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*A New wave in Education*

# EdCLAN

Empowering Educators, Nurturing Young Minds

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**The Five Senses  
& the Sixth One**

**SDG & THE ECCE  
CONNECTION**



*Observation and Visualization  
- Transform and Redefine Learning*



**Spotlight : ECDF Global Educators Edu Tour ,  
Conference and Awards 2023, Thailand**







## **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](mailto:ecdinfo2019@gmail.com) or visit [www.ecdforum.org](http://www.ecdforum.org)



**DN ACHARYA FOUNDATION**  
FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN WELFARE



Dear Readers

As the year 2023 has come to an end, it is time we retrospect and look back at the last 12 months and all the work that ECDF has done during the year. This has indeed been a landmark year for the Forum as well as for those associated with it. There have been two very successful national events in Delhi and Guwahati, one international event in Thailand, one book launch in the Capital, several online courses, webinars, edu talks, campaigns, and much more.

The ECDF Global Educators Workshop and Earth Literacy Awards was held on 24th March at the Leela, in Delhi. This event was attended by educators from the UK, the US, and India. ECDF also launched its book in the Press Club of India titled ~Early Childhood Development, Universal Perspectives by Global Experts, in the presence of renowned educationists and education leaders on 22nd March.

The Conference in Guwahati held on 2nd Sep, in Vivanta by Taj was on the theme, Best Practices in Education Management. This conference in association with CFBP, where Principals and Owners of top schools of the state participated along with speakers from the national realm, focused on many relevant issues like bullying and its impact, mentorship et. al.

The ECDF Global Educators Conference and Awards held in association with ICSN, in Thailand on 25th Nov was another very successful event of the Forum. A delegation from India visited 3 schools in Thailand as part of the EDU TOUR from the 23rd of Nov onwards and also attended the conference and awards, along with delegates from Thailand and other parts of the globe. This was an amazing learning experience for all.

This year has set one milestone after the other and we are looking forward to many more in the coming years.

We are all set to say adieu to 2023 and welcome 2024 with open arms.

Wishing all our readers a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Dr. Vasavvi Acharjya

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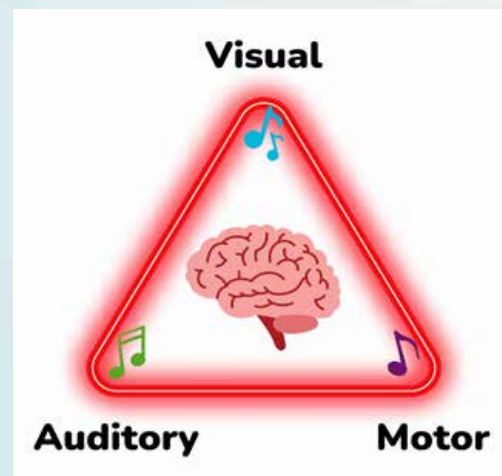
## EXPERTS SPEAK

### Music and Movement, Language and Literacy

Regular practice of music and movement in the early years builds strong foundations for language and literacy. (It also develops social, emotional, and physical skills and foundations for maths, but that is for another article!).

Music is language, it uses the same neural processing system, we call it the 'Magic Triangle'.

#### The Magic Triangle



Studies with 3-4-year-olds show us that for the brain to process the parts of language a huge number of messages need to fire around the brain, and they use the same circuit of neural pathways that are developed through regular music and movement practice in early years. Connecting the 'magic triangle' between the 3 cortices of the brain – Visual, Auditory, and Motor.

Music and movement activities are the most efficient and effective way of developing these neural pathways in early childhood.

#### Sue Newman BA(Hons) ACA

Managing Director Boogie Mites UK Ltd and Community Projects CIC

After giving up a business career to look after her children, Sue Newman returned to her childhood love of music and set up Boogie Mites as co-founder in 2007. She was delighted to spend every day leading her passionate team of teachers at Boogie Mites as they shared the joy and learning power of our original music activities. Their mission is to share the knowledge, confidence, and resources to enable Early Years Educators and parents to provide brain-boosting, active, creative music-making every day.

She leads music workshops, presents at conferences, writes articles, and also manages business strategy planning, program compilation, training provision, local authority contracts, and team, and customer relationships. They have many partners including Neuromusical Researcher Dr Anita Collins, Early Years Childhood Specialists Dr Kathryn Murray and Sue Asquith, and children's author Michael Rosen.

They have a vision of making a real difference in early years education globally through the incredible power of music, starting children on a lifelong love of music, language, and literacy, with all the associated wellness and cognitive benefits, well-being and health benefits.



Developing rhythmic awareness alongside sound processing skills is key to strengthening the 'magic triangle' processing circuit. A strong 'magic triangle', neural connections between the auditory/motor/visual cortices of the brain, is key to cognitive and physical skills generally, the key to motor sensory integration.

## Rhythmic Awareness

Rhythmic awareness is often the missing link for children with language and/or reading delays. Rhythm is an integral part of both music and language, and the rhythm of spoken language is a crucial cue to understanding. Musical training—with its emphasis on rhythmic skills—can exercise the motor/auditory system, leading to less neural jitter and stronger sound-to-meaning associations that are essential to learning to read.

*“Children with dyslexia find it challenging to hear speech rhythm and speech timing and to perceive musical rhythm and timing. Early Years educators can take simple steps to benefit language skills and minimize the impact of dyslexia. Having a rich early repertoire of singing and musical remediation will help match syllable beat patterns to language before they start learning to read.”*  
Prof Usha Goswami, Professor of Cognitive Developmental Neuroscience, University of Cambridge.

## An Added Bonus

It is a bonus that music and movement activities are uplifting for all involved so far more engaging and effective than phonics flashcard activities or other remedial language or pre-literacy activities.

Neurotransmitters are the body's chemical messengers. Four chemicals are stimulated when we are involved in group music-making and exercise:

- **Dopamine** – plays a role in how we feel pleasure
- **Oxytocin** – plays a role in social bonding
- **Serotonin** – plays a role in modulating mood
- **Endorphins** – trigger a positive feeling in the body

## What Music Activities Work?

Traditional music and nursery rhymes are great, they harness some of the benefits evidenced by neuroscience and research studies.

To harness all of the benefits we need to:

- **Include lots of rhythmic activities, keeping the beat and playing with tempo and different rhythms....** best achieved through the use of recorded music written for this age group and purpose.
- **Include lots of melodic activities, playing with dynamics, pitch, hearing harmonies, and different instruments....** best achieved through the use of recorded music written for this age group and purpose.
- **Engage and motivate all involved, the teachers, parents, and children....** best achieved through the use of recorded music written for this purpose.

## Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness in children, especially in the early stages of reading, improves and accelerates learning to read, and at the age of six, it is a strong predictor of their future reading ability. Hence, a child's level of phonological awareness acquisition accounts for the child's readiness to read. Phonological awareness consists of awareness of syllables, onset rime, and phoneme awareness. Music training by definition results in developing higher awareness of sounds. Regular involvement in music activities will develop an awareness of syllables, onset rime and phoneme awareness. Music activities are engaging so children will be more attentive and motivated to take part.

Words and sentences have an intrinsic rhythm. Children can develop an awareness of this by developing their sound processing skills and playing with syllables of words through music activities.

