

Newsletter



Teachers' Resource Centre

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Dear Reader,

We hope you are well.

Inside and outside the classroom, here is a scene we have all seen – a child throwing a tantrum and an exasperated adult looking on helplessly, or worse getting angry herself. Anger, explains our contributor Anjum Bashir, is normal and just needs some sensible management. Meanwhile the headlearner continues her quest for better systems and tests out a new performance management system in the school for a year. In this installment of the Headlearner series Gaynor Smith outlines the key steps the school took. Our other regular contributor, Patti Weeg discusses a new classroom programme with an interesting twist. Generation Y is a programme that allows children to learn technology skills and then collaborate with the teacher to see how it can be applied in the classroom. The programme works by empowering the student as agents of change. By throwing a new light on the teacher-student relationship it enhances the learning process.

The Urdu section covers a diverse range of topics, from preparing case studies of students to a maths lesson plan for the very young.

On a different note have you ever wondered about the usefulness of the homework you assign? Read our article on the subject, for effective tips on homework

Meanwhile the theme of play continues with an article on maintaining discipline while children play. Our environment section carries an article on fresh water in both English and Urdu. Fresh water is the theme for Earth Day 2003 and by now you will have received TRC's booklet on the subject. You can use this article in conjunction with the booklet to inform students about this fast depleting resource.

Finally, in these troubled times with so much violence and destruction bombarding us through the media it is essential to keep reinforcing positive values in our children and keep our spirits up. We have included a box feature on special days giving you ideas about observing them. The days can be located on the TRC calendar and observing them will help instill a sense of community and raise awareness about issues in children.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

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Counselling

Managing Children's Anger

One of the four basic emotions, anger is a normal reaction. Teach children to manage the emotion and they can learn valuable lessons about handling life, says Anjum Bashir

By Anjum Bashir

Anger is both normal and natural. Since adults find it difficult to accept anger, we convey the same to children. It is not whether one should get angry or not, it's how we express it. Author and family therapist Steve Biddulph (The Secret of Happy Children) says, "In the adult world no one is ever, or would want to be continually happy. So for our children such an aim would be wrong. If you try to make kids happy all the time, you will actually make them and yourself quite miserable! What we really want are kids who can handle the many feelings that life brings...Joy is the goal, but being comfortable and experiencing all the emotions life brings is the way to get there most often."

The four basic emotions are anger, fear, sadness and joy. All other feelings are a mix of these. Anger arises from the need for freedom and self-preservation. Fear helps us avoid danger. Sadness helps us let go of pain, and joy is what we experience when we fulfill our other needs. When sadness gets out of hand we sulk, when fear gets out of hand we are shy, and when anger gets out of hand we throw a tantrum. 'Out of hand,' means unable to deal with the new feelings being experienced.

From the age of eighteen months to two years, a child discovers that his wishes can conflict with those of others. This is when he starts experiencing and expressing anger, since he still lacks judgement and linguistic skills to argue. As he grows older the reasons and expressions differ based on the social responses that he has been getting so far. We, as significant adults determine the expression and attitude towards negative feelings.

How to help young children throwing a tantrum

Early temper outbursts are a valuable chance to teach children how to handle life with more good humor and flexibility.

Here's what to do:

1. Calm yourself by noticing your breathing. Breathe deeper and slower. Notice your muscles too; loosen them if you can. Don't throw a tantrum yourself!
2. Help the child by sitting or standing closer to him or even holding and comforting him if he will let you. Don't spank him or yell at him. By being there and staying calm, you are letting him know you care for him and that the world isn't going to end just because he didn't get what he wanted.
3. Whatever happens, don't give her what she wants just to stop a tantrum. If you do,

throwing tantrums will become a way for her to get what she wants.

4. Talk it through

When he has calmed down, especially if he is three years or older, speak to him about how this is not a good way to get what he wants. Discuss how else he could get what he wants.

5. Prevention Most tantrums occur when both parties are overloaded. The child may be tired, or hungry, or even unwell. Learn the signs and be flexible with plans. Keep in mind that certain children have preferences, like doing things themselves, or following a certain routine. They probably feel they need some control over their overwhelming lives.

Tips for older children

Students often test teachers by seeing how far they can go with them. Don't get upset or angry as a result and try not to take it as a personal affront or threat.

1. Listen to what the child is saying. If the objection has merit, share points of agreement.
2. Ask questions rather than telling them something, state benefits rather than giving ultimatums, and assure them rather than making demands.
3. Avoid generalisations about behaviour or incidents. Many people can't do this because they 'judge' and don't talk. This is part of the problem and causes the student to get angrier. The student has learnt that she will be ignored if she is not aggressive. Therefore, try to find out what is really causing her aggressive behavior rather than labeling and giving up.
4. Think adjustment, and you'll help the student be less aggressive. He may need your time, attention, and help at times when you're not prepared to give it.
5. Provide opportunities for success. Lack of success maybe making the child vengeful.



