



21 Feb 2017

*From the Principal's Desk...*

**IN TOUCH 02/2017**

## **Achievements**

### **Badminton**

We are pleased to announce that our badminton players participated in the SPSSC West Zone Primary Schools Badminton Tournament 2017 and achieved the following:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Position</b>
LEOW WEI SHEEN	4B	Junior Boys	4th
JOEL YONG XUAN WEI	4B		
CHAI TZI YU	4C		
TAN ZHENG ZHI ARISTO	4D		
NG YONG XIN	4F		
JAYANT YEO ZHI XIANG	5D		
TEO MING XUAN BENEDICT	5D		
WONG YU QING, SKYLER	5F		
TAN LE HANG, DYLAN	5F		
WONG JING KAI	5F		

### **Punctuality**

Being punctual is a mark of respect and self-discipline. It is of paramount importance that students learn the value of time and take responsibility for their time management. By attending school on time, they will be able to start the day right and set the tone for learning. All students are expected to be punctual for school and school-organised programmes/activities at all times. We hope you can work with us in instilling the importance of punctuality by ensuring that your child reports to school on time. Some of the strategies that you may find useful include:

- Setting a regular bed time routine so that your child/ward receives plenty of rest and does not struggle to get out of bed in the morning.
- Packing school bags and getting the school attire ready the night before
- Making time for breakfast before leaving for school

### **Evidence Based Parenting Programmes (for parents whose child is studying in P3 and P4 )**

We are embarking on two parenting programmes meant for parents whose children are studying in Primary 3 and 4 this year. The programmes are Positive Parenting Programme (Triple P) and Signposts.

A questionnaire and a sealable envelope will be given through your child for you to complete and return to your child's form teacher. With this information, MSF will recommend a programme that best meets your parenting needs.



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### **BPPS Facebook page**

We have started a facebook page this year. Please like our "page" to get the latest updates of our school events. You may access the school's official facebook page from the school's website at <http://bukitpanjangpri.moe.edu.sg/>.

### **Total Defence Day 2017**

Total Defence (TD) Day is commemorated each year on Monday 15 February 2016. It marks the British surrender of Singapore to the Japanese during World War 2. This annual event reminds us that the task of building and defending a nation is not easy, and that we must continue to work together to preserve our security, stability and prosperity.

This year, the theme for Total Defence Day (TDD) is ***Together We Keep Singapore Strong***. Singapore has remained safe and peaceful over the past 51 years because of the efforts of all Singaporeans. This is essentially Total Defence. Total Defence remains relevant because the threats faced today require all Singaporeans to step up and play their part. Our youth are encouraged to put Total Defence into action in their daily lives by reaching out to one another, forging new relationships and strengthening existing ones to keep Singapore strong and resilient because our greatest strength lies in the unity and resilience of our people.

### **Primary 1 Values in Action Programme**

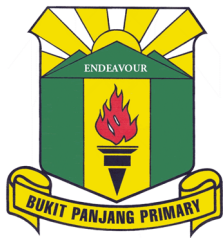
Our Primary 1 students have embarked on the Values In Action programme - Care For Self. It is an extension of the STELLAR curriculum and Health Education where the students learnt the importance of washing their hands properly using the 8 steps hand washing technique. To advocate personal hygiene and create greater awareness among the students, the students also created posters to be put up in the washrooms around the school.

### **P5 Adventure and Leadership Camp**

The P5 students participated in the annual Adventure and Leadership Camp at MOE Jalan Bahtera Outdoor Adventure Learning Centre from 4th to 6th January 2017. The students enjoyed themselves thoroughly. More importantly, the experiences that they gained such as teamwork, resilience and independence certainly enriched their learning beyond the classroom.

### **Recycling @ BPPS**

Recycling @ BPPS was launched in October 2016 with the aim to cultivate the habit of recycling in every student and saving the earth. We kicked off with a Values-In-Action Programme by our 2016 Primary Six students. Our students went door-to-door to collect paper products from our neighbouring residents and organised a Recycling Drive in Bukit Panjang Primary School (BPPS). We managed to collect more than 1.5 tonnes of paper products last year.



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This semester, we will be organising a Newspaper Collection Drive in school. The dates of the collection drive in Term 1 would be as follows:

Week 6 (Thursday, 9 Feb 2017)

Week 8 (Thursday, 23 Feb 2017)

Week 10 (Thursday, 2 Mar 2017)

On top of the Newspaper Collection Drive, we have also educated our students on the importance of recycling and how they can do their part. We have also added more recycling bins in the school compound.

