

What do we want our children to be like when they become adults?

- Someone who knows "Who am I?"
- Someone who cares. Someone who consciously thinks about people and things and how his/her actions or words affect them.
- Someone who consciously connects his/her head and heart all the time.
- Someone who is dependable.
- Someone who is independent physically, emotionally and financially.
- Someone who desires to contribute to society at large.
- Someone who is a problem solver.
- Someone who falls down and stands up again to face the challenge.

Where do we start?

It takes a village to raise a child. Our first village is the schools. Build a good relationship with the teachers/administrators, the after school tutors or childcare facilities. Always have a friendly attitude and an open conversation with them. Trust and respect them and assume they are there for the best interest of your children. Be involved with school activities as much as possible. Be active in your community and your neighborhood. Open your door to the peers of your children. All these are great resources and information. Your village is the ground foundation that good habits are built on.

Building good habits

As early as a few months after birth, researchers have indicated that it is possible to establish a pattern and routine for infants. "Sleep baby Consulting" companies have popped up recently to do just that.

Thus, a daily routine is the first step towards good habit building.

- Once the routine is set, be consistent and follow through. (That takes commitment and determination).
- Be confident. Little children, even infants can sense the uncertainty of their care-givers.
- Always look into their eyes. Handle them with firm hands and soft, gentle composure.
- If your care and concern come from your heart, they will get it for sure.

Focus and concentration

Some children are born with better focus and concentration. Others might need more help and attention. However, all of them can benefit from a few strategies that get them more engaged, especially when they need to perform tasks that are not all fun and enjoyable.

- Set aside a fixed time for specific tasks. (routine)
- Teach the good habit of sitting still and focus. (Make sure it is not playing games or day-dreaming.) Start with a short duration and slowly increase the time.

- Do one thing at a time. (Turn off TV, take away I-phone or I-pad unless used for reference). Allow breaks between tasks when it gets too boring or frustrating.
- Start with tasks the child is good at. Then move to work that is more difficult.
- Praise the child for each baby step in concentration and effort.
- Praise the process, not the person.
- Let the child have input on the routine or planning.
- Let him/her evaluate the progress and effort.
- Remind the child to use his/her heart as much as the head.
- Find ways to sparkle the child's curiosity and the need for exploration.

Practice, practice and practice

Learning to focus and concentrate takes practice. The more our children practice, the more they are able to focus and concentrate. Practice is defined as the customary habitual way of doing something repeatedly until the action is automatic. Malcolm Gladwell in "Outlier, the Story of Success" coined the phrase, "The 10,000 hour rule". He asserted that "the key to achieving the expertise in any skill is simply a matter of practice."

Without the hours of practice, real accomplishment is impossible. Creativity, imagination and inspiration are built on basic skills.

Parental support here plays an important role in the needed hours of practice. The 10,000 hour rule includes parental encouragement, financial, physical and emotional support. Conscious parenting in part of the preparation for achievement.

Thus, ACHIEVEMENT is talent plus preparation. Psychologists had closely looked at the successful gifted adults. The conclusion is: preparation plays a much bigger role than talent. Practice is not the thing you do once and you are good. It's the things you do that make you good. That is practice, practice and practice!