Preventive measures

Children who have problems experiencing and expressing anger are those who have negative role models and issues with self-esteem. Increasing a child's self-esteem through socially acceptable means can go a long way in curbing anger. The following measures should help:

Affirm Unconditionally

Whether we like it or not, we live in a conditional society. Sometimes our children sense that they must perform to be loved. They have difficulty separating who they are from what they do, and unfortunately we often add to the confusion with our behaviour. While there is nothing wrong with recognising a child's accomplishments, such affirmations must be balanced by recognising the youngster's unconditional value.

Empower the Youngster with Choices

Whenever possible, allow the youngster to exercise decision-making skills by offering choices. This is especially helpful with the youngster who has difficulty completing tasks, as he is more likely to initiate and complete that which he has selected.

Occasionally let the child lead

If you have a child who is sometimes critical of the way you do things, let her plan the next activity. Provide a few guidelines then let her have a go at it. This won't necessarily ensure that everyone will have a great time, but it will eliminate much of the complaining. Be certain to recognise her efforts.

Make Tasks Fun

There's no rule that says that chores and tasks have to be miserable and never-ending. It's a fact, however, that more conflicts occur over issues of tasks (including homework) than anything else.

Lighten Up

If we're not careful we'll neglect opportunities to enjoy being a teacher. Hang on to your sense of humor; you'll need it. Let your students know that teachers aren't perfect. Encourage them to let you know (appropriately) if you do or say something that bothers them or hurts their feelings. If you were wrong, apologise.

Spit in the Soup

Sometimes stronger action is called for. If during lunch with a friend, you lean over and spit in her soup, you couldn't say

it was a mistake. It was a deliberate act. If you have a child who often drags his feet, a simple provocative statement can be just the ticket to create some sort of action.

Recognise Improvement

Students sometimes feel that if they ever did anything well, no one would ever notice. So notice. Recognise the child's effort, express your appreciation and what you think the improvement means.

Rewards and Payoffs to curb anger in the classroom

It's not the behaviour we want that keeps on happening; it's the behaviour we reward. Sometimes it seems that the principle just doesn't work. Actually, it works perfectly. The problem is that we're using it incorrectly.

Here's a scene about the no.1 problem teachers face in the classroom --noncompliance. Asad's refusal to complete his work is annoying the teacher, and he knows it. The teacher, anxious to jump start Asad, offers him a 'reward' - a sticker if he completes his math worksheet. Then the teacher stands back to observe how much effort Asad puts into not doing the task. Reason? Asad's holding back for a bigger prize.

The part we see: The sticker is tangible. We can touch it, smell it, lick it, and stick it. It has impact and holds value for the child. It might work if it was the sole goodie on the plate.

The part we don't see: We provide another more substantial reward when this child's non-compliance annoys us. The student's ability to frustrate us and cause us to demonstrate that frustration gives him something that has an almost addictive quality: the control over the feelings and behaviour of an adult. It is a powerful force, but, unlike the sticker, it is intangible. It can be easily

overlooked. And, when we bring other adults into the picture ("If you don't start doing your work, I'm going to have a conference with your parents"), we boost the payoff.

Asad might be an underachiever, but he's not dumb. He's figured out a way to get the biggest "bang" for his behaviour buck. And, until something changes, he'll keep at it.

Three Ways to Win the Payoff Game

We can win by empowering youngsters. Here are three ways to do it:

1. Empower by "adding to."

This one strategy alone will spare you a ton of grief. With many children today, if you "take away," you will eventually lose. Consequences for non-compliance are having less and less effect. Try to develop simple techniques for motivation by giving some sort of privilege or concession.

2. Empower through decision-making

Whenever a task is assigned, a child may or may not do it, depending on her general mood and disposition, and his nature to comply. Sometimes when we say "You will do this, or else," the child opts for "or else." So wherever you can, give a choice. Of course choices cannot be offered everytime, but wherever possible, it can reduce hassles enough to provide relief all the way.

3. Empower through self-evaluation

The following example explains this point: a teacher gives her students a worksheet. Staped to the worksheet is a small slip of paper containing three small boxes. The boxes are labeled: 'I remained at my desk,' 'I finished this worksheet,' and 'I allowed my classmates to do their work'. Paper-clipped to the worksheet and piece of paper is a small reward, perhaps a sticker.