Songs and rhymes have deliberate patterning and so are extremely useful in developing the sound processing of stressed syllables – an area that is found to be weak in children who suffer from dyslexia.

## Letter and Sounds Phase 1: Principles and Practice of High-Quality Phonics

The 2007 National Strategy for Literacy guidance for pre-phonics activities in early years:

Letters and Sounds Phase 1 activities fall within the Literacy area of learning and support hearing sounds in the order they occur in words. The guidance states:

Singing songs and action rhymes,  
*(developing melodic and rhythmic awareness)*

is a vital part of Phase 1 activities and should be an everyday event.

This continues to be true, whatever SSP validated phonics strategy the schools is following. Teachers are reporting that SSP-validated phonics strategies are weak on Phase 1 activities and continuing to follow the Letters and Sounds Phase 1 guidance in pre-schools:

The 7 Aspects of Letters and Sounds Phase 1:

- Aspect 1 - environmental sounds
- Aspect 2 - instrumental sounds
- Aspect 3 - body percussion
- Aspect 4 - rhythm and rhyme
- Aspect 5 - alliteration
- Aspect 6 - voice sounds
- Aspect 7- oral blending and segmenting

Each of these Aspects can be supported through musical activities, action songs, body and junk percussion activities, and sound games.

However, we note from teacher feedback that another bonus of music activities is that they not only develop strong foundations for phonics, but also for listening, attention, self-regulation, and hence group learning in the school environment.

## Harnessing the power of music in early years education

To harness the power of music for building strong foundations for language and literacy we need to provide training, knowledge, confidence, and resources to our early years' educators. You do not need to be a musician to lead effective music-making activities in the early years, all educators and parents should have access to training and resources



so that their children have the opportunity for optimal development of sound processing, boosting auditory, visual, and motor skills (the magic triangle) by the time they start formal education. Plus the benefit of related areas of development (A-G):

Attention and Listening

Behaviour Management – Self-regulation

Communication and Language

Dancing Feet – Rhythmic Awareness/Physical Development

Engagement of children and adults

Foundations for Literacy and Maths

Group Skills

Boogie Mites is committed to providing this music training based on 25 years' experience of in delivering music workshops, parent and teacher education courses, digital resources, and evaluation of impact.

### Activities to try:

Amass a variety of hollow objects, as well as any drums you have, which the children can use as a drum – pans, tins, ceramic or metal plant pots, wooden boxes, etc, of varying sizes. Provide them with a range of sticks and wooden spoons and encourage them to experiment with sound.

You can vary the sounds created by exploring:

**Pitch** – is the note low or high? What makes low notes and what makes high ones? How do they sound together?

**Tempo** – fast or slow?

**Dynamics** – from loud to quiet and in-between

**Rhythm** – try different patterns of sound

**Keeping the beat** – play with one constant beat, with sound just being made 'on the beat'

**Pulse** - A waltz has a very different feeling from a marching song. You could take a piece of music or a traditional nursery rhyme, and use that as your pulse. Marching songs such as 'Oh When the Saints Go Marching In' tend to have 4 beats in a bar (1, 2, 3, 4, repeat) and waltzes tend to have just 3 (1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3), for example.

**Moving with the beat** - try marching, jumping, dancing to the music, clapping, and stamping feet.

**Percussion** – home-made instruments like shakers can be added to the mix.

Remember that you are developing the key skills needed for language and literacy, strengthening the 'magic triangle' in children's brains– as well as having fun!



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## EXPERTS SPEAK

**Smriti Agarwal is the Head Content Lead at the Ampersand Group and the West Zonal Head of ECDF**



### *SDG and the ECCE Connection*

The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals are essential to develop a sustainable world. In a nutshell, I will try to give you the basic context of how SDGs can be achieved if we focus on them right from the early years. Let us see how we need to begin right with the early years of education.

#### **SDG 1 – No Poverty**

The step towards removing poverty from the world is to equip the generations with relevant education to be able to contribute to the economy. This is possible when we give utmost importance to the years when the brain is developing at an incredible pace; the first six years of life. Once the foundation is strong, the secondary or university education is taken care of. The generation that received mindful and stimulating early years education will be able to contribute positively to the growth of a country.

#### **SDG 2 – Zero Hunger**

To eradicate hunger, we need to give importance to agriculture and the production of good organic food. Right from early years we can teach children the importance of good food through rhymes and stories. Early childhood educators can inculcate a sense of responsibility in the future generation towards plants, crops, and food by having a small farm/kitchen garden/field trip to see farmers and farms. This will motivate the children to take up agriculture as a field when they grow up, which is usually missing as an aspiration. 'Learning by Doing' is the key. If children learn gardening and farming, they learn nurturing and have a sense of belonging towards the environment and food growing. One will always value what one has nurtured, instead of what we have bought.

#### **SDG 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing**

Health and well-being need to be taken care of right from birth. Healthy living or emotional, mental, and social well-being early years needs to be taken care of in the following manner:





## SDG 4 – Quality Education

Quality education is a birthright of every child. It is pertinent that we focus on the following aspects of education, right from the beginning of the learning journey:

- ☐ Equity and equality in education
- ☐ Inclusivity
- ☐ Brain development
- ☐ Nurturing and safe environment
- ☐ Trained and passionate facilitators
- ☐ Hygienic and sanitized infrastructure
- ☐ Age-appropriate and comprehensive curriculum
- ☐ 360-degree evaluations
- ☐ 21st Century Skills
- ☐ Bloom's Taxonomy

## SDG 5 – Gender Equality

Gender equality is not a concept, it is a change of existing and prevalent mindset. Gender equality and neutrality should be a way of life that can be embedded in society if we begin early. Gender-neutral roles and toys in classrooms of early years will help not define gender roles in children's minds. Let us now focus on having a curriculum and resources that promote equality and gender neutrality right from the early years.

## SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitization

Hygiene and sanitization are habits that need to be inculcated right from the early years. The first step is that the family and school ensure that the children get a clean, safe, and hygienic environment and water. The next step is to empower children to be the agents of change when required by teaching them appropriate toileting, conservation of water, and hygiene habits for themselves and their surroundings.

## SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy

Schools must set an example for early learners by adapting to solar energy and electric vehicles along with cycling as a mode of commuting within the vicinity. Teaching young learners about preserving energy and recycling to generate affordable energy is a must.

## SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

The education sector gives ample opportunities for decent workspaces and employment opportunities for all. More schools not only mean education for the larger population of children, but also more employment opportunities for both men and women which will ultimately contribute to the economic growth of the country. The most respectable and decent work profile is that of a teacher or an educator.

## SDG 9- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

An industrious mindset, innovation, and positive contribution towards infrastructure need to be developed right from school years. When the youngsters of a nation are given an enabling environment and education to include them to contribute to a positive and innovative change in the world, the results will be very effective for the future. Critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative thinking are the keys to progress in industry, innovation, and infrastructure, hence inculcating 21st-century skills and approaches to learning skills like productivity, resilience, and innovation are essential in the early years.

## SDG 10- Reduced Inequalities

**Increased access to childcare enables more mothers to participate in productive and profitable jobs.** Having more mothers in the labour force boosts economic growth. As more mothers join the labour force, overall employment rates increase. Increased employment for women in the early years sector and also enabling them to step out to work leads to **higher household incomes**, increases in tax revenue and, eventually, reduced inequalities at multiple levels.

## SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities

Cities and communities can be sustainable when every home and school follows the 5R for mindful consumption and purposeful inclusivity. It should be a mandate component of each

grade curriculum and each school's culture to teach children sustainability and inclusivity so that the young citizens understand their responsibility to safeguard their communities and cities.

### **SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production**

Responsible consumption means even though we have the buying capacity, we need to be careful in differentiating between things we need and things we want. In this era of consumerism, children are the best targets for companies who know that the privileged generation demand and get what they want from their parents. The school and educators need to educate them on responsible consumption and how to later be an aware industrialist/business person to produce goods which are environment friendly and solve problems of the world instead of piling trash.

### **SDG 13 - Climate Action**

Global warming is a result of excess carbon emissions, humongous landfills, and mountains of trash and wastes comprising plastic, consumer durables, and electric gadgets. The first step towards climate change is to practice it as role models for children and to teach children the same in school. As we make afforestation, carpooling, EV, and mindful consumption a daily routine, we can show the future generation to achieve SDG 12 in a few years.

### **SDG 14- Life Below Water and SDG 15 – Life on Land**

The next two SDGs are addressed in the early years of education when we introduce the concepts of animals and marine life to children. We also educate them on the Earth being a shared planet and we are answerable for the lives below water and life on land as well.

### **SDG 16 – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions**

In an early year's classroom when we teach and practice conflict resolution, respect for classroom rules, honesty, and equality we lay the foundation of peace, justice, and strong institutions for the future.

### **SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals**

Effective partnership stems from understanding the 4 Cs- Communication, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, and Creative Thinking. These 21st century learning skills are very much a part of preprimary and primary education, where children participate in combined projects, and small and large group activities when given a common goal. Similarly, we need to collaborate to realize the 17 goals shortly.



## EXPERTS SPEAK

Namra Chauhan, currently working as a School Counsellor in New Delhi, holds a background in Psychology and Child Development. She has completed her Master's in Early Childhood Development from Jamia Millia Islamia and has also done a Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling and Guidance from NCERT, New Delhi. She is particularly enthusiastic about counselling and guidance, recognizing the importance of helping young individuals navigate the challenges they face during their formative years. Her goal is to empower children and adolescents to overcome obstacles, make informed decisions, and thrive in their academic and personal lives. She aspires to continue making a positive impact on the lives of students, helping them realize their potential and guiding them on their unique journeys to success.



*“Life is a matter of choices, and every choice you make makes you.” John C. Maxwell*

In an ever-changing world, the ability to make sound decisions is a crucial life skill that we all need to develop, starting from a very young age. Decision-making lays the foundation of a child's growth and development, as it enables them with the tools necessary to navigate life's challenges and make better life choices.

## The Power of Choices: Teaching Children Decision-Making Skills

### What is Decision-Making?

When talking about decision-making, we think about it only in the context of making choices, but it is much more than that. It's a process of identifying what needs to be done and how it can be achieved, along with reflecting on the repercussions of each choice we make. Individuals are constantly faced with a wide range of choices and challenges. Effective decision-making is necessary to navigate these complexities. Decision-making is an important element of overall growth, which also makes it a crucial 21st-century skill.

### Importance of Decision-Making

From choosing what to wear in the morning to deciding what to have for breakfast, we make decisions without

even consciously realizing it. According to research, an individual makes around 35,000 decisions in a day. Sometimes seemingly trivial choices make a long-lasting impact on an individual; hence, it becomes increasingly important that we help children develop these skills early on. Let's see how important the skill is for young children.

**Confidence Building:** Teaching children how to make decisions empowers them and boosts their self-confidence. When they realize they have the power to choose, it fosters a sense of autonomy and independence. When they make choices and see positive outcomes, they gain confidence in their abilities.

**Responsibility:** Making decisions comes with a sense of responsibility. Children understand that their choices have consequences, and this can be a valuable lesson in accountability and helps in building a sense of responsibility.

**Critical Thinking:** Decision-making encourages critical thinking and problem-solving. It involves weighing pros and cons, assessing risks, and considering long-term effects, all of which are critical thinking skills that will serve children well throughout their lives.

**Life Skill Development:** Decision-making is a fundamental life skill that children will use throughout their lives. Teaching them how to make choices and decisions empowers them to navigate various situations and challenges effectively.

**Independence and Autonomy:** Decision-making skills enable children to become more independent and autonomous. As they learn to make choices, they become less reliant on others to make decisions for them and more confident in their abilities.

**Preparation for Adulthood:** As children grow into adolescents and eventually adults, they will need to make more complex and far-reaching decisions. Teaching them decision-making skills at a young age prepares them for these future challenges.

**Nurturing Decision-Making Skills:** Cultivating decision-making skills in young children is an important part of their cognitive and emotional development. Teaching them how to make good decisions helps them become more independent and responsible individuals. Let's move ahead and see how, as parents and educators, we can help children nurture these vital skills.

**Offer Choices, Not Commands:** A great way to begin is by providing your child with opportunities to make choices. Instead of dictating what they should do, ask open-ended questions. For instance, instead of saying, "Put on your black shirt," ask, "Which shirt would you like to wear today, the red one or the black one?" This simple change encourages them to think and decide for themselves.

**Be patient:** Decision-making can take time, especially for young children who might be easily overwhelmed by choices. Be patient and allow them the time to decide. Children will make mistakes along the way, but these experiences are valuable for their growth.

**Encourage Independence:** Give your child room to make decisions about their daily activities, like what to play with, what book to read, or what snack to have. This fosters independence and helps them build confidence in their choices.

**Evaluate Choices Together:** Sometimes, it's helpful to evaluate choices together. Talk about the options and help them understand the potential outcomes of each choice. This process allows them to make more informed decisions.

**Teach Problem-Solving:** Decision-making often goes hand-in-hand with problem-solving. Encourage your child to think through potential problems and brainstorm solutions. You can use scenarios or puzzles to practice problem-solving.

**Learn from Mistakes:** Children need to understand that making mistakes is part of learning. When they make a poor decision, use it as a learning opportunity rather than scolding them.

**Explain Consequences:** Help children understand that every decision has consequences, both positive and negative. Discuss these consequences with them in an age-appropriate manner. This helps them learn to anticipate and weigh potential outcomes.

**Encourage Critical Thinking:** Ask open-ended questions that require your child to think critically. For instance, "Why do you think that is a good idea?" or "What do you think might happen if you choose that option?"

**Respect their Decisions:** Sometimes a child's decision might be very different from ours; respect it within safe boundaries. This empowers them and makes them feel that their opinions are valued.

**Role-play and Practice:** Engage in role-playing scenarios where your child has to make decisions. This can be a fun way to practice their skills in a safe environment.

Some ways we can encourage decision-making in our daily lives are:





## Situation

Snack Time Choices

Choosing Outfits

Story time Selection

Playtime Planning

Meal Planning

Homework Schedule

Setting Rules and Boundaries

Problem-Solving Scenarios

Arts and crafts

Birthday party planning

Extracurricular Activities

Giving to charity

Conflict Resolution

Technology Choices

## How to Encourage Decision-Making

Offer options like apples or bananas for a simple snack choice.