It might be of interest to you to know that we have recycling bins for your electronic waste (handphones, headphones and so on) and for tetra packs (packaged drinks). Please support our movement by educating your child on how they should sort out and rinse (if necessary) their waste before putting it in the recycling bins.

We look forward to your support in our efforts to save the earth.

### **Partners in Education**

The education of a child is the joint responsibility of both parents and teachers. To allow you to have a better understanding of the school curriculum, and to meet up with your child's form, co-form and subject teachers, we organised the following in January;

- P1 Curriculum Sharing for Parents
- P6 Principal's talk on PSLE matters

The sessions were well-received and we would like to thank you for your attendance and feedback. We will upload the presentation slides on our school website under partners' corner, parents as partners.

### **Sharing**

**Parents: let your kids fail. You'll be doing them a favour**

([http:// https://getpocket.com/explore/item/parents-let-your-kids-fail-you-ll-be-doing-them-a-favor-1077758792](http://https://getpocket.com/explore/item/parents-let-your-kids-fail-you-ll-be-doing-them-a-favor-1077758792))

**By Jenny Anderson**

Your teenager has a science project due. He hates science. He hates projects (as do you). Do you:

A. Set deadlines for him, get the necessary materials, lay them out on the table with some homemade chocolate chip cookies

B. Ask your neighbour who is a renowned chemist to stop by and wax poetic about the joys of the periodic table

C. Hide and pray



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If, out of love or a desire to bolster your child's self-esteem, you picked A or B, teacher and author Jessica Lahey thinks you're wrong.

"Do I want [my kids] to be happy now and not-scared and not-anxious, or, a year from now, do I hope that they pushed through being a-little-anxious and a little scared and became a little more competent?" she told Quartz.

That question is at the heart of her best-selling book, *The Gift of Failure*. She realized not long ago that something was wrong with her parenting and something was amiss with the middle-school students she taught. They wilted in the face of challenge. They didn't love learning like they used to. Parents took bad grades personally. Everyone was unhappy.

She couldn't pinpoint the root of the problem until she realised: we seem to be more worried about raising happy children than competent or autonomous ones.

Lahey cites the work of Wendy Grolnick, a psychologist, who puts pairs of mothers and children in a room and videotapes them as they play. Grolnick then labels the mothers as "controlling" or "autonomy-supportive," meaning the moms let the kids figure things out on their own. Grolnick then invites the pairs back and the children are put in a room by themselves and asked to perform a task. The results were "striking," Grolnick says in the book. The children who had controlling mothers gave up when faced with a task they could not master. The others did not. Lahey writes:

Kids who were raised by controlling or directive parents could not contemplate tasks on their own, but the kids who were being raised by autonomy-supportive parents stuck with tasks, even when they got frustrated. Kids who can redirect and stay engaged in tasks, even when they find those tasks difficult become less and less dependent on guidance in order to focus, study, organise, and otherwise run their own lives.

Although advice like "let them try and fail" seems blindingly obvious, it is very hard to implement. At every book event for *The Gift of Failure*, at least one parent approaches Lahey in tears. The parent describes a 16-year-old son who cannot pack a backpack or an 18-year-old daughter who cannot manage conflict.

"We think, 'I have plenty of time to teach them,'" Lahey says. "And then they are 17."

So what's a well-intentioned parent seeking failure (to get to success) supposed to do?

Lahey spoke with Quartz about some ways to inhibit the helicopter in all of us and build resilient kids.

Define your end game: long or short term?

"We rescue because it feels good," Lahey says.

Lahey admits she is equally culpable, though she has tried to change. One morning she found her son's homework on the table and decided not to drop it off at his school, even though she was going anyways. She was determined that he become more independent and better organised. She took to Facebook to discuss her decision. "If your husband left his cell phone, would you take it to him?" said one friend.

"I am not raising my husband," she thought.



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Rescuing her son would make Lahey feel like a good mom, but it would not help her son's organisational issues. Parenting for the long term meant leaving the homework on the table and letting her son, and herself, suffer a bit.

As it turned out, the teacher gave her son some extra work and offered some tips on how to remember his homework in the future. The tips have served him well, Lahey says.

#### **Let them own it**

Ever grabbed a sponge from a kid because she was making too much of a mess cleaning up?