Students are told that if they can check off all three boxes when they turn in the worksheet, they can keep the sticker. They are given complete freedom regarding their decision. This will reduce both student teacher and student-student conflict and carry over self-evaluation skills in other areas.

Assertion not aggression

Finally, I would like to clarify any misconceptions teachers and parents might have regarding the so-called positive implications of aggression in our culture. There is a very clear distinction between assertion, non-assertion and aggression. To use anger or aggression to assert oneself is neither acceptable nor required. The following definition of assertion will explain the difference: "Assertion has been defined as standing up for personal rights and expressing thoughts feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways which do not violate another person's rights."

(A.J.Lange & P.Jakubowski, Responsible Assertive Behavior: Cognitive Behavioral Procedures for Trainers.)

(Note: If you have any questions about the views expressed in this article please write to us and we will forward your queries to the writer)



A practicing clinical psychologist, Anjum Bashir has an MA in the subject from the Karachi

University and is currently enrolled in an M.Phil. programme. From 1996 to 1998, Anjum worked with the Liaquat National Hospital as a clinical psychologist. She has attended numerous training workshops and has presented papers at seminars. Currently, she has a private practice and conducts workshops on child psychology at TRC.

The Head Learner

Improving the school's systems, the headlearner researches best practices in performance management. Gaynor Smith describes the performance management system that the teacherstry out for a year

By Gaynor Smith

Model Public* School had finished for the day, but the place was buzzing as the teachers and some of the older pupils prepared for a group of visitors. Forty people from schools around the city were visiting to hear the teachers talk about their experiences, share good ideas and invite questions about the school's vision for learning.

This was a very important event for the teachers at Model Public School who had never led workshops or spoken publicly about their work. It was especially important for Mrs Jamil. Two years ago she could only dream of having colleagues who were confident, alive to learning and willing to lead others in their development as teachers.

The event was also unusual because so many of the local schools were actually in competition with each other for pupil numbers. Mrs Jamil had had to work hard to convince some of her colleagues that the principles of collaboration and learning for all should override the principle of competition!

Mrs Jamil and two of the older pupils, members of the student council, welcomed the visitors before Saira, the newest teacher in the school, explained how the evening was to be organised. Most of the visitors

quickly signed up for workshops, all of which were led by the teachers themselves.

Tahira Khan and Rehana Hussein led a workshop on a performance management system,



which was in the early stages of development at the school.

Rehana explained that the inspiration for introducing the performance management system came from the success of the structured induction programme provided for Saira, who was a newcomer to teaching. Saira had really enjoyed the professional dialogue with her induction mentor. The conversations had helped her to see where and how she could deepen her skills as a teacher. When the other teachers saw how Saira was growing in confidence and expertise they

began to discuss with Mrs Jamil how the school might make a similar system regularly available to all teachers.

There had also been a problem in school about how to decide priorities for professional development. In the past teachers had simply chosen a course or activity that they liked the look of and, if there was enough money available, they were able to attend. Mrs Jamil had soon realised that this was poor use of the

school's limited resources and, crucially, it meant that the individual teacher's learning was not always linked to improving pupils' learning.

Mrs Jamil and two willing colleagues spent some time researching the best ideas and practices in performance management. However there was no ready-made blueprint and it took several months and lots of discussion before the teachers agreed to try out a performance management system, which would be tested for a school year. After the year the

staff, led by Mrs Jamil and her two 'researcher' colleagues, would evaluate the process and make changes to improve it where necessary.

The workshop participants then heard about some of the key steps the school had taken in designing their performance management system. These were:

1) The writing of a performance management policy which contained:

- important principles, such as a commitment to performance management as a developmental and not a disciplinary process
- the anticipated benefits of the system to the school, the pupils and the individual teacher
- ground rules, for example, to clarify what information remained confidential and what information could be shared
- everyone's roles and responsibilities for making performance management 'happen'
- time-scales for meetings within the yearlong cycle
- examples of the simple and straightforward documentation to be used
- questions for evaluating the effectiveness of the system at the end of the first cycle

2) Clarifying roles and responsibilities

Mrs Jamil was responsible for the performance management of Tahira Khan and Rehana Hussein, while they each agreed to be responsible for the performance management of three members of staff.

Mrs Jamil, Tahira and Rehana were called team leaders. It was their responsibility to work with each teacher in their team to discuss and agree on

professional objectives and to play an active part in helping teachers to achieve them. They agreed to meet with teachers once every three months to discuss progress and ensure that appropriate feedback, training and development or coaching was being provided. At least once during the cycle the team leaders would observe the teachers teaching and provide useful, professional feedback.

