the classrooms and home environment of the 17 SDGs and each in more detail. These are available in child-friendly form on the UN websites.
- 2) Create an environment where **inclusivity is natural and obvious**: different colour skin tones, and culturally dressed dolls, including those with disabilities, so that they become familiar and are comfortable with the equality and diversity of all around them.
- 3) **Use natural products** and avoid plastic wherever possible in learning and play materials. Plastic is very tempting with children because it is brightly coloured and handy to being thrown around; though cheap plastic can break easily and cause choking hazards. We must return back to previous eras where natural products were used more widely.
- 4) Promote a clear understanding and **love of nature**, taking children outside into nature as much as possible, and enabling them to draw from real life. They need to learn the complexity of ecosystems and how we rely on each other for sustainability, using many different examples from ants to elephants.
- 5) Teach children their **RIGHTS** and

their RESPONSIBILITIES. Rights and responsibilities are Yin and Yang – you cannot have one without the other. The imbalance in the world is due to those who are loudest, strongest and richest overriding the needs of others.

- 6) **Make Kindness Awards:** We need a more compassionate world where children enjoy supporting each other and are rewarded for this in positive actions.
- 7) **Gratitude:** Begin each day with ten positive things we are grateful for. This helps mental health; it helps soothe any resentments or any potential bitterness. Gratitude and mindfulness really help mental wellness.
- 8) **Creativity and problem-solving skills:** design, plan and build models: use rubbish creatively; encourage the children to experiment, and then evaluate their own learning. What was good? What failed? How could this be improved? Children are wonderful at creative thinking but so often we stymie their creativity with a crushing dose of negativity. But what was once impossible is now possible – and who are we to say that what they imagine now may not be possible soon. It is through creative thinking that the future will be secure. We need ‘out of the box thinking’ for sustainable solutions to pollution, food development, building materials in increasingly hot climates. Let the children’s imaginations roam without constraint and then create these in different forms so that they can learn how to make these practical possibilities. Teach that failures are important steps to learning – not mistakes.

- 9) **Learn from the past:** many cultures had highly effective methods of living sustainably in different climates, but we have homogenised the world. Now concrete rules, where once diverse and eco-friendly materials were used. Let children learn to appreciate the past, not scorn it. We have to wind the clock back to simpler times to really manage the climate emergency – let’s start while they are very young.

- 10) **Model everything through your actions and attitude:** This is the burden and responsibility of the teacher from KG to K12. Teachers often forget that children absorb everything you subconsciously demonstrate. They realise fake attitudes and internal conflicts in their teachers. You must leave the home stresses outside the school gate and fully focus on modelling the compassion, inclusivity, peace and justice that you wish the children to imbibe. A calm atmosphere is the best learning environment with love and joy to relax the children; and they will grow in appreciation of everything they have, in an atmosphere of gratitude.

The future of the world is with these little ones. Children are like wet clay, easier to mould, than us ‘old pots’ who are liable to break when we try to change old habits. But to learn the right way from earliest childhood is the World’s Hope. As teachers and parents, your contribution to make the world sustainable is to give the children a new way of thinking. **You are holding the future of the world in your hands when you teach these young children.**



SUKAINA HUSSAIN EBRAHIM

Sukaina Hussain Ebrahim has been an educationist for the past 15 years. Since she found herself oriented more towards students with learning problems, this led to her becoming a:

- Remedial and Resource Teacher
- Students' Counselor

She is also working as a Consultant and Teacher Trainer with Skill Development Program by IBA. Currently, she is running a small set-up for special needs students to cater on one to one basis. Creating awareness and training teachers is her ultimate mission.

Importance of Play Therapy and Circle of Wellbeing in ECE

It's very important to understand Child Development before you plan any activity for them.

There are five areas of development that children undergo as they grow. These steps appear in a rather predictable sequence one after the other - they are not like steps of a ladder leading to higher levels. Rather, they

are like a spiral of stages through which a child cycles endlessly as they grow and mature.

The five areas of child development are:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Linguistic
- Emotional
- Social

These can be easily remembered by the use of the rather unfortunate acronym "PILES". All the below-mentioned activities are coherent with the above-mentioned areas of child development.

Keeping all the above-mentioned factors in mind, I thought to devise something which will not only help all age groups but also work as therapy and aid in the development of a child's personal, emotional and social skills.

The activities were chosen according to research which

showed the ratio of success higher than many other. The four activities which I always found helpful for each and every age group are:

1. Play Therapy
2. Art Therapy
3. Lego as Cognitive Play
4. Social Circle for Well Being

Let's see how each one of them work:

1. **Play Therapy:**

Play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination dexterity along with their physical, cognitive and emotional strength.

Play is important for healthy brain development. It is through play that children at a very early age engage and interact with the world around them.

Benefits of Play:

- Impulse control and emotion regulation.
- Social competence and empathy.
- Understanding of life lessons and skills.
- Strengthen relationship with caretakers and peers.

Characteristics of Play Therapy:

- Active
- Adventurous and risky
- Communicative
- Enjoyable
- Involved
- Meaningful
- Sociable and interactive
- Symbolic
- Therapeutic
- Volunteer

2. **Art Therapy**

Now, imagine Art Therapy being inculcated in your

ECE environment.

Here are the different perspectives on Arts:

Educators tell us that art encourages fine motor skills, neural development and problem-solving abilities. It can be used effectively to teach other key subjects such as reading, writing, math and science.

Therapists tell us that art is valuable because it allows children to process their world, to deal with scary emotions in a safe way and equip them with critical sensory input.

Artists tell us that art is important for its own sake—as a source of beauty and expression, as well as simply for the process of creating.

Kids tell us that art is fun and an activity they enjoy.

Parents tell us that art is vital to their families because it keeps everyone engaged and happy and helps with the difficult transitions of the day.

How does it benefit children?

- Art promotes creativity
- Encourages neural connection
- Builds fine motor skills
- Scribbling is a precursor to writing
- Develops problem – solving skills
- Helps kids understand themselves and their world
- Art is connection to the immediate environment and the larger world

3. **Lego as a Cognitive Play:**

Around the world, LEGO is used as therapy not only with children but also with adults. Whether they are children with Autism, ADHD, ADD, Short Attention Span, Down Syndrome or people of old age suffering from Alzheimer's or Dementia, Lego supports them in one way or the other.

Lego is a great way to relieve stress and engage individuals in meaningful and joyful conversations. As children comment on their Lego creations, they

develop important communication skills - including the ability to explain ideas, describe their work, talk about the process and verbalize challenges that they faced along the way.

7 benefits of LEGO:

- Teamwork and communication.
- Patience and organizational skills.
- Constructive problem solving and lateral thinking.
- Adventure and experimentation.
- Fine motor skills development.
- Increases spatial awareness.
- Better focus and concentration.

Now imagine you, along with your students, enjoying and benefitting from Lego bricks. Sounds good, right? So, don't forget to assign a separate corner for your LEGO WORLD.

Last, but not the least, the current pandemic has left all of us with deteriorating mental health, anxiety, stress and uncertainty. Believe me, our children are suffering more than us. So, keeping in mind the mental wellbeing of our children, social circle for wellbeing is something what is called *the need of the day*.

Let's take a look at how it can change the entire atmosphere of your class.

4. Social Circle for Well Being:

When it comes to school, it is said to be the safest place for the development of socio-emotional skills in individuals.

Social Circle for Well Being not only helps those who are going through trauma but also helps victims of bullying, violence and abuse, who may struggle in studies or may have behavioral or anger issues. It has been proven by researchers that this works equally with not only children but also with adolescents and mature adults as well.

Some key points of Social Circle:

- Each student will have different experiences and reactions.
- Establish and maintain routines and a calm classroom.
- Provide reassurance that school is a safe place to be.
- Support social skills by including social and emotional learning in the classrooms.
- Build connectedness to school.
- Raise sympathy for others
- Patience and makes you a good listener.

How will all of this be carried out?

Lego, Art and Play Therapy can be done in groups or individually. This can be altered according to one's needs. However, Social Circle for Well Being requires a composed, comfortable and cozy environment and needs to be done in small groups for maximum results.

Here's to hoping that we are able to create our classrooms as safe havens for our students.

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USHA VENKATRAMAN

Award winning storyteller, author, classical vocalist, puppeteer and radio show host, **Usha Venkatraman** is the founder and festival director of Mumbai Storytellers Society, an initiative born out of her zeal to keep the storytelling tradition alive. Usha curated the first science storytelling festival SCIFARI in 2019 in Mumbai India.

Usha hosts Storytellers Café, a weekly radio show on Bharat FM, a Cincinnati based radio station.

Usha has performed across India and the globe.

IMPORTANCE OF STORYTELLING IN ECE

I discovered the spellbinding power of a narrative when I began telling stories.

As I travelled across India, visiting schools, colleges, universities, organizations, libraries, and festivals, I discovered the magic formula to set people on Fire!

Persuasion is the centerpiece of any activity. The most compelling, powerful way to persuade people is by

uniting an idea with strong emotion. The best way to do that is by telling a compelling story.

You remember a story better than just random facts. Children remember and retell facts through stories. In the classroom, storytelling enlivens the delivery of curriculum, accelerates and enhances curriculum learning, and engages learners. It encourages the student to think about issues, and it also delivers emotional and factual content beyond a child's vocabulary or reading ability.