Let them pick out their clothes for the day within the guidelines.

Allow them to choose a book for story time, promoting a love for reading.

Involve them in selecting games or activities when friends visit.

Offer choices for dinner, e.g., pasta or rice, to decide what to eat.

Let older kids decide when to do homework within a time frame.

Involve them in setting family rules and boundaries for discipline.

Discuss hypothetical scenarios to encourage critical thinking.

Let them choose colors and materials for arts and crafts projects.

Involve them in planning party aspects like theme, cake, or games.

Let them decide on sports, music, or art classes they'd like to pursue.

Encourage them to select a charity or cause to support.

Guide them in finding solutions to conflicts with friends or siblings.

Discuss and set screen time limits, teaching responsible technology use.

As Catherine Pulsifer stated ***“Life presents many choices, the choices we make determine our future”***, Decision-making is not just about choosing between options; it’s a process that involves identifying what needs to be done, how to do it, and understanding the consequences of each choice. For children, learning how to make decisions sets the stage for personal growth, empowerment, and responsible adulthood. In our daily lives, we have numerous opportunities to encourage decision-making from the simplest selections of what to wear or eat to the profound decisions that chart our destinies, our ability to make choices influences every aspect of our existence. By fostering the power of choice, we empower our children to pave their own way, instilling in them the confidence to confront life’s complexities and embrace its countless possibilities.

# FEATURE

## *Fair Education Practices Summit 1.0*

CFBP (Council for Fair Business Practices) in collaboration with ECDF (Early Childhood Development Forum) organized a summit on the theme “Creating Best Practices for Fair Education Management” on the 2nd of September 2023 at Hotel Taj Vivanta, Khanapara, Guwahati. It was a day-long summit that started at 10 in the morning and was attended by notable dignitaries from all over Assam and we also had speakers from different parts of India.



Educators, Education Leaders, Stakeholders, Education enthusiasts, and change-makers in the field of education joined the event from all over the country.

The event started with a welcome address delivered by the **Founder and Chairperson of ECDF Dr. Vasavvi Acharjya** followed by the keynote address delivered by the **President of CFBP Mr. Swapnil Kothari**. The event was graced by the presence of the **Education Advisor to the Govt. of Assam Dr. Nani Gopal Mahanta as the Chief Guest**. He shared with the delegates about NEP 2020 and NCF 2022 and how it is being implemented in the govt. schools of Assam and how the government is striving to provide holistic education to every child in Assam. He encouraged the educators to always work relentlessly to help the children learn and grow up to be self-sufficient individuals.



The insightful speech of Dr. Nani Gopal Mahanta was then followed by the felicitation of the President of AREIDA Mr. Pranab Kr. Sarma.

The summit then started the first Plenary Session by **Mr. Atul Chandrakant Kulkarni** on the topic “**NEP 2020 Transforming Indian Education**”. Mr. Kulkarni is the chairman of Amazing Namaste Foundation and also a member of the Board of Governors at IIM, Shillong. He spoke about how the NEP 2020 is bringing about some

path-breaking changes in the field of education. Overall his talk was about the revolutionary changes we are seeing in education starting from the ECCE to higher education.



The plenary session was followed by a panel session on the topic “Creating Best Practices for Fair Education Management” which was moderated by **Dr. Vasavvi Acharjya** and the speakers were **Dr. Unmona Borgohain Saikia** the Founding Principal of the Asian Institute of Nursing Education, **Mr. Jyotishman Dutta**, Managing Trustee of Down Town Charity Trust, **Aarati Savur**, CEO of Parisar Asha – Centre for Educational Research and Training, Mumbai, **Mr. Krishnanjan Chanda**, Principal of South Point School, Guwahati, and **Mr. Dinesh Lahoti**, Founder of Edu Genie and Career Spark.

The panelists discussed the improvements that can be made in the education sector by implementing the best practices.

There was then an industry session delivered by **Mr. Vipul Joshi, Founder and CEO of Boost My Child Pvt. Ltd** on the topic “**Integrating AI into Early Childhood Development**” wherein he spoke about the ways we can track our child’s mental, physical, socio-emotional, and personality development with the app that he has developed and how preschool educators and parents can use this app to understand each child’s weakness and strength in a more systematic way, which was then followed by the second plenary session of the day by **Dr. Sriparna Baruah** on the topic “**Mentorship: Creating Enterprising Youth through Mentorship**”. Dr. Baruah is the Advisor (Livelihood and Entrepreneurship) at NEHHDC.



Moving on there was the second industry session delivered by **Santosh Mishra** Founder of Living Thoughts on the topic “**AI Labs in School as per NEP 2020**” wherein he showed us his robotics kit and other tool kits that can be used in schools to introduce children to technology and engineering which was then followed by the felicitation of the special guest of the event **Dipannita Jaiswal** who is the Managing Director of DY 365 and all verticals of Brahmaputra Tele Productions Pvt. Ltd.



The third and final industry session was delivered by **Ratan Kumar** who is the Founder and CEO of Encamp Adventures and Pioneer of Climate Conscious Travels. He delivered his session on the topic “**Sustainable Travel for Students Aligning to NEP 2020**”. He talked about ways in which we can make our children climate-conscious and help them understand the concept of sustainable resources and their utilization.





The second-panel session was on the topic **“Implementing strategies to reduce and address bullying and other forms of discrimination (like gender bias/ disability) in educational settings”**, which was moderated by **Amrit Nagpal** an Early Years Expert and Education Consultant, Storyteller, and ECDF Zonal Head (West). The panelists of the session were Dr. Diganta Halder, Principal of Sarla Birla Gyan Jyoti School, Guwahati, **Amit Jugran**, Headmaster of Assam Valley School, Tezpur Assam, **Radha Baruah**, Principal

of Sanskriti the Gurukul, Guwahati, **Meenakshi Barthakur**, Consultant Psychologist of Royal Global School, Guwahati, **Jugal Chandra Borah**, Principal of Faculty Higher Secondary School, North Guwahati and **Apu Dey**, Principal of Vandy International School, North Guwahati.

The panelists mentioned some important points the school should not only help the victim but also help the bullies as to what leads them to such behavioral traits and why they misbehave with their peers. Parents should be aware of their child’s needs and should make at least an hour of their day to spend entirely with children, they should talk to them, play with them, find out what’s going on in school and with their classmates and friends, how is he /she doing in her classes and co-curricular activities.



The panel session was followed by booster sessions delivered by Mr. Mayur Bora on the topic **“Fair Competition and Ethics in the Education Sector”**, Mr. Mayur Bora is a Noted Author and Social Commentator and the second booster session was delivered by Amrit Nagpal on the topic **“Creating Student-Centered Learning Environments (ECCE)”**.

Mr. Bora spoke wonderfully about how digitalization is changing the scenario today, children are bound to their mobiles and PlayStation nowadays, and at the same time, if technology is used properly with proper guidance from their parents and teachers, they can excel in many fields.



Ms. Nagpal spoke about ways in which teachers can design their curriculum by keeping it child-centric, they should focus on the learning of their children, and they should create new methodologies to help children learn practically not just rote learning.

The event ended with a vote of thanks and certificate distribution to the attendees and sponsors.

