

The Teacher-Child-Parent-Triad

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As a professional course teacher, mother of two children and a working woman with many female colleagues having children, I have often seen parents constantly worrying over the grades of their children. But what can the worry do to make a better grade by their children? Should one be worried about the grade or the amount of learning that takes place within the child?

Learning is a process and not a singular activity which can result as a miracle. It is the joint and coordinated effort of the teacher, the child and the parent (The Teacher-Child-Parent Triad) that has to culminate in, the successful completion of the learning. Each party has a great responsibility which affects the effectiveness. Each one has to play his part, and must complement the other. And in its harmonious functioning rests the success. But how many parents realise this truth? They tend to readily blame the child if he doesn't make a good grade. They may even blame the teacher or the school or even his friends! Seldom do we find parents understanding, or owning their own lapses in this vital aspect.

I would like to suggest a simple formula for parents in helping their children towards a better performance. Today in an age of knowledge explosion and competition, right from birth of a child, parents are caught with the mad rush making the future of their child bright.

It is almost recognised now that the best investment for the future of children is in educating them as best as possible or invest in their education as desired and expect them to do wonderfully. But is that enough? Sometimes the one who scored less may have learnt a lot more and it will pay off in the long run. Let the child measure his own performance in

relation to others without a threat of disapproval. In case of any problem, meet the teacher and jointly work out a plan to help the child and find ways of creating better interest in the child. Ensure there is no physical ailments that hinder better learning like poor hearing, weak eye sight, etc.

Help the child to learn in practical ways and in real life situations. Let him have a chance to pay the bus fare, the bakery man or milkman and collect the balance. Plan your family activities with him so that he can choose the bus route number, location of the city for shopping, site for picnic and so on. Be a role model to him as in childhood, they do imitate parents. Your interests will gradually become his interests, where else will he learn from? Help him to take pride in doing things well and in time.

In studies, help him to do it seriously with concentration and no disturbance. Set aside time and make it a habit. Give a proper study space with appropriate furniture and climate of good light, no noise and so on. Help him search the answers for home work, ask questions on difficult ones where he needs help, but do not for heavens' sake do it for him. It is his home work and not yours. Help him to read slowly and understand and try to question and answer intelligently. Be firm with the set rules. Do not compare children, either with siblings or neighbours. Each one is different. Let them choose a method that best suits them.

All work and no play is not a healthy rule. Allow both in its own right and place. Give the child some additional responsibility at home to perform and to find satisfaction on completion. Reward if necessary. Do not give difficult or heavy tasks which will bring boredom or sure failures. Encourage more of physical activity and try to avoid punishments. At

times special privileges or incentives act as great magic. Let your child have surprises and when it comes through parents, they cherish it.

As your child grows up and reach higher classes, gradually step back from the daily chores. Let him feel more responsible for his own work, be available in case of need and let him know that. Allow sufficient freedom with his leisure time, hobbies, reading and outings with a glance from the back bench only.

Encourage reading of newspapers and discuss matters of common interest. Get acquainted with the usual problems of teenagers and watch out for early signs. If there is need to caution, do it in a friendly democratic manner. Always remember that teenagers are making efforts to become independent and help them in this process. Let them feel that you are a partner in this natural process and not an obstruction or nuisance. According to his aptitude or choices, help him to choose his future education, college and career. Under these circumstances they become responsible for their own actions.

Learning is a cooperative activity. A child is like a seedling which will grow properly if planted in the right soil with right care, right manure, and periodic weeding by a carefully trained gardener in an appropriate climate. Special care needs to be taken in extreme weather matching the condition. This will ensure a healthy plant which will survive against odds later in life, giving abundant fruits. In the same way, a child who is taken good care of in childhood by the teacher and the parents is sure to make a better grade and thereby better educated which will stand him through the thick and thin, all through the future. He will, then be able to live as a responsible citizen of whom his parents, teachers, family and country can be proud. The secret of success of the children is the Teacher-Child-Parent-Triad and their cooperative, continuous effort.

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