It is never too early, and never too late, for storytime. **One of the enduring joys of childhood is listening to stories - being read to, and looking at the wonderful pictures in books or just settling back entranced while a storyteller weaves a magical spell of words.** The storytime magicians for youngsters can be anyone close - parents, grandparents, teachers, and older friends.

Stories tap deep into the unconscious minds of listeners, engage their emotions, and hold them in a powerful grip. A good story has the ability to make the here and now disappear.

The toddler is learning a great deal from storytime: what books look and feel like, how ideas are expressed and communicated in ways other than speech, how the sounds of reading differ from the sounds of conversation, how stories follow a logical sequence, and how they mirror your own life and help you deal with things. The Child's vocabulary is expanding, fund of information is growing, imagination is sprouting wings and powers of thought gaining strength.

As the child grows older, storytime introduces the child to a world of books.

Sitting side by side at storytime, the child discovers how writing flows across the pages, where stories begin and end, how letters make words, and how words make sentences. The child is learning to read.

One of the greatest pleasures this labour of love can give is witnessing the unlocking of your child's imagination; teaching children the mechanics of reading and sharpening your child's sensitivity to the music and fun of language.

From the comfort of your armchair, you and your child can embark on a voyage of discovery together.

Storytelling is the oldest form of Education. People around the world have told stories as a way of passing down their cultural beliefs, traditions, and history to future generations.

Why? Stories are at the core of all that makes us Human. Barbara Hardy wrote, "We dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate, and love by narratives."

Stories are the way we store information in the brain. Stories help us to organise and remember information and tie content together. Gordon Wells notes that young children find it easier to assimilate

new ideas when they are presented in the form of a story.

Thinking of teaching as storytelling, encourages us to think of the curriculum as a collection of the great stories of our culture and teachers are the tellers of our culture's tales.

Above all, stories are perhaps the best presents teachers can give their students. The six language arts - talking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and visually representing - are interrelated. Storytelling helps students make crucial connections among the language arts.

Our most memorable teachers use storytelling to bring their subjects alive. The story draws us in, makes us care about the subject and sparks the imagination. It has been used by great communicators and should be part of every teacher's repertoire. Stories tease the imagination. When we invent stories, we are playing.

Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." Yet too often this essential part of education is ignored at home and in school. Imagination helps us to solve problems, to get beyond right and wrong answers; it helps us think outside the box.

Children need to have ample opportunity to exercise their imaginations so that they can begin to see that the pictures in their minds are valid too. Storytelling is unmatched as a tool for stimulating the imagination.

The benefits of storytelling with children in the Early Years are:

1. **Development:** Storytelling is crucial in a child's development. We live our lives through narrative and the earlier we start, the better.
2. **Communication:** Storytelling opens up channels of communication and stimulates emotional, imaginative, and linguistic development. It encourages participation and develops a sense of self-esteem.
3. **Language:** Storytelling surrounds the child

with imaginative language, introduces unfamiliar words in a narrative context, introduces the narrative structure, and allows children to give voice to their own ideas in their own language.

4. **Creative Writing:** Children exposed to storytelling will unconsciously, have the rules of structure and a better grasp of the language.
5. **Reading:** Children introduced to books and stories read more easily and to a higher level.
6. **Concentration:** Storytelling develops concentration and listening skills.
7. **Imaginative and Emotional Development:** Children can experience emotions through the safety of the story and can discover worlds and situations outside their own environment.
8. **Telling their own Stories:** Children are natural storytellers. Through telling their own stories, children learn to share and listen to their peers

and to use their own language with pride.

Stories are one form of Magic. Words strung well together grow the imagination and inside us, new worlds are created. Stories make us laugh, feel anger or a wash of sudden sadness.

There are thousands of reasons to tell stories in the classroom, but really the most important reason for bringing storytelling into your classroom is JOY.

Storytelling is a teaching technique you cannot live without. Stories provide a meaningful context for teaching.

As early childhood educators, you have the chance to be a gatekeeper to that amazing world. Stories can help you provide that gateway.

Sources

- Time Life Books
- Children tell stories – Hamilton and Weiss

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**TOYIN
AWOFESO**

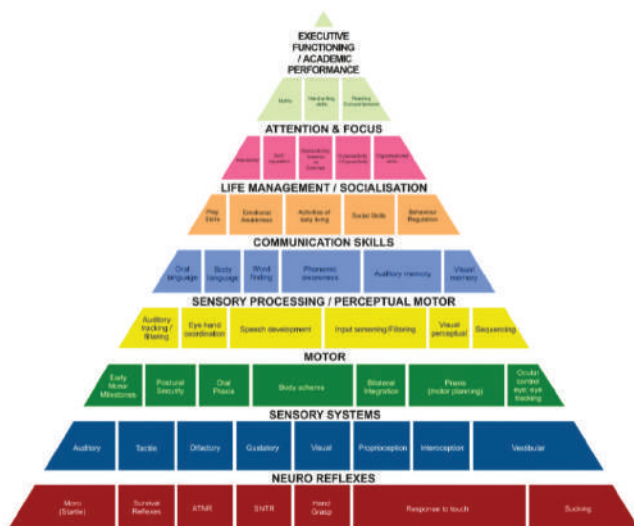
Toyin Awofeso, the Principal Consultant of McCedars Ed-Consult & Wealthunt Educational Services, is a superior education administrator with global exposure and exquisite skills in Early Years teaching and adult education. She has 18 years of experience teaching and facilitating learning for both young and old. She believes in the mantra; learning, unlearning, and relearning for the purpose of reaching self-actualization and impacting the younger generation. She oftentimes gives back to society through volunteering services to the cause of education, nationally and internationally, offering webinars and training opportunities to teachers and parents alike. She is recently going through Neural Education to further hone her skills as an Education Consultant. Toyin Awofeso, the African Head of Recruitment for Education Influence, was listed by the Excelligent Magazine as one of the top 100 Admired People in Education, 2021.

RAISING A TOTAL CHILD: RIGHT FROM THE FOUNDATION

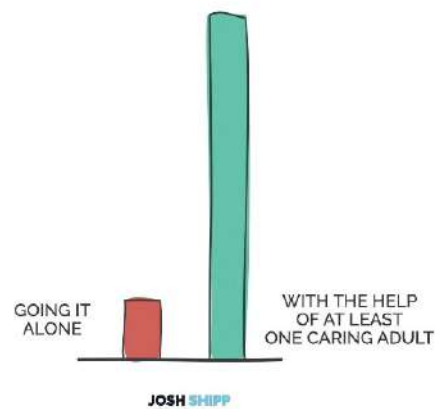
“It’s all in the beginning”, I say. Whatever we do, that we expect good results from, the foundation is paramount. Montessori says that to solve the raging problems of the world, we should look back to the foundation set. We must do everything we can to grow holistic children. The emotionally damaged child grows up to be a broken adult — and we keep wondering how we got here!

In any life endeavor, what is worth doing at all, is worth doing very well. We should not be taking chances with raising a balanced child, for the trouble for doing so awaits us soon.

Everyone in the business of child development, from the parents to the people in our school environment, must be highly intentional at promoting holistic Early Childhood Development (ECD). As stated earlier, the primary foundation for this to happen rests on the parents. It starts from acquiring basic knowledge of developmental stages and all the necessary support that the child will need to scale those stages without scars.



A KID'S POTENTIAL



Source: Josh Shipp Facebook page

The Early Years Foundation Stage outlines the learning and developmental stages for young children to guide parents and educators in their works with the children. This framework is divided into the Prime and Specific areas of development. This is to have the children well-grounded in the foundational skills and knowledge, outlined in the Prime areas, on which more complex learning will be based when they start formal education in Primary school. **The Prime areas consist of Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social, and Emotional Development.** These are the defining years when most of a child's brain develops, defining and shaping the child's personality, health, cognitive growth, and learning aptitudes. As we could see from the Learning Pyramid by Hands-On Learning Solutions, the Prime Areas are supported with the emphasis on the Neurology of Learning as the foundation for academic development. This information should form the basis for parents' and educators' interactions with every child in

their care.

From the above, we can see how vital it is that parents of young children are well-equipped with the knowledge of how to support these children when they are with them at home before formal schooling. For instance, it is very critical that they have a good understanding of how to prepare an enabling environment for the actualization of the elements of the Prime areas of development. Developmental stages, early stimulation, attachment to the primary caregiver, as well as the concept of 'Serve and Return' put forward by the Centre on the Developing Child, Harvard University are some examples that every parent should know. **If anything should go wrong at this tender age, this may cause grave damage to the child's development.** The diagram below says it all: every child needs a **'More Knowledgeable Adult'** in his/her life that will continually support them in scaling what Lev Vygotsky refers to as the 'zone of proximal development. Without such an adult, the child

will be seriously limited in his/her growth and development. Like Josh Shipp rightly said, “Every child is one caring adult away from being a success story”. (Culled from Shipp’s Facebook page).

Next to this is the child’s language development. As the saying goes, **“children learn to read on the lap of their mother”**. Personal training and years of experience from working with children have shown me that children develop large vocabulary and good communication skills from home because of the positive relationships intentionally provided by their parents.

