

BALAK

The Quarterly Journal of the
Indian Association for Preschool Education



Fourth Quarterly Journal 2000



EDITORIAL

It's time to say "HELLO" again!

It's been a long time since Balak has been published and it has probably led to some dismay and a sense of being out of touch with each other. Well, we are starting up again —although we are a long way from crossing the hurdles that seem to have become an inherent part of publishing BALAK. {Perhaps you could suggest some ways of overcoming these difficulties.} This time we share our plans with you - but let's all remember that BALAK belongs to all of us and successful implementation of any of these plans depends on

Extent of networking

- This includes our ability to communicate with each other - So PLEASE - PLEASE send e-mail addresses for yourselves as well as other IAPE members that you know of. We can save a fair amount of time and energy and money if we can communicate via e-mail

- This also means updating the membership list and there seems to be no final word on that! If you know the addresses (changed or otherwise) for other IAPE members please send them to us - urgently.

- And most importantly it means sending in contributions in terms of articles, news, ideas for classroom use. Check page 2 for a plan of regular features and let's have those articles rolling in! Given the focus of a particular issue and the constraints of space, we may occasionally send back an article for revision. When you write; do remember that we need to target both academicians as well as practitioners!

● Adequate and continuous sources of funding. We have no words to express how grave the condition is. I am sure you are all aware that the annual contribution of Rs. 50 doesn't even begin to cover postage costs!

This time many of the articles are from IAPE members from Pune (they were a little easier to pursue!) and other members from other branches that have responded immediately. Hopefully, next time we will have a wider spread and representation. But It's UP TO YOU!!

For myself, let me just say that I am glad to have the opportunity to be involved with IAPE activities in a close manner after a gap of several years (and my own shift to Pune from Mumbai). It feels good to be in touch with "old" friends and professional acquaintances once more.

So HELLO once again and let's get the show on the road!

- Suneeta

The Pune branch of IAPE has taken the first step towards making BALAK viable ~ and has decided to finance this issue of BALAK. We hope this will set a trend and those of us who are good fund-raisers will find many alternative sources of sponsorship, so that we can plan on a steady release of BALAK issues.

Thank you, PUNE!

Our editorial committee:

Dr. Suneeta Kulkarni

Maneesha Ashtaputre

Veena Sant

Prasanna Hulikavi & Dr. Meera Oke

BALAK

PLANNED FEATURES

- ☺ Regular features:
- ☺ Editorial
- ☺ Research Abstracts with implications for Classroom teaching (including student research)
- ☺ Guest Article - invited or sent in
- ☺ Try This - Ideas for the classroom
- ☺ News from the Branches
- ☺ Meet Someone Special (Guest Interview)
- ☺ Anecdotes/cartoon strips
- ☺ News Digest / News Briefs (short summaries of newspaper/magazine reports/articles pertaining to young children)
- ☺ Networking
- ☺ News You Can Use
- ☺ Services Wanted - Services Available/Information available
- ☺ Update on member activities - Let's get to know each other
- ☺ Book Reviews
- ☺ Children's book
- ☺ Adult's books (technical or otherwise but pertaining to children)
- ☺ Issues - Comments from readers
- ☺ Down Memory Lane (ECE - The field and its development)
- ☺ Ask a Question ... Share a concern
- ☺ Mailbag: Open letters to ourselves
- ☺ Potpourri - Miscellaneous
- ☺ Know yourself: adding to self awareness

In this issue, we have tried to provide examples of the kinds of articles we plan under each of these headings, so it might seem like an overload of Pune based contributions. Like I said earlier, these were easier to chase - including myself! But if you have any other suggestions and would like to contribute (and I hope you will) your ideas, information, articles, please send them to the address below - immediately. THANKS and looking forward to lots of interaction.

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THIS TIME'S INTERACTIVE QUESTION

Bright ideas for funding

Who? Where? How?