The dirty secret of parenting is that kids can do more than we think they can, and it's up to us to figure that out. (Apparently the French have sorted this out with kids and cooking, and they let their young toddlers wield large knives.) Kids can do dishes and clean a room without a bribe, but to get to clean kitchens and tidier rooms we have to face messier kitchens, not perfectly sorted laundry, and clothes stuffed in drawers while they figure it out.

Lahey cites the example of a student who was struggling in a gifted and talented school. His mother had been running interference for him for years, managing issues with teachers, and nagging the teen to do his work. The alternative was the failing local public school.

Fed up, the mother took the son to the school. She gave him the choice: she wasn't working anymore to keep him in the gifted program. Her son was shocked at what he saw and stepped up his work. He started to talk to his teachers when he had problems—without his mom setting up the meetings—and did more homework. He was never an A student, but that was not the point.

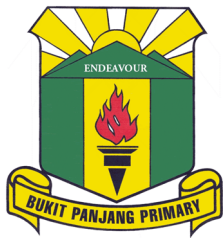
#### **Praise effort and not outcomes**

We love to praise our kids; call it a hangover from the self-esteem movement of the 1970s. But praising kids for being smart rather than working hard pushes them into what Stanford researcher Carol Dweck calls a fixed mind-set, one in which kids shy away from challenges. Consider this study, which Dweck did variations on for years and I wrote about here:

Researchers give two groups of fifth graders easy tests. Group one is told they got the questions right because they are smart. Group two is told they got the questions right because they tried hard. Then they give the kids a harder test, one designed to be far above their ability. Turns out the "smart" kids don't like the test and don't want to do more. The "effort" kids think they need to try harder and welcome the chance to try again. The researchers give them a third test, another easy one. The "smart" kids struggle, and perform worse than they did on the first test (which was equally easy). The "effort" kids outperform their first test, and outperform their "smart" peers.

And here's the really scary part: the researchers then tell the kids they're going to give the same test at another school, and ask them to send a note over with their own scores. Forty percent of the "smart" kids lie about their results, compared with around 10% of the "effort" kids.

Lahey sees the results of a fixed mind-set in her classrooms. The kids who have been overpraised for their smarts "do the bare minimum required to get by; they never take up the gauntlet of challenging extra work and are reluctant to risk saying anything that might be wrong," she writes.



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Dweck's advice is easy: praise effort, not outcomes. Lahey adds to that advice: let your kids know about your own struggles. If they see you fail and survive, they will know that failing at a task is not failing as a person.

#### **Cheer like a grandparent, not a parent**

Most of us sign our kids up for sports for the right reasons. We want them to run around, get fresh air, learn how to be part of a team, and have fun. If they show talent, many of us suddenly turn into maniacs, screaming instructions about sports we have never played and questioning coaches at decibel levels we prohibit at home. Some soccer leagues have implemented silent soccer Saturdays in an attempt to silence the parents and coaches and give the game back to the kids.

Bruce Brown and Rob Miller, two former coaches who formed Proactive Coaching, asked college athletes, "What is your worst memory from playing youth and high school sports?" The answer was the drive home with their parents. Too much advice, not enough support.

Lahey suggests that if you go to the games, cheer like a grandparent and not a parent. College athletes wanted grandparents at their games because their support was not predicated on achievement.

"Grandparents don't critique the coach's strategy or a referee's call. Even in the face of embarrassing failures on the field, grandparents support their grandchildren with no ulterior motive or agenda," Lahey writes.

The teacher is your partner, not your adversary

If we talk to teachers and they talk to us, a lot of problems can be avoided. Easier said than done.

Lahey tells harrowing tales of parents who demand grade changes and refuse to see challenges as learning opportunities. "Teaching has become a push and pull between opposing forces in which parents want teachers to educate their children with increasing rigour, but reject those rigorous lessons as 'too hard' or 'too frustrating' for their children to endure," she writes.

Lahey has a long list of suggestions on how to build a better parent-teacher relationship. Some are so obvious it is sad she has to write them down—be friendly and polite; project an attitude of respect for education.

Here are some others:

Wait a day before emailing a teacher over a perceived emergency or crisis

Let the teacher know about big events at home

Let your child have a voice; role-play to help him prepare for tough conversations

Some other excellent books on the subject of extracting yourself from your kids' lives include Madeline Levine's *Teach Your Children Well: Parenting for Authentic Success* and Wendy Mogel's *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*.

The somewhat contrarian message in all of them: failure = success.

Thank you.



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Bucktha Seelan  
Principal

*It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.*  
~ Charles Darwin