## ECDF GLOBAL EDUCATORS CONFERENCE AND AWARDS 2023, THAILAND

ECDF GLOBAL EDUCATORS CONFERENCE AND AWARDS WERE HELD IN ASSOCIATION WITH INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL NONTABURI (ICSN), THAILAND ON 25TH NOV 2023, THEMED: BUILDING BRIDGES: THE POWER OF GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS IN ECE AND K12 EDUCATION, IN WHICH GLOBAL EDUCATORS JOINED IN A DAY-LONG EVENT THAT CONSISTED OF PANEL SESSIONS, BOOSTER SESSIONS AND PAPER PRESENTATIONS BY EDUCATION LEADERS. DR. EDWARD ROY KRISHNAN FOUNDER AND DIRECTEUR GENERAL AT THE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (EIU-PARIS) AND DIRECTOR AT PEDAGOG WAS THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER. THE OTHER SPEAKERS INCLUDED DR. IMAN AL-AMIN, ROSEMARIE GESTOPA, MICHAEL SYPSOMOS, SOPHIE WILSON, JANWIMON EKTRAKUL TO NAME A FEW. THE CONFERENCE WAS FOLLOWED BY THE ECDF GLOBAL PINNACLE EDUCATION AWARDS 2023(4TH EDITION). THE AWARDS WERE GIVEN BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF ECDF DR. VASAVI ACHARJYA. THE DELEGATES RECEIVED PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATES FOR ATTENDING THE EVENT. THE INVITED SPEAKERS WERE HONoured WITH A PLACARD AND OTHER TOKENS OF APPRECIATION.









### ECDF GLOBAL EDUCATORS EDUTOUR IN THAILAND

ECDF GLOBAL EDU TOUR WAS HELD IN ASSOCIATION WITH APPLE TREE INTERNATIONAL KINDERGARTEN, BANGKOK, CRESCENT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, BANGKOK AND INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL NONTABURI (ICSN), THAILAND ON 22<sup>ND</sup>, 23<sup>RD</sup>, AND 24<sup>TH</sup> NOV 2023, IN WHICH A DELEGATION FROM INDIA WENT TO THAILAND, TO EXPLORE THE TEACHING METHODOLOGY, STUDENT ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES, CLASSROOM INTERACTION AND DESIGN, OUTDOOR EXPLORATION SPACES AND SO FORTH. THE SCHOOLS WERE EXTREMELY WELCOMING AND OPENED THEIR DOORS TO THE DELEGATION. MINI CONFERENCES WERE HELD IN EACH SCHOOL TO DISCUSS THEIR BEST PRACTICES AND A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE HAPPENED IN TERMS OF TEACHING PRACTICES IN BOTH COUNTRIES. THE EDU TOURS WERE VERY ENRICHING FOR THE DELEGATION AS WELL AS FOR THE HOST SCHOOLS.







## TESTIMONIALS OF EDU TOUR DELEGATES, SPEAKERS AND AWARDEES OF THE ECDF GLOBAL EDUCATORS EDUTOUR, CONFERENCE AND AWARDS 2023, THAILAND

**Simran Ballani** is the Pedagogical Director of CCE Finland. She is a Happiness Coach, Doctoral Candidate, EIU France and the Zonal Head, South of ECDF. (Event Curator & Speaker)

As I reflect on my role as a curator for the Global Educators Conference and Edu Tour, I'm compelled to express my heartfelt gratitude for the transformative vision led by chairperson Dr. Vasavvi.

Devoting personal time to curate this tour was undoubtedly challenging, yet witnessing the exchange of knowledge, the growth of educators, and our shared commitment to improving global early childhood education made every effort worthwhile. As a core member of ECDF, the prospect of the proceeds contributing to the welfare of marginalized children adds a deeper layer of fulfillment to this endeavor.

The warmth and generosity extended by the Thai schools were pivotal in making this event a success. Their dedication not only showcased their commitment to education but also honoured my efforts which have flourished with them over the past two years.

What stands out even more is the generosity of my mentor and president of EIU, Paris - Dr. Roy. He turned the keynote address into an engaging session, stayed back the entire day to contribute his insights and expertise. His dedication went above and beyond, leaving a lasting impact on the participants and enriching the overall experience for everyone involved.

As we move forward, I am deeply thankful for the opportunity to continue this journey of my collaboration with ECDF and our esteemed partners in Thailand. Together, we are shaping a future where education knows no boundaries, and I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead!



**Amrit Nagpal** has carved a remarkable path as a Teacher Trainer and mentor, Curriculum Architect, Storyteller, and Consultant. She has served as the former Head of Preschools and ECCEd. at Birla Open Minds Education Pvt Ltd in Mumbai, her contributions have been recognized with prestigious honors such as the Innovation in Early Learning and Child Development award by the Early Child Development Forum and the Innovative Leader of the Year title by Ekk Updesh. Ms. Nagpal has a remarkable storytelling prowess. (Speaker and Edu Tour delegate at the event)



I had the incredible opportunity to embark on an enlightening edutour in Bangkok with Early Childhood Education Forum (ECDF), exploring three distinguished educational institutions. The experience was nothing short of transformative, offering a unique insight into the educational landscape of Thailand.

Our journey began at Apple Tree Kindergarten, a haven for early childhood education that left an indelible mark on my understanding of nurturing young minds. The school's commitment to fostering a holistic learning environment inspired by Reggio Emilia Approach was evident in every corner. The colorful classrooms, dedicated teachers, and innovative EYFS curriculum spoke volumes about the institution's dedication to shaping well-rounded individuals. Witnessing the engaging activities and personalized attention given to each child reinforced my belief in the crucial role of early education in laying a strong foundation for future success.

Crescent International School emerged as a beacon of academic excellence, seamlessly blending tradition with modernity. The state-of-the-art facilities and a diverse curriculum underscored the school's commitment to preparing students for the challenges of the 21st century. The emphasis on critical thinking, creativity, and global awareness left me inspired and reassured that the next generation is in capable hands. The warm reception from both students and educators showcased a vibrant community united by a shared passion for learning.

Our edutour culminated with a conference at the International Christian School Nonthaburi, a testament to the harmonious integration of faith and education. The school's commitment to nurturing not only the intellectual but also the spiritual and moral aspects of students was deeply impressive. The serene campus, dedicated faculty, and emphasis on character development conveyed a sense of purpose beyond academic achievement.

Throughout the edutour, the vibrant city of Bangkok served as a backdrop, adding an extra layer of cultural richness to the experience. The warmth and dedication exhibited by the school teaching and non-teaching staff of the schools in Bangkok have left an enduring impact on my perspective of education.

In conclusion, this edutour and conference was a profound exploration of educational excellence in Bangkok. I wholeheartedly thank Dr. Vasavvi (Chairperson of ECDF), Simran Ballani (curator of the edutour), Sunny (handling logistics and Operations from ECDF), Sophie Wilson (The Apple Tree International Kindergarten), Dr. Imam (Crescent International School), Ester (International Christian School Nonthaburi) and all the delegates for creating a well-rounded and immersive experience.