The window of opportunity is open for children at this age to learn sporadically because they have what Maria Montessori calls **“the Absorbent Mind”**. They absorb every impression from their environment with ease. Unfortunately, most parents are not aware of all these concepts. Research has proven that a child’s brain matures faster than at any other time, and is the most malleable it will ever be in a child’s first five years. This is the critical period to get children the care, nutrition, health, and stimulation and learning opportunities that they need to succeed in school and grow up to be healthy and productive adults. The question is, how do parents of young children and parents-to-be become aware of their critical roles in the lives of their children at this tender age?

Now the children are in school, good, or bad, teachers will have to take up the children’s learning and development from here. This should be a collaborative assignment between school and home

for us to record success in raising a total child. The Early Years educators have a huge responsibility on their hands: first, to assess the knowledge and skills with which the child is coming to school. The best approach to their learning at this tender age is experiential learning. Learning by play is the way to go. Montessori says that it gets to a point in their learning experience that the children in her class were learning as if there was no adult in the environment. This is the power of an enabling environment, experiential and personalized learning. When a child finds a piece of work that calls the attention of his soul, he or she is lost in that exercise. This tells me that not just anyone could work as an Early Years Educator. These people are specially trained to observe the child at work, at play, in distress and like a doctor, can prescribe and deliver to the child the necessary support for his continuous growth and development.

I must say that parents play major roles in providing a solid foundation for the holistic development of all our children, nowadays, as much as the educators. Therefore, schools must find ways of involving the parents in their work with their students. ECDF is doing a great job in this aspect already: training and providing necessary information to everyone. We must keep the awareness going so that we begin to receive in our schools’ children that are ready to learn, rather than damaged children that need resuscitations by the educators. The unannounced emergence of COVID-19 and its variants has shown us that educators need the parents’ involvement in the education of their children.



SHOBHA MATHUR

Shobha Mathur is an Educational Consultant and has been working for the betterment of children since 1973, at first as a teacher, graduating to become Headmistress of an International school. Now she is a confident, caring, assertive and organised Curriculum Writer and Teacher Trainer, looking for opportunities to make a difference in the lives of young children. Her main aim in life is to ensure that learning science, math, along with technology, is made interesting for children and concepts are clarified to them at a young age to help children comprehend and retain what they learn in the later years. She also feels that teachers need mentoring, support and encouragement to simplify and conduct basic science experiments and hands-on math activities for young learners.

Her training expertise lies in Phonics, Art of Storytelling, Math with fun, ICT in ECCE, Quality Circle time, STREAM in Early childhood, and many others.

Her motto in life is: *The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.*

DEVELOPING FINE AND GROSS MOTOR SKILLS IN LITTLE CHILDREN

From the very beginning, babies want to explore their world. They always want to move their eyes, mouth, and body towards the people that comfort and look after them. Their gestures, their cooing, their smile always helps them move the desired person or object closer to themselves. A child's physical challenge begins at birth and they keep changing as the child grows. Observe children thoroughly to know about their needs and ability and then arrange the space around for further physical development.

Developing and nurturing the physical growth of a child is an essential part of their growth. Children need enough time and space for vigorous, noisy, physical play. The questions now are: Why is this growth or development necessary? And how can we help in their enhancement? Physical growth is divided into 2 parts – fine motor and gross motor skills.

- **What are Fine and Gross Motor Skills?**

Motor skills are the movement of the muscles. Fine motor skills are the movements of the smaller muscles or actions of our body like blinking our eyes, wringing our nose, wriggling our toes and fingers, etc. The gross or the large motor skills are the actions of the entire body like running, jumping, kicking, etc. The development of these motor skills differs from child to child, as all children are different. It is up to us to try and provide the children with 'fun activities' and innovative ways to enhance this growth.

Gross Motor Skills:

Development of the large muscles starts soon after a child is born. The first motor skill that develops in a child is the turning of the head, as a child looks right and left within two weeks of birth. Gradually, children start kicking, turning, putting their hand in their mouth, crawling, and playing which helps in the overall growth of the children. Gross motor development includes the larger muscles of our body, arms, and legs.

Activities to Develop a child's Gross Motor Skills:

The larger muscles are best developed outdoors where there is plenty of places to move around, enough fresh air, and a child can take in an adequate amount of sunshine.

Outdoor play:

- Place a large mat for babies to roll and turn; if possible, hang some ribbons for play
- Creeping, crawling, holding
- Walking, running, jumping, skipping, cycling, kicking or rolling or passing or catching a ball
- Digging in the garden; planting seeds or saplings

- Somersault on mats
- Running through a maze created by toys or hanging clothes from clotheslines or trees
- Sensorial walks – walking on wet or dry sand or mud, grass, dry leaves or smooth pebbles
- Swings, slides, jungle gym, etc.

Indoor play:

- Walking, jumping, hopping
- Rolling a ball
- Imitating animals like slithering like a snake, jumping like a frog, etc.
- Dancing or exercising along with music
- Swaying like trees

Fine Motor Skills:

Using crayons, scissors, segregating seeds, stringing beads, picking up blocks, and doing puzzles are all examples of developing eye-hand coordination and fine muscle enhancement. Fine motor development starts only after most of the gross motor skills are mastered. Fine motor skill development involves specific movements and is acquired through practice and over a period of time. Agility and nimbleness are the foundation of fine motor skill development and involve control over the smaller muscles of the body. A 3-year-old should be ready for fine motor skill activities. Mud, sand, clay, water, and air are natural commodities that work wonders for the fine motor development of children.

Activities to Develop a child's Fine Motor Skills:

Outdoor play:

- In a tub full of water –
 - Encourage children to draw a line

or a circle or a letter of the alphabet with their middle and index fingers. This will not only develop fine muscles but will also embed the drawn diagram straight into the child's brain

- Splashing fingers freely in water will help in the development of the child's fine muscles.
- Give children a sponge, straw, small empty plastic bottles, and a transparent piece of hosepipe, and let them play with these objects in the water. Squeezing a sponge, watching bubbles form when blowing with the straw or when the bottle is immersed in water, and watching the water go up and down in a pipe not only develops the fine muscles, it also prepares the child for experiments in the later years. Watching objects float or sink in water or stirring to dissolve salt or sugar in water facilitates scientific thinking as well.
- In the sandpit –
 - Let the children draw lines or circles or a letter of the alphabet in sand or mud with middle and index fingers or with a stick.
 - Playing in mud or sand, making sandcastles, filling mud in small buckets, builds up the fine muscles

Indoor play:

- Writing letters of the alphabet in the air with the middle and index finger will not only develop fine muscles but will also

embed the formation in the child's mind

- Making objects with clay or play dough
- Wooden or foam puzzles
- Building blocks
- Beads and string
- Lacing shoes
- Segregating beads, buttons, or pulses
- Playing with glove or finger puppets
- Holding a pair of blunt scissors correctly and cutting paper in any shape and then graduating to cutting on a line and then a specific shape
- Tracing on sandpaper letters of the alphabet or numbers
- Picking up and counting beads or grains
- Shelling peas or peanuts
- Tearing
- Pouring
- Blowing bubbles (blowing bubbles is especially good for speech therapy.)
- Free painting is something that most children enjoy. Along with the muscles, the child's imagination and eye-hand coordination are also developed.
- Finger, thumb, and hand painting

Build up the fine muscles so that the child can write well. Writing at an early age hampers the growth of these muscles and the children face problems with their written work. Let the children indulge in painting, puzzles, play dough, cutting, threading, and playing with blocks and see their fine motors build-up, before you hand a pencil to them to write.



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ANAM MOJIB

Anam Mojib is an Early Childhood Development Advocate and Parent Educator. She is an experienced early childhood practitioner with an M.A. in Early Childhood Development from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. She has worked with the parents of very young children in rural areas across India. She believes in creating an environment of learning that can generate a new path for opportunities by disclosing child potentialities without pressurizing the children.

LET YOUR CHILD MAKE A REAL “MARK” ON THE WORLD!

The early years have tremendous consequences in the making of a global adult. It is not only because this stage of development provides an everlasting blueprint for learning, success, and wellbeing but also because it sets the foundation for upcoming years.

From birth through age 6, children develop the foundational capabilities on which their linguistic, cognitive, social, and emotional development builds. And in these early years, all of these critical dimensions of early development are interrelated. Each requires a great deal of attention.

Effective literacy skills are crucial for a child to develop fully as an individual to live a satisfying life and participate fully in society. The question that comes to our mind is that do we need to wait for our child to enter a preschool or start formal schooling to start the process of becoming literate?

In the olden days, children could be defined as being literate or illiterate. But the concept of literacy needs to be evolved. It has been changing in most parts of the world. Nothing is black and white, there is so much grey to everything. It is the case with the literacy skills of children. Children are in the process of becoming literate even if they are making random marks on the window of a car.

Literacy is the process of helping children, helping them to communicate with others, to make sense of the world, and to foster creativity right from birth. It draws focus on oral, written and other signs like scribbling and drawing.

Emergent Literacy

Emergent literacy consists of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are the developmental forerunner to reading and writing. The child becomes all set and groomed for formal schooling when we provide her with better exposure to reading and writing in the early years.

Exposure to literacy in the early years does not start from asking a child to hold a pencil and force them to write alphabets or letters.