This meant that during the year every teacher would be entitled to

- an initial structured conversation with her team leader to agree, celebrate and record their strengths as a teacher and discuss those aspects of teaching they wished to improve. During this dialogue teachers asked themselves 'how does my teaching help children in my class learn as much as they are capable of learning?' 'how does my teaching hinder pupils from learning as much as they are capable of learning?' 'how do I know whether my teaching helps or hinders pupil's learning?'
- a short agreed statement summarising the conversation and highlighting agreed objectives which, when met, would improve their chosen aspects of teaching. Teachers asked 'how will this objective help the pupils in my class to learn and make good progress?'
- a brief but focused action plan written by the teacher. Teachers asked themselves 'What specifically do I need to improve?' 'What specifically will I do differently?' 'What do I need to help me?' 'What differences will there be to pupil learning as a result of these changes and how would I know?'
- a chance, during the year, to be observed teaching and given feedback by their team leader
- a review between teacher and team leader in the middle of the performance management cycle to discuss progress

and plan for further action if necessary

- an opportunity for professional development activities linked to the teachers and the school's priorities for improving teaching and learning

The conversation between team leader and teacher was to remain confidential. However, it was agreed that each teacher's statement of objectives and summary of development needs should be kept by the teacher, team-leader and Mrs Jamil. Mrs Jamil could then maintain an overview of the quality of teaching in the school and allocate limited funds for professional development in a more focused way.

3) Providing training in key skills for performance management

The teachers themselves had a very important part to play in the school's performance management process. They needed to be willing to reflect on their teaching, to question themselves and be able to make good use of feedback from their team leaders. The team leaders, for their part, must become skilful in encouraging dialogue and giving feedback to their colleagues.

Training was provided for both team leaders and teachers to improve their skills of active listening, questioning, observation of teaching and the giving and receiving of feedback.

**Names of the characters and the school mentioned in this article are fictitious.*



Gaynor Smith is an education consultant with Education Bradford, UK. She specialises in the continuing professional development (CPD) of head teachers and is an accredited trainer for Performance Management. Gaynor has co-edited a series of books on educational leadership.

Empowering Students as Agents of Change

An exciting new programme called Generation Y is empowering students to partner with their teachers and bring technology into the classroom

By Patti Weeg

As the dismissal bell rings at Delmar Elementary School, 980 students leave the building and begin their ride or walk home from school. The school is located in a rural area on Maryland's eastern shore about 40 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. But at least nineteen students are not going home at this time. They can be seen moving quickly down the halls to the Media Center computer lab, called "The Write Place," where they will stay until 5 pm learning new technology skills.



Why are these excited nine- and ten-year old students so eager to learn something new? So eager that they are willing to remain two hours after school, two days a week for thirty weeks?

The students are participants in a programme called Generation Yes (www.genyes.org).

The typical Gen Yes class has about 15-20 students. Eighteen teachers volunteered to be part of the Delmar Gen Y team. This was exciting! After the teachers volunteered it was time to select students. Delmar Gen Y students were selected based on (partner) teacher's recom-

mendation and are 9-, 10- and 11-year olds. Students are not required to have extensive knowledge of technology in order to be Gen Y students. The nineteen Gen Y students at Delmar have a desire to learn and an interest in technology and collaboration with a partner teacher.

Agents of change

The Generation Yes programme is not new, though it is new to Delmar Elementary. It has been in existence since 1996. The programme empowers students to be agents of change in their schools. They learn technology skills in a Gen Y class which lasts for eighteen weeks at the secondary level and thirty weeks at the elementary level. A designated Generation Yes teacher in the school leads the class with curriculum prepared by the Generation Yes staff.

After several weeks of classes during which Gen Y students learn technology skills, these students collaborate with a partner teacher to decide which curriculum unit or lesson can be enhanced by including technology. Together they create a technology infused lesson for the partner teacher's class. Partner teachers bring their educational expertise to the team while students bring technology skills, which they have learned in the programme. Students may search for websites that address the lesson topic and make a PowerPoint presentation that provides links to the websites. The student might create an interactive Kidspiration template that addresses a desired skill or create a KidPix slide

show. On the day when the lesson is scheduled to take place, the Gen Y student is present to assist the partner teacher or even teach the lesson for the partner teacher. In a programme of this type, students are the catalysts for change. They share skills with teachers who may not have time to infuse their lessons with technology or who may be "technology reluctant" for whatever reasons.

Learning new skills

During their after school computer classes Gen Y students learn basic computer skills, e-mail, web searching techniques, educational software programmes such as Kidspiration, KidPix, PowerPoint, and Graph Club. They also learn how to use a digital camera and scanner. Their afternoon classes include topics such as collaboration with a partner teacher, mentoring, presentation and leadership skills and more.

