

## মনোভূবন সেন্টার

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## POP UP

## All things almond

Almonds are full of vitamins, minerals, protein, etc. They were much prized since the ancient times for the myriad health benefits.

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## LS SUGGESTS

## Hobbies for the child

Ask any modern, gadget-toting youngster — What do you like to do? The answer will involve his or her tablet/phone and some sort of game involving crushing zombies or matching candies with a side of watching fun videos over YouTube.

Hobbies now belong in an unfamiliar zone, quarantined away!

This is a far cry from the ideal vision for parents who want their children to develop a healthy mind ready to take on whatever the world will throw at them.

To encourage a hobby, let alone sustain it outside the tablet screen is now a mammoth task on its own. There is no shortcut to initiating a hobby but the first steps to it can be streamlined.

## MAKING TIME

Hobbies are meant to be pursued in free time. If free time is spread out in small irregular intervals, a solid bout of activity cannot take place. Outside of study and school hours, maintaining a solid time schedule is a must to nurture a hobby.

## TRIAL HOBBIES CAN HAPPEN

While a variety of creative activities can take

up a child's free time, cycling through a couple of activities before settling on a specific one is expected.

One week there may be a can't-live-without-it situation with a set of building blocks, by next month the interest may dissipate and be replaced with drawing cartoons.

Even after years of actively pursuing a hobby, a child may abandon it for a newer one. As long as it does not develop into a habit of leaving things unfinished, the experimentation process should be taken in stride.

## LEARN TOGETHER

No one becomes an expert in a week. Starting from sewing to origami to playing football, everything requires some basic learning to start with. As a parent, learning with the child is an extremely effective way to spend quality time together and acquire a new skill, which both are interested in.

## TAKING THINGS OUT OF THE SCREEN

Sure, the devices are essential for everyday work. But they cannot be the sole centre of one's activities. Reading can be done both on and off screen. A game of chess on the

board with an actual opponent is far more stimulating than the virtual one. As it stands, active participation is vital to develop a hobby.

## ENCOURAGING UNIQUENESS

Often children acquire good interesting hobbies which none of the parents are familiar with or interested in. Hobbies are after all a way of self-expression; as long as it consists of a wholesome activity, parents should not inhibit it.

## IT'S A HOBBY, NOT A TEST

Instructing a child to read a book and later on asking for minute details about it is no different than the school tests. This has a negative impact on the reading habit. It's the same for any other such activity where the parents intervene with a test-taker mentality. Rather the child should be encouraged to talk about the activities in his or her own pace.

Just about every parent has undergone the question of "What is your hobby?" multiple times in their young lives. Older parents had the chance of answering with coin and stamp collecting, over time the

answer included photography while reading has been the most common (with the best possible long term benefits!).

English essays on hobbies were a welcome sight during the exams since everyone could make good-grade-worthy pieces while actually enjoying writing it!

But the reality is that generations are bound to change. Just because the mother likes knitting does not necessarily mean the daughter will take it up too. At the same time the son may enjoy watching tennis while the father is an out-and-out football fan.

Encouraging a hobby for a child does not mean imposing the parents' hobbies onto them. Hobbies have their own rewards but only in due time.

For a healthy childhood filled with fun and learning is to maintain balance, the parents hold the key to developing it in terms of content, financing and time. All that remains is for the child to pursue a hobby freely and enjoy the best of his or her time.

By Iris Farina

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