Researchers suggest that children are in the process of becoming literate from birth.

For infants and toddlers, the beginnings of literacy may not look much like reading or writing. Instead, beginning literacy appears in activities like mark-making, scribbling, drawing, messy play, playing with picture books, and many others.

Writing in Early Years

Emergent writing or foundational writing skills are significant in building the foundations for good handwriting in the future. Emergent writing is the combination of scribbles, shapes, drawing, free gestures, letter-like symbols, and invented spelling, used by a young child to express meaning in written form before she could write and spell conventionally.

The problem arises when teachers and parents see writing only as a combination of letters and meaningful words on a sheet of paper. They misperceive conventional writing as the only form of writing. As a result, young children are taught conventional writing and alphabetical principles at earlier ages much before they are ready and have all prerequisite skills for writing. Linda Lamme has discovered six areas of prerequisite skills before writing. They are-

- **Small-muscle development**
- **Eye-hand coordination**

- **Ability to hold a writing tool**
- **Ability to make basic strokes**
- **Letter Perception**
- **Orientation to printed language**

It becomes crucial for parents and teachers to focus on the prerequisite skills for writing. Writing is a process art for children in the early years. There is no one clear path to develop foundational writing but rather a series of associated experiences that result in the building of knowledge and skills related to the literacy process.

Just like a child needs to crawl before she can walk, children need to scribble before they can draw. In the same way, they need to draw before they can write conventionally.

When a child is around 12-15 months, she will begin to show interest in making marks and scribbling. This phase can be categorized into five different stages:

- **Mark-making**
- **Random scribbling**
- **Controlled scribbling**
- **Naming of scribbling**
- **Early representational attempts**

- **Representational stage of scribbling.**

When a child starts random scribbling at the age of 15 months, it may not look like anything to an adult, but that is okay. Writing in the early years is about exploring, experimenting, and learning from what children are constructing. It is all about letting children try a variety of techniques, tools, and processes as they engage in artful experiences and find ways to express their thoughts.

The child should have opportunities to make marks, scribble, draw, paint, cut, tear, glue, shape, sculpt, mould, and construct for exploring and developing their fine motor potential. Over time and with experience, their artwork will evolve from simply exploration to more representation.

Literacy is a mission and we as parents, caregivers and educators can participate in this process by facilitating a positive approach towards writing in the early years, by accepting all writing attempts, modeling writing, providing free access to writing materials, using a process approach and by creating a supportive learning environment.




**DR. MOUSUMI
BHAUMIK**

Rehab Counsellor/Teacher
Trainer (GDD)

Leader in ECCE & Associate
Professor in NIEPID RC
NOIDA.

MAKING PRE-SCHOOL CLASS-ROOMS EMOTIONALLY SAFE PLACE OF LEARNING

The future of any community is dependent upon the ability to promote the healthy development of the next generation. An extensive study into the biology of stress currently demonstrates that excessive or continuous activation of stress response systems in the body and brain can irritate or alarm healthy development. Toxic stress can have negative consequences for children's learning, behaviour, and health throughout their lives. Research has proved the concerns arising because of bad/toxic stress. What happens when children experience severe, prolonged adversity without adult support & how significant adversity early in life can change a child's ability to learn and adapt to stressful situations, as well as how sensitive and responsive caregiving can cushion the



effects of such stress. How to design regulations that reduce the disruptive effects of toxic stress on early childhood has also been thoroughly investigated.

What a child experiences during the first years of their life have a lasting effect on the development of their brain. While genes lay the basis for our emotions, language, motor skills, vision, and memories, experiences lay the framework for the same. If one region gets additional stimulation the neural pathways within those areas grow stronger. This process is called synaptic pruning. Now if one area was never developed, there can be traffic jams which slowdowns the development of the entire brain. Adults and adolescents alike benefit from schools that promote emotional safety. Schools that seek to reopen must incorporate initiatives that define a safe learning atmosphere as having not just physical aspects such as cleaning standards, ventilation conditions, and physical distancing protocols, but also emotional elements in order to react to COVID-19. Creating an emotionally safe environment for reopening schools is especially urgent as many students, and adults, including educators who care for them, are experiencing increased mental health concerns or are exposed to trauma.

Every school administrator, teacher, and staff member has to have the requisite knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to execute techniques that enhance the core of an emotionally safe school environment in order to establish an emotionally safe environment.

WHAT DO WE UNDERSTAND ABOUT AN EMOTIONALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT?

Emotionally safe learning environments are the places where learners can feel safe to express their emotions, share their joys and sorrows, manage their emotions, feel psychologically secured, show empathy towards others, are able to establish positive relations and can make responsible decisions. A safe classroom environment can be a place where learners feel comfortable, physically, psychologically, emotionally & socially; where they understand and have trust that they are cared for by their educators, members & the school as a community.

ARE WE EDUCATORS READY?

How do educators ensure the learning environment is safe and supportive? Educators have always emerged as key figures in the implementation or sustainability of classroom-based programs and curricula, including socio-emotional-programming; which tends to get ignored and many a time dropped by policymakers/stakeholders. However, most educators have little to no training, both at the pre-and in-service levels for inclusion of socio-emotional- competencies in India. Educators must cooperate with students to construct a group agreement that defines the rules for class discussions and recognise that certain students may not feel comfortable participating in order to offer a secure and engaging learning environment

for kids. Emotions shape the learning process, influencing how and what we learn. Children who are able to manage or regulate their emotions are more likely to adjust to school and have better academic achievements.

HOW TO MAKE PRE-SCHOOLS CLASSROOMS EMOTIONALLY SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

Educators:

The most important tool to make pre-schools an emotionally safe learning environment is THE EDUCATOR and her emotional quotient. Modelling positive behaviour & providing opportunities for learners is the key point to success.

Gentle Teaching:

The concept of gentle teaching is with the premise of building safe, loving, caring relationships with the learner. This type of teaching creates ways to develop safe and caring relationships between the learner and the tutor. Educators through her/his leadership qualities and compassion can build a secure environment around them. Gentle teaching helps to serve the best in a class with diverse learners. In India and across the world, a known and accepted degree of legitimacy for gentle instruction is required.

Social-Emotional Learning Competencies Skills:

Early childhood education has typically concentrated on building young children's social and emotional competency qualities, particularly in preschool programmes. Programs are aimed at increasing students' social and emotional

competence abilities while also promoting learners academic performance and pro-social behaviours.

STRATEGIES FOR CREATING PRE-SCHOOL CLASSROOMS EMOTIONALLY SAFE:

Building a positive atmosphere- A bright, open place with plenty of natural lighting can help to improve spirits and create a positive vibe. Put up happy photographs and motivational words to get the party started. Arrange the classroom in a way that encourages student interaction and active engagement. A bulletin board displaying the kids' creative creations will stimulate and inspire them to participate more in class. To brighten your student's day at school, you may arrange the classroom according to holidays, seasons, and birthdays.

Structure your program-Students love having a set schedule in their classroom. Introduce pupils to the standards and behaviours that should be observed in class on the first day of school. List the numerous activities that students are expected to engage in in a concise manner, as well as discussion, assignment, and exam dates.

Understand them-Take the time to learn about your students. Get to know their likes, dislikes, strengths, and weaknesses. This will help you connect with them as well as arrange lessons, assignments, and other activities. Addressing them by name, making eye contact, and inquiring about them will give them a personal touch and demonstrate that you are interested in them.

Model Positive Behaviours consistently- Be consistent in your attitudes, conduct, and actions toward pupils. Excessive rage, harsh disciplinary

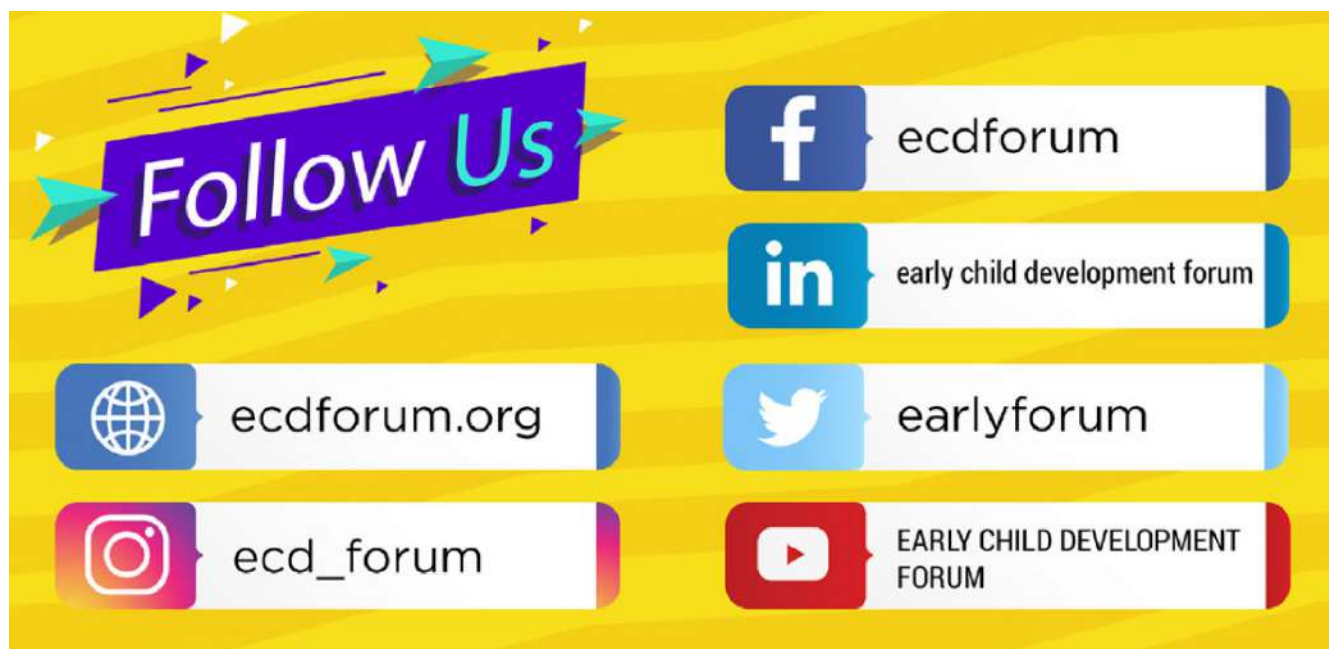
tactics, shouted voices, and rude statements will only isolate them. Instead, use clear directions as well as friendly gestures and actions to communicate with the class. Provide opportunities for pupils to exhibit positive conduct by modelling it.

