

LS SUGGESTS

Nurturing creativity in children

Tahiya is a grade four student of Viqarunnisa Noon School. Aside from her weekdays spent in school, her weekends are preoccupied with singing lessons and drawing classes as well as debating club activities. Her parents are determined on keeping her young mind busy in a balanced manner, but Tahiya herself is mostly disinterested in the various activities she takes part in and sees nothing special in them.

The sad fact is that while the school years are filled with these common creative activities, in their more mature years, they feel no inclination to continue. The root cause of the issue lies in how the activities are introduced and forced-upon in the first place.

NOTHING CREATIVE TO START WITH

Extra-curricular activities have very little to do with natural creativity. The institutionalised singing, dancing, recitation, etc. are just like typical classes in a school and are inherently competitive; they demand quality in a quantitative manner. For some, they may work as a leg-up in expression later on, but for the majority, there is no sense of creative expression in these.

THINKING IN TERMS OF CREATION

The very definition of creativity embraces creating or making something. It may be a drawing for a bridge connecting North



Pole to the South Pole, it can be a solar system made out of fruits, it may as well be a story about how the windows and doors of the house talk to each other -- but it needs creation in its core. Creating things do not need the 'right light, the right space and the right time'; these are excuses that children should never be introduced to.

LEARNING AND UNLEARNING

If a child is capable of learning things on his or her own, the war on sustaining creativity is half won. This capacity to learn can and will trigger future creative growth. To begin

though, parents themselves need to unlearn their definition of creativity and broaden their vision.

NO WRONG WAY TO CREATIVITY

Parents often forget that a child may have a very different idea of creativity and will show it in a unique manner. Biplob, a seventh grader from Rajuk Uttara Model School and College, adorned his class note books with tin foil cut outs. His older brother however is considered the creative one since he is learning to play the flute. This type of discrimination, as well as a tendency to mark traditionally creative

activities as better, certainly leaves a negative impression early on.

There is no on-off switch for creativity. Some people embrace it a bit later in life, some are lucky to start off as early as three years old. The natural process also includes definite down-time. What any parent must do is ensure a judgement free attitude and be open to what the child is capable of creating. More than that, listening to the children is the true key to tapping into their creative potential.

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Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Bidhu and Tavishee



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