**Tamanna Rahman** an Edupreneur, Image Consultant, Life Coach, and Event Planner, is a journey that transverses a a Biz Dev & Admin Professional at various MNCs in the IT Industry. She is the Founder of KIDSFESTIVAL Northeast, one of the largest inclusive carnivals for children, families, and schools since 2017. She is also the Director of Public Relations and operations at Spring Dale International School, Guwahati. (Speaker, Awardee and Edu Tour delegate at the event)

As we stand on the last leg of another trip around the sun, it is about time we look back at the experiences gained and milestones archived in the year 2023.

From KIDSFESTIVAL-Northeast receiving the prestigious award for the category - ***AN INCLUSIVE PIONEER EVENT FOR CHILDREN AND STAKEHOLDERS***, to having the honour of representing Spring Dale International School, Guwahati as one of the Panel Discussion Speakers on the topic ***“Using technology to enhance the traditional classroom in instructions”***, during my visit to Bangkok organized by ECDF, the year 2023 has been one eventful ride! One that I have enjoyed thoroughly all the while gaining life-transforming insights and first-hand experiences.

Speaking of first-hand experiences, my visit to Bangkok undoubtedly tops the list as it helped me view the city from an altogether different and fresh perspective.

A silent city with no honking policy visited by more than 20 million tourists to enjoy the culture, monuments, shopping, and nightlife, it was indeed refreshing to see that Bangkok isn't lagging when it comes to adapting to the new pedagogy of education, be it in Early Childhood Education or K12, the British and Finland education curriculum being the most followed ones.

It was an intriguing experience to comprehend the methodologies and teaching techniques utilised in a foreign country's Early Childhood Education. The skill-based methods adopted to teach the children to stay connected to nature and being self-sufficient enough to understand and visualise each new element are immensely effective and commendable.

However, what was truly refreshing and humbling to witness was the calm attitude and polite gestures of all the educators combined with their willingness to share and learn more from different stakeholders of educational forums from different parts of the world. To sum it up, it was an experience to treasure, the learnings of which I aim to utilise in the development of the young minds I come across.

I look forward to unlearning and learning more from such wonderful platforms and being connected to all the wonderful people who have dedicated their lives to developing and upscaling the new generations.



**Rashida Begum**, administrative head, NEPNI Group of Institutions.  
(Awardee and Edu Tour delegate at the event)

Educators from around the globe were a part of the Global Educators Conference and Edu tour 2023, which was organized by the Early Childhood Development Forum, held from 23rd to 25th November 2023 in Thailand.

I participated in the Conference as a delegate. The event was to explore innovative teaching methodologies and witness the dynamic learning environment. Being a Teacher Educator, the conference was very much beneficial for me. It was a matter of pride for me to introduce my organization NEPNI on such an international platform for the first time. The Conference aimed to bring together Educators around the Globe to share their teaching ideas on pedagogical innovation and application. It was a great experience for all of us to visit different international schools as a part of our Edu tour. I could relate to the importance of NURSES in Early Childhood Education. The conference also had a plenary session where speakers had the chance to speak on the topic of using technology to enhance traditional classroom instructions. The conference ended with the ECDF GLOBAL PINNACLE EDUCATION AWARDS, 2023. I was glad and honoured to receive the most prestigious Award for my organization in the category of PIONEER IN NURSING EDUCATION, held on 25th November 2023 at the Christian School, Nonthaburi, Thailand. The Award was presented to me by Edward Roy Krishnan, founder and director general, of European International University in the presence of other dignitaries.



The conference ended on a happy note and was a grand success.. I wish the Chairperson of ECDF, Dr. Vasavi Acharjya the heartiest congratulations and pray for more success and power ahead.. Looking forward to more such valuable and informative conferences ahead.

**Usha Venkatraman** is the founder of the Mumbai Storytellers Society and a renowned storyteller and TEDx speaker. (Speaker)

Overall, the Conference was Good. Well planned and executed by ECDF.

Informative, as we visited three Kindergarten Schools and exchanged knowledge on the Early Childhood Practice adopted in Bangkok and how a concerted collaborative effort is required in Education. This was possible through the papers presented by the delegates from India; Dr. Vasavi Acharjya, Simran Ballani, Amrit Nagpal, Dr Jonathan and I, that gave a global perspective on Building Bridges - The Power of Global Partnership in ECD and K12 Education.



The Strengths were the Knowledge shared by all the delegates. Would have liked more papers to be presented.

My takeaway from the Conference was how the seeds of lifelong learning can be planted through the Reggio approach and Pearson Edexcel Curriculum to Early Childhood Education.



**Dr Mayuri Dutt** is an excellent educator, a psychologist a die-hard science communicator, and a Human rights social activist. She has been working in the domain of education for the past 42 years. Under her guidance, she has established more than 20 academies. She was featured in Journey magazine as among the 100 best educationists of India in 2019 and the 20 in 2022. (Speaker, Awardee and Edu Tour delegate at the event)

Congratulations, team ECDF on embarking on a new chapter in your career!

It has been an incredible journey to Bangkok, experiencing each day's visit, planned so meticulously, especially in our shared endeavours within the academic domain. The unwavering professionalism, commitment, and innovative thinking in the Schools that were visited have left an indelible mark on our interactions. Their contributions were not just commendable but truly remarkable.

While our professional paths may take different directions, I am confident that our trips will continue to thrive beyond boundaries.

I wish the ECDF team abundant success and fulfillment in this new venture, Dr. Vasavvi Achariya, Simran Ballani, and Amrit Nagpal. Your impact will undoubtedly be felt, and I look forward to witnessing your continued growth and success.

Cheers to new beginnings!



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### BRAND AWARDS AND ACCOLADES





## EDUCATORS SPEAK



*Deepti Bedi is an inspiring and imaginative IB educator with over 2 decades of invaluable experience in the Art of Early Childhood Education. Her unwavering dedication and passion for children's holistic learning radiates from her eyes and effortlessly flow into the engaging lesson plans. Parents, Children, and Fellow educators have consistently praised and commended her for her invaluable support and for enriching the wings of their imagination with new dimension.*

### Observation and Visualization: Transform and Redefine Learning

What's the last observation you made, and do you clearly remember about it? My observation about children playing on a soccer field with loud noises and colored t-shirts is that they cheer out loud for a goal. Have you ever wondered if this consciousness is turning the light on? I found my balance with observation, which lightened me up and graced me with creativity.

#### Building observation:

Building observation is a significant process that is built upon the senses. As an educator, my children get ample opportunities to play together with friends outdoors, observe birds, and see birds flying to swing along with friends in the park, which simply lays the foundation to connect with the sounds of nature. They often get busy collecting leaves, twigs, and flowers, fallen around, and some often begin to count, comparing who has more to just picking up flowers and gifting me. I gently bring them into the present moment and make them conscious of enjoying the present moment.

Thoughts are the dry expressions of the mind;

emotions make them juicy. We make these little humans understand that you must be able to direct it the way you wish. Unleash your power to be present in the moment. Once they deeply touch their lives by being conscious humans and not just being ordinary, they will turn other lives extraordinary. Observation is built upon various consistent practices, building on a learning environment full of calm colors to be closer to nature, which allows for connecting with peers and a free flow of expression. Establishing a culture of mindfulness and observation will certainly have an absolute impact.

