

Rewards or Punishments? The right way to discipline

"Discipline is about having the right relationship with your child, not only the right techniques."

All parents love their children and desire to do what is best for them, but most of us are not conscious of how our actions, words and thoughts affect our children. Most of us are unaware that traditional methods of discipline are not based on love, but on fear of not being in control or being too permissive, being ignored by our children, having our children make the "wrong" choices, being embarrassed in public, etc. Punishments and rewards are manipulative methods which may achieve our desired result in the moment, but they come with a very high price over the long run. Our child's self-esteem and the quality of our parent-child relationship suffer.

Let's look at why these manipulative, traditional methods do not work:

Punishments (imposed unpleasant consequences, threats, and time-outs): Punishments are unpleasant consequences that we impose on our children for doing something we do not want in the hope that they will learn a lesson. Going to the room and being grounded are the imposed unpleasant consequences.

Threats intend to make our child do what we desire because of their fear of an unwanted consequence. Threatening children with a punishment or imposed consequence implies that we do not trust them. Traditional **time-outs**, those who force our children to a designated place by themselves ("forced isolation"), are a form of punishment as well. We are not hurting them physically, but emotionally.

Reasons that punishments do not work: Teaches them that the only way to get what they want is to exert power over others. Makes fear the motivation, rather than desire to be helpful or follow inner values. Adversely affects the quality of your relationship because it breaks down trust and lowers the self esteem.

Rewards: It may seem that the opposite of punishments are rewards. Rewards and punishments are really two sides of the same coin. **Rewards** are most damaging when the task is already intrinsically motivating. Rewards train children to think, "What do they want me to do and what do I get from it?". Rewards and praise condition children to seek approval; they end up doing things to impress, instead of doing things for themselves. Rewards and praise can create a kind of addictive behavior: children can get addicted to recognition, and thus lose touch with the simple joy of doing what they love.

Alternatives to Punishments & Rewards: If we do not use control to teach and guide our children, how do we do it? The answer is: we build a strong relationship based on understanding, compassion and mutual respect. We communicate in a way that shows our children our unconditional love and our intention of honoring their needs, as well as our own needs, in a balanced way. Instead of forcing our children to make a choice out of fear of punishment, guilt, obligation, shame or a desire for reward, we can allow love to guide us. We can find solutions that work for everyone, by showing mutual respect and empathy and by focusing on our heart connection.

Focus the child on his/her own pleasure at achieving: Instead of lavishing children with congratulations, it's better if they focus internally on the pleasure they derive from accomplishment. Children are naturally thirsty to achieve, learn and conquer. When you see your child do something new, it can be wonderfully encouraging and supportive to say: "you look like you enjoyed that!", or "how did it feel to do that?".

Help him/her to self-evaluate: Whenever possible, it is a good idea to ask your child about their own self-evaluation. For instance: "how do you like your drawing?", "are you happy with how that piece fits into the puzzle?".

Ask them about their inner experiences: Say, for instance, your child reads you a story he just composed. After sharing how the story made you feel, you could ask: "How do you feel about the story you wrote?", "How did it feel to write it?".

Use "I" statements, instead of labeling the child: Your appreciation touches your child more deeply when it is expressed in terms of your feelings. For instance: "I like the colors you chose!", or "I love how you sang that song!" - instead of: "what a good drawer you are!", or "you're a good singer". Avoid labeling statements like: "Good boy for sharing your toys!", Say instead: "thanks for sharing with your friend."

Comment on the behavior, not on the person: Feedback and acknowledgment are definitely important. Imagine your child has just recited you a new poem she has learned in school. Instead of saying: "You are really good at recitation!", you could tell her how much you enjoyed the poem. Better still, be specific. These qualities come forward as a result of our guidance, our role-modeling, and our appreciation. Rewards and praise for "good behavior" or "good performance" simply get in the way.

Brick wall...