Promote and Encourage Social Behaviours- Teach the many social behaviours that are required in the classroom. Encourage pupils to treat one another with respect and to communicate effectively in class. Keep an eye out for indicators of bullying, such as frequent taunting, and take the necessary steps to avoid it. They should also be taught conflict resolution techniques. Controlling and maintaining class unity is critical in a class with students from various backgrounds.

The relationship between a teacher and his or her pupils is the most critical part of a safe and happy learning environment. Children feel safe asking

questions, making errors, and taking chances in order to learn something new when they know their instructor cares for them and wants them to succeed. To build these kinds of relationships, the teacher should take interest in each learner's potential and interests, as well as their struggles and frustrations. He or she must serve as a good role model for learning and accomplishment.

- NEP 2020: Early childhood education do talks about learning in the formative years where developing curiosity, logical thinking & problem solving, arts, crafts& music, relationship with nature, colours, shapes, alphabets numbers, teamwork & collaboration, play-based &discovery-based learning, ethics, self-identity, behaviour & emotional development. These all may help children to build the optimum proficiency for life; but are the educators ready for the BLEND and the teacher trainee courses??



Ramandeep Kaur is an Early Childhood Educator, Content Designer (pre primary), and a Teacher Trainer. She is an education blogger who speaks her mind about her open-mindedness in education. Ramandeep Kaur has trained almost 200 teachers in the last six months through various workshops and she also got the privilege to be the finalist speaker at the Educator Speak-An Exclusive event for Educators in Bangalore School Groups 2021.



THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY- MY PERSPECTIVE

Empathy, the sharing of feelings with another person and consequently caring about them, is typically a virtue in our society. 'I hear you' and 'I feel your pain' are said with a sense of compassion and concern for the welfare of others. We embrace the 'Golden Rule' to treat others as we would want to be treated. And when we feel empathy, we are inclined to do good things. To understand the importance of teaching empathy, we first have to understand what empathy really is.

Imagine this scenario: A fifth-grader named Tia notices her friend, Neel, being bullied by the other kids in his class. Because of this, Neel starts to cry and spends the rest of the day alone in the classroom. After observing this situation, Tia feels a sense of sadness so she shows compassion to Neel by sharing her snacks, playing together at recess, and standing up for her friend.

IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Empathy can have a huge impact on how a child sees and interacts with others in their community and the world. The sooner children learn about empathy, the sooner its lessons can mold them into becoming better people and students.

Take Denmark, for example. According to recent reports, **Denmark is one of the happiest countries in the world.** Their secret? Since 1993, empathy has been a required subject in the classroom.

As a part of the Danish curriculum, students between the ages of 6 and 16 are required to participate in weekly empathy lessons. During these lessons, students discuss their problems and find solutions through discussions with other students and teachers. **Denmark believes these lessons are a fundamental part of the curriculum, as teaching empathy helps build relationships, prevents bullying, and sets up students for success.**

That is just a glimpse of what teaching empathy in the classroom can do.

Science tells us that children who have received more empathy also have a higher capacity for learning. Students who have gone through negative experiences at home also tend to be more stressed,

which negatively impacts their school life as well. To put it more simply: children learn better when adults and their peers are kind and understanding.

Empathy not only creates a more positive classroom experience but also strengthened relationships between students, and prepares the next generation to lead with kindness.

HOW IT AFFECTS STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONS

Experts in psychology explain that there are three levels of empathy and each affects the way we behave and act with others.

Cognitive empathy: This level of empathy gives us the ability to understand another person's emotions and thought processes after experiencing a situation (as mentioned earlier).

Emotional empathy (also known as affective empathy): The second level gives us the ability to share the emotions of others. This type of empathy helps build emotional connections within our circles because it allows us to personally feel other people's experiences.

Compassionate empathy (also known as an empathic concern): After understanding another person's emotions and sharing the same experience, the last level of empathy gives us the motivation to take action and provide emotional support to those who need it most.

Let's dig a little deeper into these levels by going back to our original scenario with Neel and Tia

Seeing her friend cry after being bullied, Tia understood Neel's pain (**cognitive empathy**), felt a level of sadness from the situation (**emotional empathy**), and as a result, approached Neel and offered her friendship by hanging out at recess and standing up for him (**compassionate empathy**).

As you can see, empathy is the ability to understand situations on a deeper, emotional level, and affects the way we interact and communicate with others.

It is important that these skills are taught at a young age as it can lead to stronger empathy skills later in life. **Social and Emotional learning is a positive development framework that refers to teaching children skills that help them recognize and manage emotions, develop empathy for others, and maintain positive relationships between peers.**

According to the American Public Health Foundation, those who were taught about empathy in kindergarten grew up to have healthy relationships with their peers, were successful in their careers, and reported low criminal activity.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO IMBIBE EMPATHY IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

I believe you're never too young to help impact change, and it starts with fostering empathy in the classroom.

1. We can create facilitated role-plays that allow students to "feel what it is like" "in the shoes" of someone else, and thus arrive at an understanding of their common humanity and tailor their subsequent actions to that understanding.

2. **Start a Random Acts of Kindness project:** Once a week (month, or day, depending on what time allows) have students show a random act of kindness for another person.

3. Reflective Journals

Have students write 2-4 times a week for 10- 20 minutes on a prompt related to empathy. Journal responses can further discussions about how

students are treating each other. It forces students to think about their actions and how they impact others, and allows teachers to gain insight into how students are responding to one another. When students are forced to be reflective, they may not always like what they see. This is where empathy begins.

Prompts can be as simple as:

Were you nice to your classmates today? How?

What can you do to help someone at home?

How would you feel if someone called you by names?

4. Use literature

One of the first ways that students begin to experience empathy is through exposure to a variety of literary experiences.

Characters and conflicts in books can expose children to a range of social situations that children may or may not have experienced themselves. By exposing children to these resources, teachers can prompt and guide discussions related to characters' emotions, as well as children's personal feelings about characters or conflicts in the story. These discussions, as well as strategic questioning on the part of the teacher, will allow students to engage in empathy practices.

The use of literature is a step that can be taken at any level of education. Elementary school students often interact with literature to understand how to make friends and form early relationships. Middle and high school students build on these early skills and use literature to expand relationship building into their communities and begin to think globally

5. Model Empathy Every day

Teachers and other students can be role models who show students the importance of empathy in

their interactions. By using yourself as an example; you can start a thoughtful discussion about feelings in the classroom. Reading and watching videos can provide many great examples for students to model empathy on. But sometimes the best examples are those which children can see or relate to.

I find that the best way to be explicit about empathy is to look for it everywhere—in your classroom, school, novel studies, math problems, science experiments, everywhere. After a while, your kids will become empathy experts themselves and will begin calling out examples of empathy they see.

This could also be a topic for your daily, weekly, or monthly class meetings. Ask students when they've seen empathy and kindness being shown.

If we are raising children to be global citizens, to be change makers in the world, and to be leaders in kindness, one of the most important skills we need to help them develop is empathy. Encouraging students to embrace diversity and foster an environment of tolerance can make them responsible individuals. We can do our part to make the world a better place by teaching empathy in our classrooms.

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DR. MAYURI DUTT

With 33 years of experience in teaching, admin & counseling, Dr. Dutt is widely recognised as a leading educational expert in early childhood development and has given talks and undertaken consulting services for inculcating scientific temperament across the country.

She is a passionate educator and has an affiliation with various NGOs, working in the field of education.

As National Coordinator has successfully created 11 Guinness World Records along with students in Hybrid mode since 2019 in India International Science Festival.

Dr. Dutt has many accolades in her bag one being the best amongst the “Top 100 Inspirational Educators” award and getting featured among “Top 100 Stories” in journey magazine 1.0.