#### Enhance-embrace-encourage with the right questioning:

The power of observation will bring enormous vision, which will bring creativity to every aspect of life. It's creativity that will transform you and your memory. As an educator, simple breathing techniques like star breathing, bee breathing, rainbow breathing, and many more have worked on my children and brought them back to the present moment. My favorite of all would be 'bumble bee breathing' as I sing

rhymingly. Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Take a couple of breaths. Breathe in through your nose, keeping your lips sealed. As you breathe out, hum a 'M' sound. At the end of your breath, breathe in and repeat.



Now learners are ready as their energies and thoughts are well balanced and they are ready to be one in the moment. I begin my journey with empathetic questioning, “How did that make you feel” or “What sounds did you hear when we were on a walk in the park?” to “What do you think lives in a big tree? Which allows me to check on the learner’s emotions and feelings.

### Explorers envisioning:

A right questioning technique enables the educator to walk along with learners. While finding and building upon shapes and colors, I ask questions like, ‘Can you find something in the room that’s shaped like a circle?’ or while painting, I ask them, “What kind of pictures should we paint today?”

My learners feel empowered, and we feel connected in class, which boosts self-confidence and brings along joy. Now learners have visualized and formed connections with learning and spending time with their environment.

### Model of 3 c’s

As an educator, following a model of the 3

C’s—choices, challenges, and celebrations—allows my learners to make choices within reasonable limits. Challenges that require problem solving and critical thinking further lead to overcoming challenges, which further boost confidence.

### Inner vision

My inner vision of keeping children happy and feeling good as they spend their formative time of the day with me carries a great responsibility. My words like ‘You are my sunshine’, ‘you make me smile’ to ‘I believe in you’ work as great motivators. The positive words spoken give them a smile. As an educator I embrace their mistakes and give them a power to think creatively at any problem with a solution maker mindset.

My idea of working towards believing that observation and visualization can transform their learning process with ease and comfort is that all they have to do is be present in the moment and just allow their thoughts to flow.

We join in with rhymes and play a game of different scenarios to solve puzzles, bringing along many skills of problem solving, building upon thinking skills, and making connections.

### Learning is reimagined:

Now little humans have begun to express happiness, joy, yays, and nays, which has given them a pack of good feelings. Now they look more positive and exuberant with energies.

As an educator, I have won their hearts, and positivity of thought will lead to a better acceptance of thoughts and response.

Let our energies be exuberant and focused, as this is our time to be spectacular.

## EDUCATORS SPEAK

Seema Goswami is a certified career Counsellor from UCLA Extension, a Bachelor of Education honours & B. Ed from Gauhati University, CTET qualified & holds a diploma certification in ECCE, Personality Development & certification in student's profile building. She has worked in educational field in various capacities as head teacher, school head and school coordinator with more than ten years' experience in the field of teaching.

Adept in developing college and career plans in line with the needs of students from various academic and socioeconomic background, she believes in creating and providing conducive atmosphere to students during her career counselling sessions. Seema Goswami has been conducting these Counselling sessions at various schools as well.



“Senses are the gateways of knowledge.” When a child is born the senses which he experiences are: responds to the sound, touch, light, hunger, motherly smell and the sixth one is the curiosity- “where am I?” Am I ready for this unknown world?

### The Five Senses and the Sixth One



The curiosity starts at the cradle and goes on till eternity.

Sensory organs play a crucial role in shaping a child's understanding of his surroundings and world.

If we look into details all the aspects of early childhood learning are based on sensory experiences.

Let's explore this in detail.

A child playing with sand, and mud, explores the textures, and softness & when he moulds the sand, it helps in his motor skills. Throwing the sand on others in a playful manner also helps in hand and eye coordination & drawing an object on the sand helps in strength control & also helps in the development of creative skills.





Plucking a flower requires lots of concentration. It engages the sense of touch as the child can feel the fragility of the flowers. A sense of achievement is secured when the flower is plucked successfully. Bringing the flower closer to the nose enhances the sense of smell. This one action can stimulate multiple senses.



Similarly, while looking into the child's eyes and making funny faces, stimulates the child's sense organ of seeing and thus reflects in smiling back. Isn't it beautiful?

Smiles are contagious, when you smile at others, they too respond with a smile in return. This is the first social interactive connection.



Have you ever clapped in front of a child? Just like smiles, clapping is contagious too. The

sound of clap not only makes the child aware of your presence but it is also a motivating gesture for the child to respond to you with a clap and smile again!

Taste is all about liking our favourite food and exploring it. The first taste that a child-experiences is the milk or liquid that goes into his/her mouth and also when he/she accidentally puts something in his/her mouth. Sense of taste is the first milestone where the feeling of achievement is secured as the child puts effort to like or dislike the food that goes into his/her mouth. Later it also helps in guiding them to choose healthy food choices as they grow. Food also plays a major role in activating other sensory organs. The smell of good food can be immensely satisfying while a foul smell can be severely upsetting. Similarly, the child also learns to understand the temperature of food and when and how it should be eaten.



The five senses are the five gateways of a child's life. The first five doors are where the first five milestones are set and each of them has some or the other connections with one another. Sometimes holding a toy can stimulate all five senses, holding it, can be a sense of touch, seeing the toy is a sense of sight, pulling the toy next to his ear to hear the response is a sense of sound, putting it in the mouth is a sense of taste & sniffing at it, is the sense of smell. Sometimes all five senses can be explored and activated by exploring a single object.

Exploring the world with the sense of an organ is a natural gift that a child explores effortlessly. These sensory organs drive the curiosity and



exploration of the surroundings which foster a better understanding of one's environment and the world where a child grows.

Having these five sense organs prepares a child to explore the '**sixth sense**', which is '**Curiosity**'. Curiosity is again a natural gift. There are no books that teach a child to be curious. A child is born with curiosity. The word **Curiosity** is derived from the Latin word '**Curiositas**', which means eagerness to know something. It is a natural desire to explore and learn something that we find interesting or attractive and it can also be unknown. The following points mentioned below will give us more clarity with the five sensory organs and the sixth one i.e., curiosity:

- Curiosity provides information to the brain to understand the external world or environment
- Sense of hearing, touch, taste, sight, and smell act as stimuli to receive information when curiosity increases
- Curiosity rises to its peak when the suspense is created in the environment to explore and understand more and more when the brain receives new signals and extraordinary sensory information. For example, A rainbow will capture the attention of the child and the unique visuals created by the rainbow will generate curiosity in the young mind which will further prompt him/her to explore further and understand how to explore what is seen in the environment. At this stage, a parent, teacher, or a responsible adult can guide the child to understand more about the rainbow.

Curiosity & Sensory Organs are two sides of a coin. They are interrelated and by combining both will contribute to a continuous exploration and navigation for a better understanding of

the world and to solve a complex problem and get better clarity. These two factors also help in adaptability, problem-solving ability, enhanced learning and understanding of oneself and others, helping in building memory, developing critical thinking ability, etc.

Learning is a lifelong process and proper integration between sensory organs and curiosity can encourage young minds to remain open to learning new things, exploring new ideas, adapting to new situations, and ability to solve any challenges with calm and poise. So let us explore this beautiful complex and ever-changing world using our sensory organs with all the curiosities which is buried deep inside our hearts and minds. Our curiosity will be guided by our sensory organs to lead us to our desired path.



