

The Complete Education Portal

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Horizons

Parenting by Example



Parents can make children develop resilience and strength by involving them in sports, cultural activities and community fostering holistic development.

Children are the greatest gift one can have, and they must be nurtured for the betterment of one's family, country and indeed the world. Countries gain their power and global influence based on their population size and demographic dividend. Given the stressful situations the world is facing these days and expectations that such stressful scenarios will be rising due to political and economic crisis in many parts of the world, children need to build up characters like confidence, resilience, compassion, etc.

Resiliency is the name of the game. Our hearts go out to people who have lost their entire belongings to wildfire in California, famine in some parts of Africa, recent floods in North Carolina. It is inspiring to see how these communities stood together and helped each other while local and national government agencies were doing their best to bring life back to normalcy. In recent few decades education has focused on technical skills, but the current political, trade and humanitarian crises around the world demand other skill sets which cannot be acquired only from structured classroom courses. It is becoming evident that holistic education gives some basic understanding of the world and the society for developing as a global caring citizen.



Kyle Galyean

“The concept of chasing excellence drives professionals to set goals, develop, and go above and beyond. If an individual sets that goal professionally, it will only drive them to do the same in giving back to their community. It is also important because employees reflect their organization and should be ambassadors in their community,” stated Kyle Galyean, Director of Social Services for UMC Health System, Lubbock, USA. Mr. Galyean’s job involves engaging with the community and serving as a bridge between care givers and community.

Parents’ Role

Recently, I had an opportunity to visit Spring Orchestra Recital at the US\$ 158 million newly built Buddy Holly Hall of Performing Arts and Sciences in Lubbock. Seven hundred students belonging to multiple schools in the Lubbock Independent School District participated in the Spring recital. The event attracted about 1500 people who were family members and the community emphasizing the importance of fine art in students’ curriculum and learning. I was pleased to know from the event that social skills and community engagement are critical skills needed in children to face the complex world.

Fine arts programs are one set of tools for the overall character development in young children. Such programs depend on the support of parents and community. Participation in orchestra and bands builds comradery and appreciation of fine things in life. Extracurricular activities like sports, music, and art build a sense of appreciation of blessings some children have. Such a profound understanding of bounties and resources is the need of the hour as there are parts of the world where children lack necessities such as food, shelter, and education.

It is in the interest of parents and society to support all sorts of extracurricular activities not only sports. Like sporting activities competitions in music and debating build competitive spirits. Competitions teach us that winning is not

only the goal of competing, but also to gain good moral characteristics such as lifting oneself up from failures, being flexible, planning for the future, team spirit, etc. An integrated approach imparting robust basic curriculum, involving science, mathematics, languages, and history along with broader skills will be a forward-looking curriculum.

Parents often face challenges to push their kids to spend time in the service of their community. To my query on this issue, Klye Galyean opined, “I believe identifying strengths and providing opportunities for growth and development motivates our younger professionals to go beyond their minimum roles and responsibilities.”

Not only children need motivation, adults who are busy professionals also need some sort of push. According to Galyean, “Leading by example is a tremendous way to motivate colleagues, however, providing peer feedback for accountability is needed as well. We must be willing to engage in crucial conversations and open two-way communication to support each other and encourage living out standards of excellence.”

Given the world shifting to be multipolar one with power centers in Washington, DC, Beijing, and New Delhi understanding of global cultures, having some level of proficiency in languages and exploring different parts of the world helps us to be a better person.

Living By Example

Parents and leaders of the community have responsibility to lead by example. I asked Mr. Galyean to highlight any events in his life which youngsters can use as an example. As a professional whose job involves outreach and engagement provided heart touching incidents from his life.

“One example of helping an individual was providing a hospital bed I inherited from my grandparents to a lady in need to discharge to a new apartment

safely. She was otherwise homeless, and an agency found an apartment for her, but it was not furnished, and she required a hospital bed to be safe. My twin brother, who also loves helping people, delivered the bed and moved it in for her. During that process, I met the Social Worker who helped get the apartment and through that meeting was able to recruit her to join my organization because acts of service and kindness, such as giving the hospital bed, were hardwired in the culture of our hospital.”

We see so many such people with a passion for serving in our community. Youngsters should be linked with service-minded people. Social organizations such as Rotary and Lions Clubs are good places to cultivate one’s interest in serving the community.

Encouraging Broader Understanding

Students from India and many other countries consider it as a badge of honor to gain diplomas from Ivy leagues. Admission to leading universities like Harvard and Stanford is not simply based on academic grades but depends on unique accomplishments and contributions. Admission officers look for contributions to society, international engagements, creative efforts as well as national and international excellence. Parents must engage with students and society to enable children to give back to the community. College aspiring students in the United States are aware of the importance of extracurricular efforts and there are streamlined resources for students to be engaged in activities beyond classroom education. Such resources should be made available in other parts of the world, where parents have a role to play.

Prime Minister Modi’s My Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat) initiative empowers youth and provides opportunities for youth to engage with communities.

Students from ninth grade should carve out time to do volunteering and other engaged outreach efforts. Volunteering in hospitals and veteran clinics will

enable them to understand pain and suffering. By contributing to the care of others, students can realize the purpose of life.

The medical sector is a good example to highlight the importance of giving back to society. Agreeing with this issue, Galyean stated, "In healthcare and medicine, you have several different disciplines who have committed their professional careers to helping and serving others. It comes naturally to see the various groups of medical professionals find opportunities to go beyond their work roles and responsibilities and find ways to give back to their community. Fitting examples of this are building ramps for people who need a ramp into their homes or the groups of hospital workers who volunteer to build a house for Habitat for Humanity."

To feel the sufferings of others and take little steps to ease the pain of others builds one's character. Mahatma Gandhi understood this and is evident from his preferred Bhajan song "Vaishnav Jan To, Tene Kahiye Je Peed Paraayi, Jaane Re."

Community Engagement and Outreach

Engagement is given importance in academia and industry as it has positive outcomes. Leading American Universities are having "Outreach and Engagement Offices," receiving the support at highest level. Engaged scholarship consortiums are supported trying to create a culture of professional and community engagement.

Parents have a responsibility to cultivate interest in young children to spend some time with the needy. On giving back to the community, Galyean commented, "My final thought is each of our lives are cups. We always perform and feel our best when our cups are full. If you fill other people's cups by giving back and helping those in need, your cup will always be full."

Holistic education encouraging engagement with community will be a new dimension in the education of future.

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