During the second week, Delmar Gen Y students created a simple Valentine image in Windows Paint. They saved the file and then sent it to their parents as an attachment in an e-mail message.

Learning skills in context makes the classes more exciting for students. There is an audience and a purpose for what they are learning to do. The students were eager to show their parents that they are learning new skills... skills that perhaps their parents do not know.

Benefits for all

Empowering students to use technology and partnering them with a teacher brings amazing benefits to all involved in a school and its local community. Technology reluctant teachers have a knowledgeable student at their side to help them. Students in technology classes feel proud to be on a team of students who assist teachers.

A Delmar teacher shared his thoughts about students and technology, "I'm probably the typical teacher who loves to

have a computer in the classroom, but through lack of knowledge and intimidation, does not realise the power a computer gives a student. I experienced a relatively shy student who blossomed through using our computers. He started explaining, demonstrating and teaching computer procedures and programmes to everyone in the classroom - including me. His excitement in using the computer as a learning tool has definitely boosted his self-esteem." (Jim Lingo)

Students have positive comments about their roles as mentors. Linzy, a fourth grade student, wrote in her Gen Y journal, "I am really glad that I'm in the Gen Y program because we get to learn more about computers and I get to work with my partner teacher!"

Dawn Cuffee, the librarian at Delmar willingly agreed to partner with two Gen Y students who will develop a valuable tool for her to use in the Media Center. The students will scan covers of new books. The images and a short description of each book will be put in a PowerPoint presentation so that any student will learn about new arrivals on the library shelves very easily.

Students can initiate valuable changes in a school if given the opportunity. I am watching this happen first hand as I work with the Generation Yes students at Delmar and teach them new skills.



Patti Weeg is a computer teacher at the Delmar Elementary School in USA.

She is actively involved in teacher training and has presented at many conferences on integrating the internet into the curriculum. Patti has written a book *Kids@work: Math in the Cyberzone* and has received awards including MICCA computer Education of the Year and Maryland Distinguished Technology Educator.

Play

When it all comes tumbling down

Are your scared things will get out of hand if you let the children play uninhibitedly? Or that you may end up controlling the situation too much? Here's how to walk the thin line between being too authoritative and too mellow

By Shahrezad Samiuddin

TRC

Lets start by stating the obvious - all children love to play. And all children, who love to play, have their 'moments.' That is, there are times when they can get carried away and things will quickly deteriorate into an anarchy-like situation.

Many teachers, especially new ones, throw up their hands in exasperation and give up when it comes to discipline. Many approach the issue by questioning whether efforts to discipline are worth it. And many a times, when a game of tag prematurely ends with the children running unrestrained or two boys thrashing each other, the easiest thing to do is to do nothing.

However, a little introspection helps, before you begin to blame someone else. Often the person, who is in charge, can be the cause of the indiscipline. Unwittingly of course, because no teacher wants an uncontrollable class or child, on her hands. Secondly a little planning also helps. To be able to control a class at play it maybe necessary to divide them into groups and send them out separately. That way the number of children playing will stay manageable.

Say you have been assigned recess duty, or you have a free lesson on your hands and you can sense that things will soon deteriorate into a spree of misbehaviour. Most children who misbehave merely want to be told what to do. They are probably misbehaving because they have nothing to occupy them. Remember you can always

teach them a game or allow them to play a game they enjoy, even if you are not a PE teacher.

This is backed by a study carried out in the US that found that organised games for children reduced the incidence of inappropriate behaviour.

But before you plunge into introducing games in this situation, start by laying down the rules. Children should be told how to behave before they are expected to behave. If possible (and if the children can read), write out the rules and put them up where everyone can see them. Lay down the rules, such as, 'No hitting. If you are hit or want to hit someone, go to an adult,' 'No swearing' and 'No climbing the walls.' They should also know that breaking a rule means certain consequences.

Follow a deliberate sequence for the 'consequences,' so that you continue to communicate with the child if he is losing control. Here is an example of a procedure that you could follow. At the first incidence of misbehaviour, the student will be warned quietly. This is done because, hard as it may be to believe, sometimes the student may not realise that his action is wrong. At the second incidence of misbehaviour, the teacher takes the student aside to discuss why he is misbehaving. This is especially recommended if the child is old enough and can be reasoned with. Another incidence of misbehaviour, and the older child is sent to a predetermined spot for a time-out. At this point the child has enough autonomy to

decide how long he will leave the playground for. This could be any spot that is removed from the area of activity. He may be told to go sit in a corner chair or bench and 'cool off,' before returning to join play. When he feels he has calmed down, he can return and join play (incidentally the teacher can follow a similar principle when she feels she will lose her temper with a misbehaving student –count to ten before you give in to the urge). The fourth incidence of misbehaviour could be dealt with by sending the older child



to the time-out area for a pre-determined time, say 5 minutes. Here the teacher will be determining the time (i.e. taking the decision without consulting the misbehaving student) and is thus withdrawing a privilege. And finally in the rare event that these steps are unsuccessful in changing the child's behaviour, the last resort is to call in the parents.

