

Terrors of Hindi cartoons

In the modern age of Doraemon, and Motu Patlu, children are bound to embrace the language they hear the most; the one they associate entertainment with!

We have all seen at least one child running around and screaming some random Hindi phrase at the top of their lungs. What starts out as a cutesy phrase or two, ends up into a full blown conversation, often not as adorable as it was before. And the biggest culprit behind the whole ordeal is the black box we all have, commonly called the TV.

Azwad, a young seven year old boy, is no exception to this. He sits on the couch, hours at an end without taking a break, just so he doesn't miss out on any of the scenes of his favourite television programmes. Azwad's parents have all but given up on him and his addiction to the cartoons.

Every breakfast, lunch, dinner and any snacks in between, has to be served in front of the television, otherwise he just would not touch the food on his plate. And to appease him, Azwad's parents let him do as he pleases. Anything to make their son finish his food!



They let his behaviour slide until one day they are called to the principal's office, only to find out that their son refuses to communicate with his peers in English, and responds to all the questions only in Hindi. However, Azwad's parents were not the only ones who were facing this problem; many other parents were called for the very same reason.

We do get that it will be very difficult (read 'nearly impossible') to make children stop watching cartoons, however it has become essential for parents to maintain some rules to ensure that this Hindi speaking trend soon dies down. It might be difficult in the beginning but replacing the Hindi cartoons with the original English content or re-dubbed in Bangla may be a step in the right direction.

In all honesty, the fun aspect of 'chingam ke chingam se bachna impossible hai' will run out real soon, and all we will be left with, is a future generation which uses a foreign language, instead of speaking their own! And taking pride in it.

By Qazi Mustabshara Tabir

Photo: Collected

Children and acts of giving

Many of us donate money, time, and belongings to good causes every year, and it is the least we can do for those who are less fortunate. However, acts of giving should not only be performed by adults, our children, too, should be taught about the importance of giving. It was only after my daughter started going to school that I realised how important it is to ingrain in a child the significance of helping those in need.

My three-year-old daughter goes to a pre-school in the United States, where they teach children about giving from the tender age of two. In her very first semester, my daughter's class teachers asked her and other students to bring loose change from home to donate.

Every day, for two weeks, the children dropped coins, brought from home, into a jar that was placed outside their classroom.

My daughter's school is relatively small but together they collected \$386 last year, which they used to purchase treadle pumps, tree saplings, a goat and a clutch of chicks for communities in need. The school partnered with Heifer International, a global non-profit organisation that works to end world hunger and poverty, for this service project.

In the Heifer catalogue they sent home with my daughter this year, four Bangladeshi women were featured – there were stories about how their lives were changed by the donations sent to Heifer from different parts of the world. My daughter is three now and I see a big smile on her face when I send her to school with a handful of coins to donate to their winter service project - she now understands where this money goes.

Last spring, my child took a gently used

book of hers to school for donation. Her books are her favourite possessions, and it was the first time she parted with something so dear to her. She was a little upset about giving the book away, but when I explained to her where this book would go and who would read it, she was quite happy about parting with it.

My daughter's little school also organised its annual harvest food drive last September. The children were asked to bring a non-perishable food item from home every day for two weeks. The food

not undertake community service projects, you yourself can teach your child empathy at home. As a matter of fact, children's first lesson on giving should begin at home.

When you donate clothes, shoes, food or anything else to someone less fortunate, let your child be around. It's even better if you let your child give away his or her own old toys, books, clothes, and shoes to other children. I myself never forget to take my daughter with me when I drop our old clothes and shoes in dona-



items were later given to the state food bank. This project was also part of teaching little children about helping and sharing food with people who are less fortunate.

In Bangladesh, where many people go to sleep with empty stomachs, finding people to share your food with is anything but difficult. Many houses have more food than they need. Instead of overeating or dumping your food, find people you can share your extra food with.

Children learn about kindness through acts of giving. If your child's school does

tion boxes.

You can be your child's role model by participating in community service at least once a month. If possible, take your child along with you so that s/he knows about the importance of voluntary work for the common good.

Together, we can create a generation of children who understand the significance of loving, giving and sharing in their daily life.

By Wara Karim
Photo: Collected

Letter to My Past Self

Dear M,

This is a letter you would want to save for the future; for all the heartaches and bliss you endure.

Sometimes it might seem like the days are too long, but let me assure you everything will turn out okay in the end.

Even when you think there's no end to the pain you suffered, rest assured there will always be a silver lining.

The heartaches might be profound, etching a deep mark into your fragile heart.

I won't lie to you. Yes, you will be hurt!

Loved ones will be leave you for-

ever, for a new journey of their own; making you feel left out and alone.

But despair not; they are always there, residing in a deep corner of your heart. You only need to close your eyes and be conscious of their spiritual presence.

You only need to believe...

For all the people you lose in your life, you will gain a new bond; a new friendship, a relationship pure and selfless.

I like to call them 'human angels' and they will surprise you by entering your life when you are at your lowest and least expecting any sort of solace.

Trust me.

Just have faith in yourself. For the thousands of times that you doubt yourself that you cannot do, or perform; you are simply wasting time. Don't listen to anyone else, but your own consciousness.

For, you are capable of doing—all that you have ever dreamed of.

Finally, relax.

Take time out for your own self. Take care and prioritise your health.

You will be going through a lot of upheavals and downturns in life, but at the end you will come out as a winner — a survivor! Stay Strong.

Yours truly,
M