COVID-19 SPARKS AN OVERDUE DISCUSSION ON EDUCATION REFORM:

AN OPTIMISTIC VISION

The pandemic is giving us an opportunity to make a pivot that we should have made long ago. We have been on a treadmill of short-term fixes, pretending that if we just get the right test, the right incentives, put the right pressure on teachers and students they will achieve. ... But we are realizing what we should have known all along: that you just can't widge your way to powerful learning, that relationships are critical for learning, that students' interests need to be stimulated and their selves need to be recognized."

“The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges to the development of human capital in India, as it did in countries across the world,”

The situation is dire—only 45% of 3rd—5th grade students were least proficient readers on the ASER—2008—2010 survey, a serious concern for their long-term academic achievement and economic well-being was raised.

And this was all before the pandemic situation. During the pandemic students, teachers, administrators, and families faced unprecedented pressure. Despite teachers’ herculean efforts, an analysis of nationally representative surveys of over 1,000 teachers across the country found that 56 %of teachers nationwide covered half of the materials they teach in a typical year, at most, when data was collected in fall 2020. A recent projection estimated that students would begin school in fall 2020 having lost up to 37% of a typical school year in reading and as much as 54% of a typical year in Math. The level of students’ attrition in these results remains a concern since the students most vulnerable to the adverse effects of COVID-19 were more likely to be missing to adapt to their needs with respect for their circumstances and experiences. Although bemoaning the current educational system is in fashion, the COVID-19 period reveals what we must and can do moving forward.

Not all students thrived in digital and distance education. The experience was particularly difficult for the youngest learners and those without devices.

The report also reveals some concerns over students’ feelings of isolation, boredom, laziness, lack of physical activity, eye strain, and absence of social interaction with peers. Around half of the students felt that they would have learned more in the classroom, and most teachers, parents, and school principals wanted to see a return to in-person schooling, with continued use of the new digital resources.

To continue improving education following the experiences during the pandemic, we need to put more effort to identify and support students needing help, ensuring all students have the devices and connectivity they need for distance and blended learning, and target teachers’ professional development to reduce variability and ensure all students have access to high-quality teaching. Governments across the globe will spend about \$5 trillion on K-12 education this year. But unless they get all children and young people back to school, keep them in class, and recover the central elements of learning, this generation could lose twice or three times that amount in earning losses.

The first impact was the millions of lives lost due to the disease caused by the COVID 19 virus. The second was the human suffering caused by job instability and poverty. The third is on children and youth who should have been in school but were told to stay at home.

It is two years since the pandemic started nearly all countries decided that one of the main ways to fight the pandemic was to keep students out of school and universities. Public health experts had decided that keeping education institutions open would lead to the further spread of the virus. To “flatten the curve” and prevent overcrowding of hospitals, kids would have to stay home.

Many European and some East Asian countries reopened schools relatively quickly, conscious of both the obvious costs for children and the scant evidence of the benefits of the complete closure. But in many countries in South Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and even in East Asia, school closures were maintained for exceptionally long periods.

Biggest losses for those with the least

In all countries—rich, middle-income, and poor—children from the poorest families are bearing the largest losses as their opportunities to maintain any educational engagement through remote learning

are limited. Internet access for them is poor: only half of all students in middle-income countries and just a tenth in the poorest countries have web access. The use of TV and radio and facilitating learning materials has helped, but it cannot replace interactive education. **‘Learning’ cannot just mean watching television or listening to the radio for a few hours a day.**

The result is a widening of the already large inequality of opportunity. In the developing world, COVID-19 might lead to lower growth, higher poverty, and more inequality for a generation, a terrible triple threat to global prosperity for decades to come.

“The future of a billion kids around the world is at risk. Unless we get them back in school again and find ways to remedy the effects of the interruption, COVID-19 will result in a huge setback for this generation.”

Three new “Rs” for a novel coronavirus

Encouragingly, by the end of 2021, schools had reopened in many countries. But nearly one in four education systems were still closed and many systems had reopened only partially. 1.5 billion children were back in class, though 300 million children still need to be brought back to school safely. But that was before the Omicron variant of the virus. These numbers have changed since the start of this year.

I think a blend of reopened schools, remote learning, and remedial programs can limit the damage caused by the disruptions and serve as a model response for future shocks—and maybe even make public education better than it was a couple of years ago.

Invest in remote learning. World Bank and OECD teams completed an assessment of remote learning during the two years of the pandemic. The results are not always encouraging. But the pandemic showed that hybrid learning innovations -combining in-person and remote instruction

through smart use of digital technologies— are here to stay. But investments in technology have to be cleverly coupled with investments in learning skills. The pandemic has quickened a change in mindset about the use of technology, and we have a small window of opportunity to get teachers and administrators to see technology as part of the learning process. Besides, this is not the last pandemic or natural disaster that might force schools to close. By facilitating the continuation of the learning process at home, better learning technologies in the classroom can also make the system more effective both when schools are open and when they have to be closed.

Averting a permanent loss

To help in these efforts, the World Bank Group is working on nearly a hundred COVID-related education projects in more than 60 countries. These projects sum up to \$ 11 billion. These are record numbers for the World Bank, but a fraction of the \$72 billion the US federal government is making available for public schools to reopen safely. We are supporting countries as diverse as Chile, Jordan, and Pakistan. More efforts are needed to finance the return to classroom-based teaching and help public schools adopt teaching techniques that blend online and in-classroom learning and teach students at the level they need today after the months and years they have been denied an education, focusing on foundation skills and in their emotional wellbeing

The future of a billion children around the world is at risk unless we get them back in school again and find ways to remedy the effects of the interruption, COVID-19 will result in a huge setback for this generation. When the fallout of the coronavirus is finally tallied, it will become clear that its biggest damage is the lost learning of school-goers.

A decade from now, we may look back and find that the biggest permanent loss of this pandemic was avoidable. We can act now and avoid regret.



MASUDA YASMIN

Masuda Yasmin is an edupreneur. She is the Managing Director of Reliable Educational Trust and Founder and Academic Head of National Institute for Foundation Teachers.

She has 13 years' work experience in education industry, with 9 years of exclusive experience in Preschool management, administration, academic curriculum development, academic and activity planning, and pre-primary and primary classes teachers' training.

She is also into research and development of Government Educational Policies, their implementation and their effectiveness, need for changes and ways to bring out the changes. And working as West Bengal State President (Education Policy Council) for Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and All Ladies League. She is also the State Joint Secretary, Private Schools and Child Welfare Association.

Ms. Yasmin is also Global Ambassador for Global Research Foundation.

She is also Education Ambassador for India and Core Team of International Internship University.

She is also Manager- Early Childhood Education (India) for Positive Thoughts.

Importance of Right Teacher Training in ECE

Early Childhood Education is not just about teaching ABCD to a 3-year-old child. It has a vast spectrum and long-lasting impact in learning. Yes, early childhood educators need to understand the difference between merely introducing a child to literacy and the holistic development required at this critical age. Introducing alphabets without giving the phonic sense and vocabulary development makes no sense. Introducing numerals without co-relating them to counting even doesn't make any sense. All

learned without ethical values is useless. Dear mother teachers, you are producing a new batch of rote learners and not rational thinkers. And what about motor and sensorial development? It's nowhere in the scene. What about speech and language development? We, as educators, take pride when our students in their later life get selected in medical or engineering entrances but do we ever take the blame if he/ she commits suicide when couldn't take up the next level of challenges in life? Did we ever realize that as an educator, we have actually failed to focus on their emotional development at the right age? Dear teachers and my dearest schools, do we ever realize that we are producing the next-gen muttonheads? As early childhood educators, it's high time that

we understand that we are nurturing the youngest citizens of our country and we will definitely reap as we sow.

Let's start with understanding the fact that there is a difference between literacy and education. And we call ourselves educators and not 'literators'. And the very first quality of a good educator is that we must be dynamic learners. So, let's begin with accepting the transformation in the education system. And understand the fact that we need to have 21st Century Teaching Skills now. We need rigorous training, that too in the right way.

Every child is unique and every child has a different learning style. As early childhood educators, we need to understand this.



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SANJHEE GIANCHANDANI

Sanjhee Gianchandani has a Masters' degree in English from Lady Shri Ram College for Women and a CELTA from the University of Cambridge. She works as an ELT curriculum designer and is passionate about writing.



MOVING FORWARD WITH ASSESSMENTS

Assessments form an intrinsic part of an educational framework as they help determine whether the end goals are being met or if modifications are required in the teaching approach and provide diagnostic feedback and evaluate students' progress. The last decade of the 21st century has witnessed a gigantic alteration in the way assessments are designed and executed in classrooms.