If you are working with younger child, it is inadvisable to try the time-out technique. Even with older children it should be used only after you have tried other methods.

The time out technique takes the students out of the play environment and places her in another area when she misbehaves. It communicates to her that she has disrupted the class and so has to be removed, so that the rest of the class can carry on. In case two children have to be sent for time-out for fighting with each other, separate them so that the animosity does not continue.

However, such techniques work only in the short term, and for them to be effective the game the children are playing

should be one that they enjoy. Otherwise the child will not want to join the group again and will be quite happy not playing.

But more preferable to this approach is to encourage positive behaviour, rather than constrain the negative. There are many ways a teacher reinforces certain behaviour. She can use praise that is specific (e.g. "great catch, Saima!"), physical contact (e.g. a pat on the back) and physical expressions (e.g. clapping) to convey a reinforcer. She can also use token reinforcers such as medals or

trophies. However, as discussed in the article on competition in play in the newsletter's last issue, the teacher has to be careful about how the rewards are perceived.

The teacher can also use what is known as the Premack Principle to reinforce certain behaviour. In the Premack Principle an activity that the children enjoy is used to encourage an activity that they are hesitant to perform. For instance, 'We will begin the game, when everyone is quiet.' But again be careful how this is used so as not to undervalue another activity. Saying 'Finish your apple first so that you can go out to play,' undervalues eating the apple and at a general level the act of eating.

Children should also have certain prompts when they are playing. These will remind them about what is appropriate behaviour. The most obvious prompt is modeling. In this case the teacher models the desired behaviour and the children automatically take the cue. For instance, after a teacher is done demonstrating what to do with a football, she will put it back in its place,

prompting the children to do the same. The teacher can also use verbal cues to prompt behaviour. For instance by telling the children to 'Form a straight line.' The same could be conveyed through body language. In many cases, especially when the children are young, the teacher can physically prompt a child by moving him into position or moving his body into the proper alignment. Used properly, eventually the children should not need to be prompted.

To act fairly and continue to maintain discipline during play, there are certain principles the teacher should remember. Remember that all children whether they are our own or our students can drive us to the limits of our patience. At such times it helps to remember to address the child's inappropriate conduct rather than attacking the child himself. Say, 'it is upsetting to see you fighting with Ali,' rather than, 'You always fight with everyone.'

Secondly, when the disruptive and misbehaving child is old enough one can use reason and persuasion, while discussing things through. By being democratic the teacher provides a good environment for games and play. On the other hand by being authoritative or aggressive the teacher provides an environment that may seem less disruptive on the surface, but may turn aggressive the minute the teacher's back is turned. So praise loudly those who are correct and whisper to those who are not.

Remember that all children are looking for clearly defined limits. The children should know that antisocial behavior will carry certain consequences, yet they should be aware that when they modify their behaviour they can join the game again, as a full and equal member.

And as a teacher you should be willing to analyse a situation and honestly assess where you went wrong. Go in with a positive mindset, knowing and believing that the majority of children choose to cooperate and participate in any setting.

Special Dates

Special dates are special, because they remind us of important issues in the world around us and help instill a sense of community and belonging. Here is a list of special days that fall between April and June. Mark them on your calendar (they are already marked on the TRC calendar) and do the suggested classroom activity.

22 April is **Earth Day**, which seeks to promote a healthy environment and a peaceful, just, and sustainable world. (TRC also sends out an *Earth Day* booklet to its members)

Classroom Activity:

You will need: a large sheet of white paper (on which all the children can work), crayons or markers, some selected litter (gum wrappers, discarded soft drink bottle, etc)

Ask the students to draw a pretty scene on the paper. Next ask them to draw a line through the centre and glue the litter on one side for contrast. Put the picture up on the wall.

April 23 is **World Book and Copyright Day**. World Book Day seeks to promote reading, publishing and protection of intellectual property. The day draws its inspiration from an old Catalan (Spanish) tradition in which numerous book fairs are held there on this day. April 23 also marks the death and birth of writers Miguel de Cervantes and William Shakespeare, respectively.

Classroom Activity:

Encourage children to make bookmarks. Ask them to decorate it with their favourite quotes from a book or interesting sayings.