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## EDUCATORS SPEAK



**Jahnnabi Sharma** is a Counseling Psychologist and Psychotherapist (CBT, REBT, Art therapy). M.Sc in Counseling Psychology, Trauma Informed Care Specialist. She works as a School Psychologist at SBOA Public School, Guwahati, and is a Consultant at the Gate Hospitals, Guwahati.

When we talk about the education system and the school environment, it is seen that social-emotional learning, or SEL emerged as a functioning element during COVID-19 and gained its relevance after the reopening of schools post-lockdown. However, SEL is a very age-old concept that started primarily in the U.S., functioning and incorporated in the K-12 classrooms.

Today, the relevance of SEL in the school context and the classroom environment is witnessed majorly in recent times. Children, especially are observed portraying inappropriate behavior towards their peers. This solely focuses on the ongoing bullying and aggressive interpersonal behavior intended to harm and affect the emotional well-being of the one being bullied. A means to show power and dominance in front of those considered “weak”, bullies usually suffer from low self-concept, negative emotions, adjustment, and family problems.

There is a lot of interconnectedness between SEL and the prevention of bullying if imparted appropriately within the school environment.

Social Emotional Learning will develop self-growth among students and put students on equal footing to succeed. In between all the rat race and competing for academic achievement, less attention is paid to the individual differences and poor interpersonal relationships that students face among themselves – in the classroom, playground, transport etc. Today’s 21ST-century

educators can bring reform and modifications to the curriculum through the formulation of policies and approaches that focus on the personality and socio-emotional development of the students that works as an antidote to the concept of bullying.

**Self-awareness** is a crucial concept that needs attention and to be taught during the early years of development. Being known and identifying one's emotions, accepting them, and being able to name them is of utmost importance. Children learn a lot through communication and observation, and hence parents and educators can take the role of modeling such behaviors. This would contribute to their learning of emotions as well as of others. This links to promoting interpersonal behavior, which is another major core component of SEL to understand their peers and other's emotions and how one feels in a given situation.

Modern-day education requires modern and improvised training methods. Inculcating **empathy, compassion, and pro-social behavior** at a very early age needs to be the focus of parenting. This is positively correlated with building awareness and developing sensitization toward bullying.

Nowadays, there has been a new concept and framework that has been introduced in the education system. Peer support groups or buddy system is one such idea. The idea here is to train and sensitize students who will act as “**peers**” or “**buddies**” towards each other and stand as a support system. The basics of this concept can be taught to children in primary and pre-primary classes through – philanthropic acts, group activities, and playground involvement, that ensure peer learning, gratitude expression, role-playing, exchange of habits, etc. within the children.

Today SEL is seen as more as a skill to be emotionally and socially capable of understanding one's feelings, and emotions, managing them, developing empathy, and applying them to build intrapersonal relationships. This is what is called social-emotional learning to yield successful and accomplished individuals in the future.

Social Emotional Learning however implemented, educators should be trained to first notice and address the emotions that a student goes through with every passing day, still managing to carry on with their duties, responsibilities, and class work. Educators can understand the needs of the students better with SEL so that they can identify distress or any behavior change among the students making learning more personalized and impactful. This would involve parents and school participation along with all the stakeholders in building a bully-free environment.

Parents need to be more considerate, give time to their children, and communicate more and more. They should also be ready to actively listen and participate in the conversations and their day-to-day life. To build a safe, sound, and comfortable space both at home and school to stop all those who bully and the ones called victims by enhancing positive parenting by the caregivers.

SEL works best for all levels namely primary, middle, and high school. However, if implemented at the foundation stage and early years of life, it will set the base and prepare them for better



emotional development and maturity for the future aiming at their holistic growth. From the traditional way of teaching and education which focused on the grading system, evaluation, projects, etc, using an integrative approach with SEL will put students on equal footing, helping each other socially in terms of challenges.

SEL not only adheres to the teaching methodology, but the teacher-student equation which is one of the most relevant parts of the education system is also uplifted in terms of yielding better adult–student interaction and brainstorming viewpoints, and perspectives in a room where learning takes place.

### **Educators and parents’ role in introducing SEL and managing bullying and victimization :**

Educators and parents can actively take part in implementing SEL and combining it with academics. Role plays, narration, and peer interaction, can be helpful. Educators and parents can begin by asking students about their week, the emotions they feel, and how they feel about themselves. The students can be asked to journal their thoughts and emotions on a day-to-day basis. However, parents cannot force or push the child into studying or learning something, and rather begin with modeling how to express, understand, and manage emotions for oneself and others. SEL is more beneficial when it comes to special kids or slow learners and incorporating the concept of “inclusion” in the education system. These children need to be dealt with patience and require formal learning techniques to make learning meaningful and easy.

Positive parenting awareness and necessities need to be communicated and awareness should be raised. Educators and stakeholders can collaborate with parents, conduct sessions, and take feedback about the quality of development and growth of their child. Bullying and any incident aiming to harm other students need to be taken under careful consideration.



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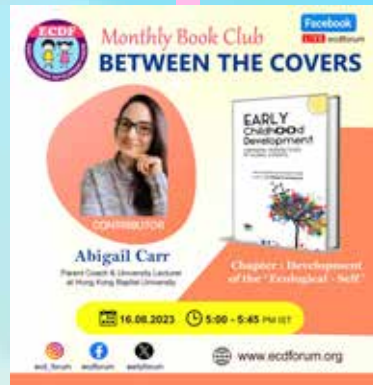


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Chairperson - ECDF-INDIA  
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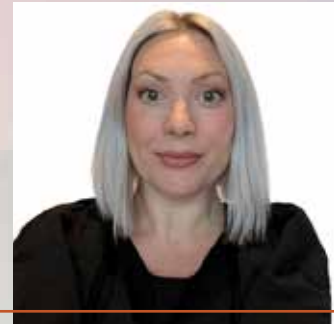
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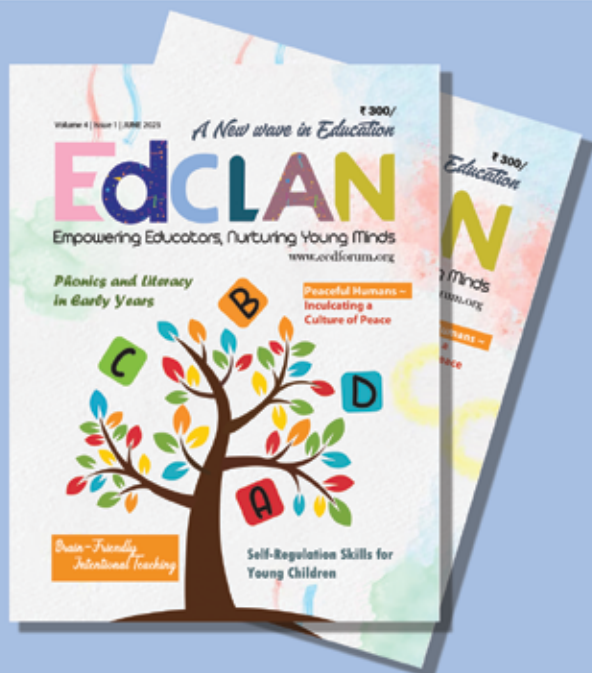


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