This reform in assessments has its roots in the changing nature of educational goals in alignment to the demands of a workplace in the fourth industrial age which we are currently in, the symbiotic relationship between teaching-learning and assessments, and the limitations of the existing assessment practices.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Educators, school administrators, policymakers, and leaders across the world recognize the fact that the learning outcomes of today must reach beyond the traditional domains of the subject areas and aim towards developing a broad array of academic as well as non-academic competencies which are pertinent in order to survive in the modern workplace. Consequently, there is an increasing focus on including 21st-century skills, project-based learning, continuous review processes, extensive use of technology, inculcating life skills, blurring of rigid boundaries between streams, multilingualism, and adopting cross-curricular pedagogical approaches across all curricula in the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

Addressing students at the School Education Conclave, Prime Minister Narendra Modi talked about the changes that NEP 2020 will bring. ‘The New education policy will sow the seeds for starting a new era, will give a new direction to 21st century India,’ he said. ‘The National Education Policy 2020 is a way to fulfill the new aspirations and new hopes of our new India. It needs to be implemented effectively across the country and we need to do it together,’ the Prime Minister said.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHING-LEARNING AND ASSESSMENTS

A second factor contributing to the need for a reorganization of assessment strategies involves the relationship between assessments and the processes of teaching and learning. Behavioural theories that characterize learning as the accumulation of discrete skills have become

outmoded in this day and age and have given way to a conception of learning and teaching based on cognitive psychology. The learners of today gain an understanding not by regurgitating bits of mugged-up information during examinations but by constructing their own knowledge base and by developing their own mind maps of interconnectedness between facts and concepts.

This holistic view of learning is reflected in contemporary instructional methods such as the activity-based ‘hands-on, minds-on’ approaches in science; an increased stress on productive skills in languages; problem-solving and reasoning emphases in mathematics; and collaborative learning in sports and art. If learning occurs in a holistic fashion, then assessments, too, should be able to provide holistic information on the progress, not just bits of information.

THE LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

In order to uncover the true potential of assessments, one must reevaluate their design so that they mirror the process of learning more clearly. For instance, conventional test formats are built on task types such as multiple-choice, true/false, matching and are quite narrow in their focus. They provide only a glimpse of learning. Although such kinds of tests may have certain uses, they are highly undifferentiated and generally incapable of revealing in any comprehensive way what students know and can do. Moreover, the conditions of such tests are often highly monitored. Students complete the work within rigid time constraints with controlled access to resources and limited opportunities to make revisions. These kinds of tests are also not authentic, since they noticeably differ from the ways in which people apply

knowledge in the real world. Despite these limitations, the results of such one-time measures are frequently used to make significant decisions, such as a student's final grade in a class and his or her progress in that particular subject.

Assessments need to be transformed at a granular level so as to include personalization, differentiated instruction tailored to meet the needs of each student, and should also be able to proffer a students' grasp of specific knowledge skills and habits of mind in a variety of contexts.

There needs to be a measurable and well-defined outcome of each learning nugget which should be reflected in the tangible result or observed behaviour of an assessment. The assessment should encourage self-evaluation, require judgment to assess, make its scoring criteria public, and reveal degrees of proficiency-based on the established criteria in order for it to be called an efficient, transparent, and holistic assessment test.

Some assessment strategies which can be used in the classroom today include:

1. **Ask open-ended questions:** Stay away from yes/no questions and devise questions that get students thinking. Use quick debrief sessions to engage students in reflective learning.
2. **Use hand signals:** This is a quick indication of understanding. For example, thumbs up mean they've understood, sideways thumb means they're unsure, and thumbs down mean they still need help with it.
3. **Four corners:** After you ask a question, learners each take a spot in a corner of the room. The corners might be 'strongly agree,' 'strongly disagree,' 'agree somewhat,' and

'not sure.'

4. **Think-pair-share:** Students take a few minutes to think about the question or prompt. Then, they pair with an assigned partner to discuss before sharing with the class.
5. **3-2-1:** Students debrief a lesson by answering the following: 3 things they learned, 2 things they want to know more about, and 1 question they have.

Since we are on the verge of implementing radical changes regarding assessment practices in school education, we must leverage technology to aid us in this endeavour. There are free and easy to use online tools such as 'Socrative' which is a smart student response system that empowers teachers to engage their classrooms through a series of educational games and exercises via smartphones and tablets; 'Moodle' which is a Learning Management System (LMS) or a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) can be used to create dynamic websites; 'Google Forms' which allows you to create many different types of questions, automatically collects students' usernames, and also has self-grading options.

Assessments have finally begun to receive attention as important academic benchmarks in a student's life. The proposal to set up a national assessment center, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), as a standard-setting body under the Ministry of Education indicates that the government is keen to provide a regular check on the education system. This can be a game-changer as it will not only help states offer quality standardized assessments but also aid in India's alignment to global educational benchmarks.



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WEBINARS

ECDF **WEBINAR**
NEW YEAR NEW GOALS
Date: 4th Jan 2022 (Tuesday) | Time: 5-6 pm IST

Simran Ballani
Moderator
• Zonal Head – Bangalore – South India
– Early Child Development Forum (NGO)
• Pedagogical Director & Communications Head at Council for Creative Education (CCE) Finland

Speakers

DR. VASAVI ACHARJYA Founder Chairperson ECDF and DNAF Founder MQ Innar1 Foundation Pvt Ltd and Tender Petals Chain of	ABIGAIL CARR * Currently lecturing at Hong Kong Baptist University and Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education	AMRIT NAGPAL * Head of Preschool and ECCE at Birla Open Minds, Mumbai * ECDF Zonal Head	MANDY WORSLEY AND JULIE ROBINSON Co Founder Mini Minds Matter UK Ltd. UK	SMRITI AGARWAL * ECDF Zonal Head (West) * Pre-Primary content lead Amperand Group	SHAMILA NAZIM * A Government (KHDA) approved Nursery Manager with over 21 years of experience
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ECDF **WEBINAR**
Topic: Making STEAM Learning as the Root for Early Years
19th February 2022 (Sat)
4:30 - 5:30 PM (IST)

Dr. Vasavi Acharjya
Chairperson - ECDF / DNAF /
CEDRCA M.D. / IPL / Tender
Petals Preschools

**Moderator
Amrit Nagpal**
Head of Preschools and
ECCE at Birla Open Minds,
Mumbai / ECDF Zonal Head (West)

PANELIST

DARCEL WASHBOURNE * A British Government for 8 years and is teacher of TEP and Montessori	DHANYA GEETHANJALI SASIDHARAN * Head of Key Stage 3 and Coordinator - STEAM/IGMS MODERN ACADEMY KOCHI	INDRA CHARISMADJI * Director of the Center for Education Regulations and Development Analysis (CERDA)	PRISCA MASIH * STEAM Education Manager * Co-founder of Robot Planet, a pioneer of STEAM education programmes: circuit, coding and robotics for ages 5-10 years old
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ECDF **WEBINAR**
Topic: Identifying and Addressing
Mental Health Needs in Children
17th March, 2022 (Thursday)
4:30 pm - 5:15 pm IST

DR. VASAVI ACHARJYA
M.D. IIPFL / Tender Petals Preschools
& Chairperson - ECDF/DNAF/CEDRC

Moderator
Simriti Singh
* A trained and licensed practitioner
from Association Montessori Internationale,
* She has been working with 3-5 year old children
and families since the last 5 years
* She runs her own Early Intervention Center in
New Delhi called, Inweat, which means kindness.

Speaker
Ayesha Khawar Butt
* Trained clinical psychologist with certification
in behavior therapy from BACB, USA.
* She has expertise in Acceptance and
Commitment (ACT) therapy.
* She is working on building collaborations and
creating mental health awareness across the globe.

Speaker
Tanya Batra
* RCI Registered Special Educator
* Consultant, Child Counselor
* Expressive art therapy practitioner
and certified play therapist.

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SIMRAN BALLANI
Pedagogical Head CCE Finland,
Zonal Head ECDF (South) India

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App Partner


Feminism and its Importance in our Society

"Feminism isn't about making women stronger. Women are already strong; it's about changing the way the world perceives that strength."

~ G.D. Anderson

Years of oppression by the patriarchy gave rise to a noble movement, a movement of struggles and hopes, of barriers and broken chains. But this movement and its name has been one of the most miscomprehended terms of all time.

Feminism is often compared to misogyny while in reality, it is a movement with equality as its central ideal. Many believe that feminists only wish to suppress men and this is one of the biggest misconceptions that surrounds this movement. Feminism does focus on women's rights but it is only because women have been historically oppressed and are still tyrannized in many parts of the world.

Let us learn about two of the biggest reasons why this is such an important movement.



IFFAT IKRAM

STD X

Maria's Public School
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Breaking down the term 'feminism'!

"Feminism is about all genders having equal rights and opportunities. It's about respecting diverse choices, experiences, identities, strengths and knowledge."



1. Feminism stands against harmful Gender Roles

Gender roles are socially constructed ideas of how a person should behave based on their gender. Imagine having a set of rules that tell you how to act and behave based on the gender you were assigned at birth.

How many times have we heard people saying ‘boys must not cry’ and ‘household chores are for women?’ This is a common example where a natural human trait of crying and a basic life skill of doing chores is taken and made into a role for a specific gender. It cannot be emphasized enough on how toxic gender roles are and how much of a negative impact it has on people, men and women alike.



And Feminism, being synonymous to fighting against oppression, stands against these toxic gender roles.

2. Feminism stands against Patriarchy and Toxic Masculinity

Patriarchy can be defined as a social construct that places men at the top. For years, patriarchy has been normalized and encouraged. However, patriarchy is not just harmful for women, but for any human being.