From **April 21-27** is **TV-Turnoff Week**. The general consensus about TV is that it eats into family time, leads to unhealthy sedentary habits and often, educational underachievement. Started in 1995, TV Turnoff week is an annual

event which encourages a healthier lifestyle.

Classroom Activity: A few days before TV Turnoff Week have a discussion about the bad effects of watching too much television. The children should then make a list of recreational activities that they could do instead of watching TV.

Note: Do not pressure them to turnoff their TV for a week

May 1 is **Mayday** which is the international holiday of the working class that was originally observed in pagan Europe as a festive day for the first spring planting. The modern day celebration of Mayday evolved from the struggle for the eight-hour day back in 1886. The struggle resulted in many deaths and to commemorate the dead the International Working Men's Association (the First International) in Paris in 1889 declared May 1st an international working class holiday.

Classroom Activity: You will need the following for each child in the class: a bag, a balloon, candy, staplers or ribbon. Mayday is a holiday, so the day before, arrange an assembly line game. Seat children in lines and hand the first worker bags (one for each child in his line). The second worker gets the candy, the next gets the balloons and so on (you can include any other item the children may want that will fit into the bag). The last worker has a stapler or ribbons to tie up the bags. The children start filling the bag and passing it back and then take home a goodie bag each.

May 3 is **World Press Freedom Day**. This day is celebrated to evaluate press freedom around the world, to defend the media from attacks and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the course of duty.

Classroom Activity: This activity will help children appreciate the different perspectives of

different newspapers.

You will need: different copies of that day's newspapers (both English and Urdu) for each group of 3 or 4 people. Ask each group to find one story that is covered by all the papers and compare the treatment of their selected item, by looking at the source of information, the pictures, and the relative emphasis in each paper.

Have a class discussion about the differences in language used and what it reveals about the writer.

May 15 is **International Family Day**. The day is dedicated to recognising the importance of the fundamental unit of society – the family.

Classroom Activity: Make a family hand flower: Ask the students to trace or take a print of the hand of each member of the family. Paint the traced hands. Stick a stem and leaves on a piece of paper. Stick the hands onto the piece of paper, where you would normally put the flower and stick it onto a piece of paper.

5 June is **World Environment Day**. Commemorated each year on 5 June, World Environment Day is the vehicle through which the United Nation stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action.

Classroom Activity: What you need: cardboard, old newspapers, plastic bags, tape or glue. Take the children on a litter hunt. Direct them to the playground and ask them to pick up all the litter (not broken glass) and put it into plastic bags. Take the litter inside and empty it onto newspapers to see what has been collected. Cut out a large shape of a dustbin from cardboard. Stick an example of each litter item and write the number of each item found.

Once the display is made, the children could make posters encouraging everyone to keep the playground clean.

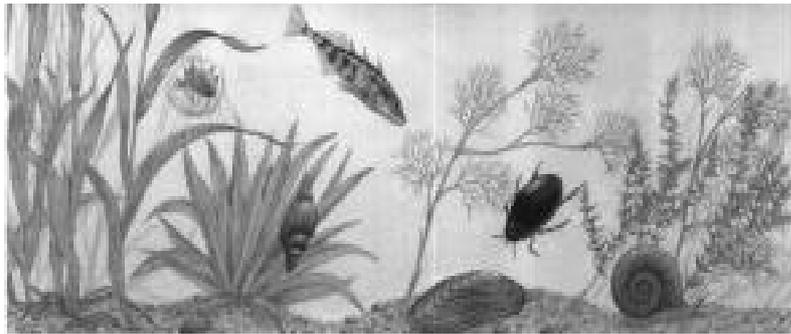
The International Year of Fresh Water

The world currently faces a water crisis. This article outlines how schools can raise awareness about conserving this scarce but essential resource

By IUCN Pakistan

Fresh water is blood for our earth, nourishment for our forests and crops and shimmering beauty in our landscape. However, the availability of fresh water is one of the most significant issues facing humanity today. The problem is not the supply of water, as the earth has virtually the same amount of fresh water today as it did in pre-historic times (i.e.

Like the rest of the world Pakistan also faces a critical shortage of fresh water, which is exacerbated by numerous other environmental issues such as soil erosion, deforestation, and fresh water and marine water pollution. Major sources of fresh water pollution are industrial and domestic wastes. In addition, lack of water treatment facilities and



only one percent of our overall water resources). The problem is our increasing population and the flagrant mistreatment of one of our most precious resources.

This is a resource we cannot take for granted, as it plays a key role in satisfying basic human needs, agriculture, energy, health, ecosystems, as well as combating poverty. A healthy human being can live for a month without food, but will die in less than a week without fresh water.