Group Activity - Play Group



Kaustubh - Play Group



Kairah - Jr. k - A



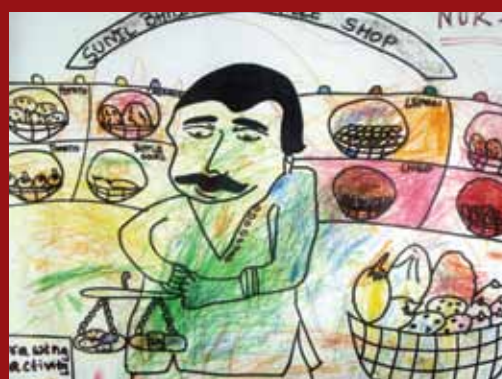
Aanshi - Jr. k - A



Group Activity - Nursery



Aryan - Sr. k



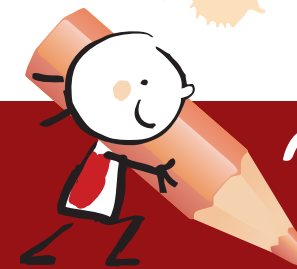
Group Activity - Nursery



Group Activity - Class 1



Amrita - Class 2



"Brick-Beat"

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Dear Parents,

In Trivandrum there was a famous school where not only were the results good, but the students became great contributors and exemplary citizens. One day the District Inspector of schools came to this ideal school to visit the classrooms. The Principal took him to the classroom of Unni Krishnan Menon, an elderly mathematics teachers and one of the best teachers of Kerala. The Inspector selected a student named Venu to ask a question, "Venu, 5 plus 5 will be how much?" Venu, stood up and said, "Eight." Teacher Menon said, "Very good Venu! You are right. Now sit down." All the boys clapped. Inspector got a shock and slowly walked out of the room. Inspector asked the teacher, "What is 5 plus 5 equal to?" He said with a smile, "Ten, of course." Inspector was further surprised. "Sir! Then how did you appreciate the wrong answer of Venu?" Unni said, "Sir, you have to know that same boy answered '6' for the same question 3 days back. Now you have to give time for the boy to come up to ten." He continued, "Sir, no teacher or leader can take any learner or team member all the way. Final 20% is to be covered by the candidate himself." The Inspector appreciated the deeper reality.

As we move towards the end of one semester of the academic year, it is time for assessments and discussions regarding children's progress. At this time, it is important that we see, value and appreciate the progress that our children have made through the first half of the year. There will always be many areas in which we would still like our children to grow further. However, as adults, let us be encouraging to our children and help them to develop further with our full support and engagement.

There have been many celebrations, events and happenings in the first semester. It has been an exciting start to this year and we hope to continue with the same spirit and enthusiasm. I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter.

Best Wishes,
Renita Handa
Founder
Redbricks Education Foundation

Launch of Redbricks Teachers Institute

We are delighted to share with you the launch of Redbricks Teachers Institute. The institute is launching a program "Post Graduate Program in Early Childhood Care and Education" with its first batch starting from 7th November, 2011. It is a holistic and experiential 6-month certificate program and it is designed to be highly practical and engaging. To launch the institute, ECCE expert workshops were conducted on topics such as Early years- the wonder years, Arts and creative development, Language and literacy development, and Nurturing young children in the 21st century. We thank our faculties Dr. Gargi Singh, Dr. Jigisha Shastri, Dr. Shruti Bhargava and Mrs. Beena Handa for these wonderful workshops.



redbricks | Junior
Play Group | Nursery | Junior KG | Senior KG



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Highlights

Celebrations!

Rakshabandhan

Students of all age group presented a special celebration on 'Raksha Bandhan' This was followed by a rakhi tying ceremony by the students and teachers to mark the spirit of the festival and spread the message of love and compassion.



Independence Day

This is the time when our school stage is set to remember and pay tribute to the great heroes of the nation who laid their lives to free us from all shackles. To commemorate our 64th Independence Day various patriotic performances were enacted by the children.



Project Approach at Redbricks

Experiences Construct Learning. We Create Experiences! At Redbricks, we believe in the power of experiential learning which was highly evident in the Project Approach. The teaching-learning at Redbricks happens through an activity-oriented approach, and a three phase model called "Project Approach" was implemented in all the classes (except Playgroup).

Phase I is when the teachers help the children to share their current knowledge on the topic and to come up with their own questions to investigate the topic further. Phase II is when the children and teachers engage in field work to find answers to their questions and to develop further real-life understanding of the topic. In Phase III, the children culminate their learnings and represent it in various forms through their work. They prepare for the final display of their project work along with the teachers which helps them consolidate and display learnings from the project.

The parents were invited to view the children's work displays and overall they expressed their happiness for this approach. Most parents shared that the children have learnt a lot through these projects and talk a lot about it at home. We, as a school, really appreciate the interest that the parents have shown during the projects through their interactions with children and sending resources/information to school. Project Approach requires extensive documentation and the efforts of all teachers also needs to be applauded as they fully dedicated themselves to making the projects most effective and meaningful. We hope to again implement this approach in the second semester this year.