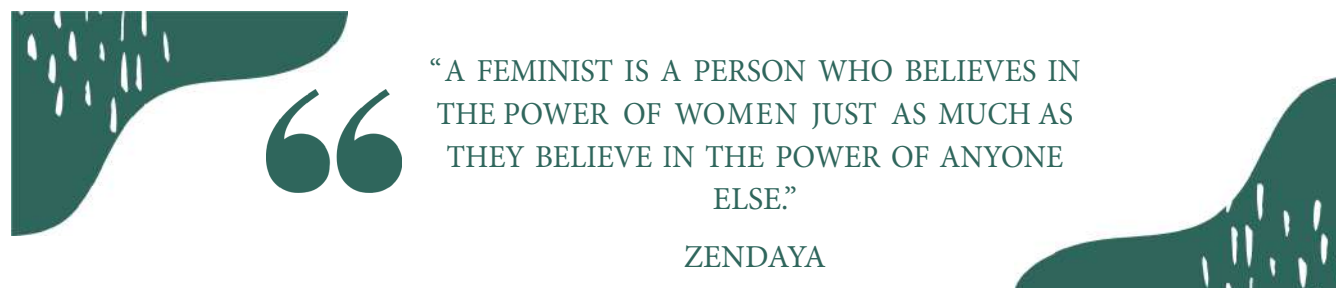
Patriarchy pushes men to become strong and the breadwinner of a family, while women are forced to be the nurturing caretaker. An example of patriarchy is the wage gaps that some of us may be aware of. If a man and a woman are working in the same position, the man would be paid more. This has been happening for centuries and still continues till date.

Feminism has been fighting against patriarchy since the beginning and it continues even when faced with backlash from conservative patriarchs.



It is about time we recognize the importance of this movement and support feminists in their struggle. Let us take a step towards awareness, towards equality. And as the marvelous Zendaya put it, “A feminist is a person who believes in the power of women just as much as they believe in the power of anyone else.”

So, if you believe in equality, congratulations! You are a feminist.



BULLYING AND ITS IMPACT

The act of bullying is when a person seeks to harm or intimidate a person. It is common to look at this issue from the bullied perspective as they are the ones who are deeply scarred. But I would like to first put forward the point as to why bullies are born.

Why are bullies born?

The reasons might be numerous

- To feel a sense of superiority by dominating someone weaker.
- To vent out because of other problems in their life.
- To forcefully get something from the one being bullied.



AGNIVH PRAKASH BORA
STD VII
Sanskriti the Gurukul

Most frequently, those who bully others are looking to gain a feeling of power, purpose and control over someone. The easiest way of doing this is to focus on something that is seen as one's weak point – either preying on or creating new insecurity with an intent to hurt either physically or emotionally.

Bullies are also kind of victims of a situation. They do all this because of the stress and trauma in their lives and use bullying as a coping mechanism.

Research shows that those who have experienced bullying are twice as likely to go on and bully

others. Maybe they were bullied as kids in the past, or maybe they are being bullied now. Many a time this is used as a defence mechanism, that by bullying others, they will become immune to being bullied themselves. But it actually just becomes a vicious cycle of negative behaviours. But that is not always the case. Some of those who are bullied become lifelong introverts and suffer from low self-esteem.

What happens to the bullied?

Children who are bullied can experience many issues that may be bad for their overall development, be it in physical, emotional, academic or mental health. They become isolated and depressed. They suffer from health problems like acute stomach ache, backache, loss of weight etc. They also have decreased academic or work performance as they are not able to concentrate and focus. They may even resort to becoming violent at times or extremely introvertish.

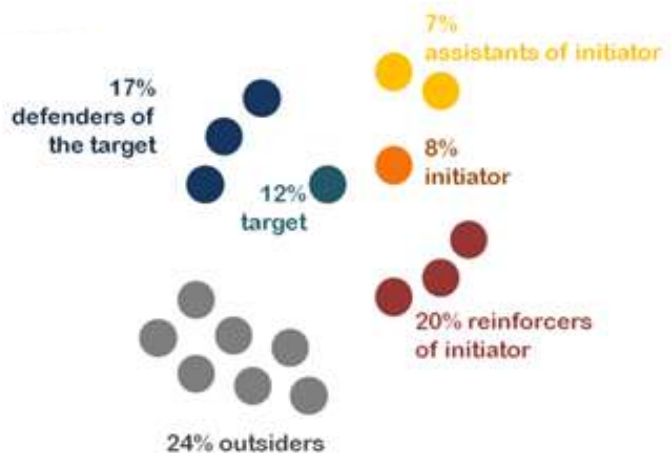
The role of bystanders in bullying

A bystander is a person who witnesses the bullying happening to someone but that doesn't necessarily mean that they can't work to stop the bullying.

There are 3 types of bystanders-

- Assistants- Do not initiate, but take an active role in the bullying behaviour supporters
- Reinforcers- Support the bullying behaviour but do not take an active role in the bullying behaviour defenders
- Overtly or Covertly- dislike the bullying and try to help the target by intervening, getting teacher support providing direct support to the target

Who's typically involved in a bullying incident?



Types of Bullying

- Physical bullying- Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property. Physical bullying causes both short-term and long-term damage.
- Verbal bullying- Verbal bullying includes name-calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse. While verbal bullying can start off harmless, it can escalate to levels that start affecting the individual target.
- Social bullying- Social bullying can include: lying and spreading rumours, negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- Cyberbullying- The Cyber Bullying Research Centre defines cyberbullying as Intentional and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers,

phones, and other electronic devices. Cyberbullying can be overt or covert bullying behaviours using digital technologies including hardware such as computers and smartphones, and software such as social media, instant messaging, texts, websites and other online platforms.

Long term effects of Bullying

Bullying has a very long-lasting and bad effect on a person's life, bullying causes an increased level of anxiety, pressure, depression, feeling of sadness and loneliness. People also lose interest in things they used to enjoy, change eating patterns, suffer from loss of sleep, lose interest in their work or studies (if student), become reclusive and a lot more. A lot of physical harm is also inflicted through all this, many a time by other people and also self-inflicted. Due to all this, many people see no other option but suicide. All these things have a very negative impact on the environment around us and also affect the mental health of those not even involved in bullying.

Ways to prevent bullying

Bullying should be nipped in the bud, the early being the crucial point. The best way to prevent bullying is to not even let it begin. The following are some ways-

- 1) To help kids understand bullying so that they understand what is wrong and right thing to do. Also teaching them how to get help if bullied.
- 2) To regularly check in on children and ask them about their friends, what goes on in school and more.
- 3) To model children to treat each other

with love, kindness, compassion and empathy.

- 4) To encourage children to do what they love and enjoy and to not be concerned by what others say.
- 5) Parents and teachers to check on the signs of bullying like change in behaviour of the child and so on.

The importance of Reporting Bullying

Reporting to elders-

Start by telling people, like a friend or a family member or a teacher. This is a very important step as without their help it would be very hard to get rid of bullying. Schools and institutions should have an anti-bullying policy intact, so that action may be taken when bullying is reported.

Reporting to Police-

This might be an uneasy option but once there is a crime involved, we should make sure to contact the police. It isn't necessary for specifically the person being bullied to report it, they can also take the help of adults to report such cases. By reporting a crime, you are helping to prevent it from happening to someone else, as well as protecting yourself.

Bullying is one thing that needs to be restrained in all ways in society.

Ref:

Stopbullying.gov

<https://cyberbaap.org/cyberbullying/reporting/>

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/bullying/effects>

<https://www.ditchthelabel.org/report-bullying-options/>

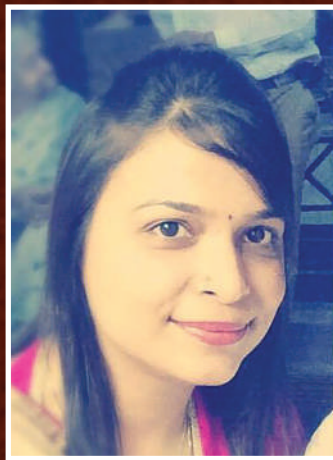
<https://www.southeastpolk.org/school/high-school/report-bullying/>

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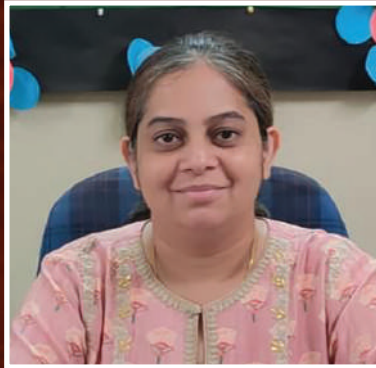


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ECDF Chairperson Dr. Vasavvi Acharjya along with a few members of the forum met the hon'ble Education Minister of the State of Assam Dr. Ranaj Pegu and discussed about the best possible ways of implementing of the NEP 2020 in the coming years. The members also presented a proposal and copies of the EDCLAN journal to the hon'ble Minister.



ECDF is elated and at the same time humbled to have its little efforts recognised in the form of an Award in the category Education and Training Social Enterprise. ECDF endeavours to give quality education to children in their early years through its training programs for educators, conferences et. al. and rural projects, cutting through the cross-sections of society. Big thanks to Ekk Updesh, Ministry of Ayush, and FiT INDIA for the honour.



Youth Squad Members of Kenya, Africa distribute goodies to the locals. They are a bunch of enthusiastic children.



Activities with children of Habigoan Village at Khetri, Sonapur, Assam



EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT FORUM (ECDF)

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