This year is the International Year of Fresh Water and aims at raising awareness of the importance of protecting and managing freshwater resources. It is a platform for promoting existing activities and developing new initiatives for water resources at the international, regional and national levels.

awareness also results in dumping of untreated waste in our rivers and lakes.

To make matters worse 80 percent of infant diseases in Pakistan are water borne, 45 percent of infant deaths have been attributed to diarrhoea and 60 percent to overall waterborne diseases. These health problems cost Pakistan approximately \$750 million annually.

This dire state of affairs calls for the development of policies and strategies at the national and provincial levels to address the issue and also raise awareness. Teachers, for their part, can play a vital role in developing awareness amongst their students at the very basic level.

By integrating issues of environment and water in subjects such as science, language, social studies, mathematics,

Islamiat and recreational arts teachers can enrich the content of the subject. To this end the following activities can be done at the school level:

- Teachers can encourage classroom discussions and research through available media resources and organisations in this field such as government institutions and IUCNP – the World Conservation Union and WWF World Wide Fund for Nature. Students can be assigned to research and write papers on various aspects of the issue. The papers can then be presented at school events attended by parents and other community members. They can also be printed in the school's publications.
- Relevant guest speakers can be invited to the school to speak on the issue.
- Water wastage can be highlighted at the school level (See the TRC booklet for tips on conserving water)
- Teachers can invite students to mark local water resources on a map and have classroom discussions about them.

Students could then research and write about scientific, cultural and historical aspects of important rivers or lakes of Pakistan. This could be used to highlight the problems faced by these communities due to pollution of these water resources and scarcity of fresh water.

- Teachers can plan events and public awareness campaigns on the theme of water conservation. Students can participate in poster competitions, art exhibitions, plays and poetry writing competitions, on the theme. Such events could be organised around World Water Day (March 22nd).

These and other such activities can be pivotal in increasing awareness about the issues related to fresh water. It is only through education that water management at individual and community level can be stressed and practised.

ECE going to scale

TRC took the first steps in implementing the National ECE Curriculum at the national level. An initial workshop leader-training



workshop took place at the TRC premises. Fifteen teachers from public-sector schools who were part of TRC's original ECE project, took part in the training. This was an intensive 60-hour workshop that stretched over 10 days and participants were acquainted with the National ECE curriculum and also trained by TRC's ECE staff to become workshop leaders themselves.

Under the USAID- Aga Khan Foundation's Releasing Confidence and Creativity (RCC) project the newly trained workshop leaders joined TRC's ECE staff to train teachers in parts of Balochistan and Sindh. Two work-



shops were held in Pishin, one in Mastung and another in Nushki. One hundred and four teachers from government and community schools were trained in Balochistan. In Hala, Sindh, 58 teachers were trained in two batches. The workshops were 45 hours each.

KAP Study on Child Rearing

TRC collaborated with the UNICEF to undertake a research study to explore the practices of primary caregivers in rearing children. The research project studied the knowledge, attitudes and practices of a sample of five hundred primary caregiver in Lyari Town and Jamshed Town (Lines Area) in Karachi.

A comprehensive questionnaire, which covered child rearing practices in health, hygiene, social and emotional development was developed for the survey.

Subsequently a pilot survey was carried out in Neelam Colony (Sadar Town) and Karo Lane (Lyari Town) through RASTI – a local NGO- and community workers of Lyari, after which a follow-up session was conducted.

For the actual survey the primary caregivers, the majority of who were mothers, were interviewed.



The data has been compiled and is currently being analysed. Based on the findings of the research, recommendations will be made to the provincial ministries of health and social work.

Monitoring visit in Kasur

At Save the Children UK's request TRC conducted two training workshops of 15 hours each for 54 teachers in Punjab and Sindh. The workshops were hosted by Sudhaar, Indus Resource Centre and Trust for Rural Development.

After the training TRC conducted a monitoring visit on 3 and 4 February 2003 to schools supported by Sudhaar in Kasur. Seven schools were visited for the extensive monitoring and evaluation exercise.

The results showed that the PTB (Pehla Taleemi Basta) was regularly used in the classroom and that the children enjoyed using it. One teacher in Kasur said that 'the children are more interested in learning now because they're using these materials.'

TRC website updated

If you still haven't visited the TRC website, now is the time to do it. We have added new links to the website and updated it. Now much of what you may want to find out about us is a click away. In addition to keeping you updated on the latest news



about us, the website also offers surfers the option to download our membership form, access several relevant links, participate in an opinion poll and a discussion forum and much, much more. Visit us at www.trconline.org and call or write to us to tell us what you think.