Parenting Workshops

Academic Orientation for all the new parents was conducted by Mrs. Renita Handa, Dr. Jigisha Shastri and Dr. Shruti Bharagava on 6th August, 2011. An orientation to the academic approach adopted at Redbricks Education and basics of Early Childhood Care and Education was covered in the workshop.

In September, Dr. Darshan Shah, a psychiatrist from Antarnad Foudation conducted workshops for all parents on disciplining children and parenting. Various parenting styles were presented by him in the workshop and the parents were asked to reflect on the styles that they believe they adopt with their children. Many questions were raised by parents regarding guiding young children which were discussed in the workshop.

Given the positive feedback from parents, we will continue to conduct such parenting workshops from time to time. We hope to see more participation from all the parents in future.



Navaratri

The event began by offering prayers to the Goddess followed by garba performance by each class. The campus drizzled with the festive feeling of love, devotion and exquisite "Rass Garba".



Janmashtami

Students attired themselves like Radha and Krishna, the school was decorated with flowers, buntings, swings and pictures of "Makhan Chor" looked like Vrindavan.

Reading Workshop for Redbricks School parents by the teachers

With the launch of the Reading program, the teachers of Redbricks Primary school held a reading workshop for Parents of Grade 1 and Grade 2. The workshop revolved around the importance of reading, how to select books and they gave tips for reading to parents. It was an interactive session, where demonstrations were done on how to make reading an everyday practice at home and also emphasized on why reading is essential for our lives. Both teachers and parents had a healthy discussion regarding strategies for inculcating better reading skills in the children.

Holistic Development at Redbricks School



School is a place, which not only nurtures the academic learning of a child but also builds the personality and character of children.

Co- curricular activities at school: The co-curriculars at Redbricks include Visual Arts and Craft, Music, Dance, Drama and Sports. Various visiting faculties come to the school to share their expertise with the children. For visual arts, Ms Sujata is an artist who guides the students through various art styles. The sports classes have coaches like Mr. Priyank for Football, Mr. Manthan Choksi for Chess and Ms. Purvi Shah for Yoga. The performing arts have Ms. Yatri Sheth as a visiting faculty, a trained classical singer guiding the children in classical music.

Extra- curricular activities: Redbricks Primary School has designed and is implementing two innovative extra curricular programs- Self Enrichment and Interest Centers. The Self Enrichment sessions focus on building the life skills and spiritual skills of students. The classes are divided into various modules focusing on topics like Knowing Myself, Communication with others, Relationships, Thinking, Habits, etc. World Health Organisation (WHO) has recommended following 10 life skills as the most essential life skills- Self-Awareness, Decision-making, Problem solving, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationship Skills, Empathy, Coping with Emotions, and Coping with stress. This program focuses on developing students' skills across all these 10 areas. The Interest Centers program is geared towards Talent Development in children and is inspired by the Multiple intelligences theory of Dr. Howard Gardner. To develop children across the eight intelligences, it is essential to create an environment which evokes and exercises all of these intelligences. Through exploration activities in the interest centers, a young child's particular interests and strengths can be identified. Every month the interest center program focuses on a particular intelligence to conduct related activities. All interest center sessions start with free exploration of learning materials by children related to various corners- Linguistic, Science and Naturalistic, Logical-mathematical, Bodily-kinesthetic and Arts corners. The objective is for the children to explore and enhance their multiple intelligences, as well as to learn to make choices and develop interests.

Snippets

Ride within the city

Play Group children after the settling period enjoyed a ride within the city in the school bus.



Visit to the Veterinary Clinic

Senior kg children visited the Veterinary Clinic to explore pet animals treatment their food, habitat, etc., as a part of their project on "Pet Animals".

Visit to the Police Station

Junior kg and Senior kg children visited a nearby police station to get an understanding of the role of policemen and how they help our community.



Achiever's day

The kindergarten and primary school teachers interacted with kids about two great achievers from Indian History. Shri Rabindranath Tagore-a truly versatile genius and Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan - a great philosopher whose birthday is celebrated as Teachers' Day in India.

Visit to the Narmada Canal & SGVP School

Class 1 & 2 students visited the Narmada canal to explore monsoon rain water harvesting, and its channelizing to the fields as a part of their project on "Water". They also visited SGVP School in Ahmedabad to explore on the school's Gaushala and horse stable.



Visits to place of worship

Class 2 students visited various places of worship to learn that everyone in community are equal as a part of their ongoing theme "Myself, Neighbourhood and others in the world"