We are planning several special issues with focused themes. Some of these Potential Special Issues could be:

- ~ Early Identification of Disabilities
- ~ Assessment
- ~ Inclusion/Integration
- ~ Integrating issues in classroom conversation & stories (ecology and environmental awareness)

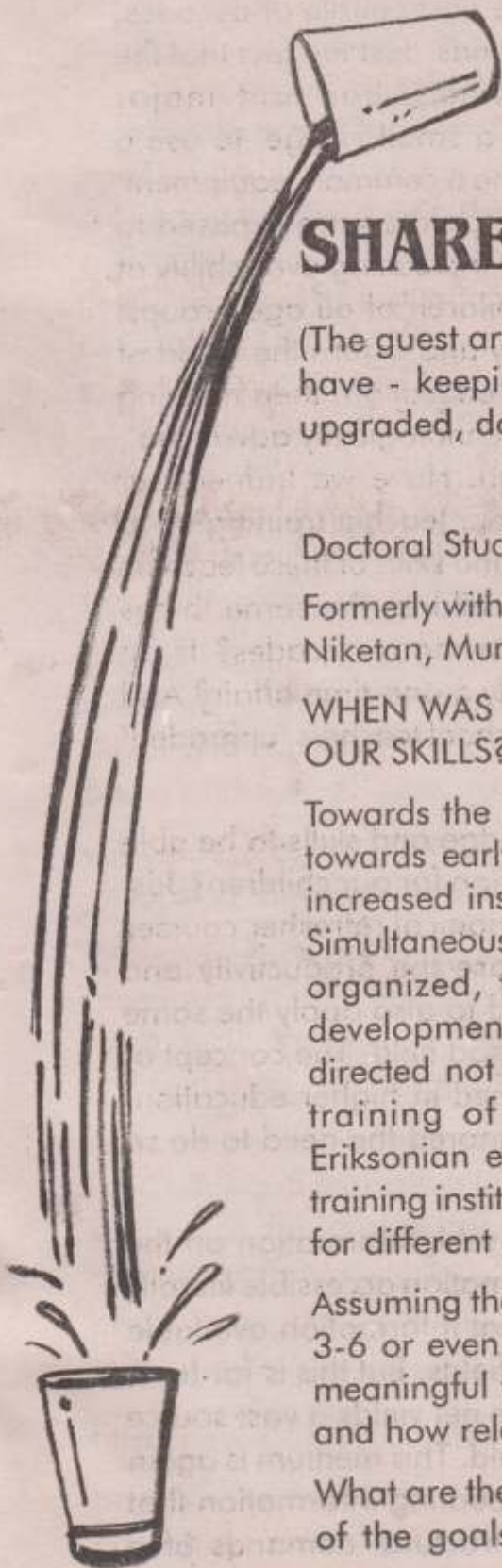
Any other suggestions?

Box: IAPE conference !!!

We still need suggestions on where the next IAPE conference

should be and what should be the theme!

Do write in with your ideas on this URGENTLY.



SHARE A CONCERN

(The guest article this time talks about a concern we all have - keeping ourselves and our skills updated and upgraded, do share your views on this.)

- Arti Joshi

Doctoral Student - Syracuse University

Formerly with the Dept of Human Development, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME WE UPGRADED OUR SKILLS?

Towards the latter half of the last century, a movement towards early childhood education per se fostered an increased insistence on training of preschool teachers. Simultaneously, the preschools themselves became more organized, formal and ideas regarding curriculum development were crystallized. Various philosophies directed not only curriculum development but also the training of teachers...Constructivist, Montessori, Eriksonian etc, to name a few. Multitude of teacher training institutes cropped up offering training to teachers for different duration.

Assuming that all the teachers who are working with the 3-6 or even 0-6 years age group have received some meaningful training, the question is when was it given and how relevant is it in today's society?

What are the goals of early childhood education? If one of the goals of early childhood education is to help

socialize the child in accordance with the society's goals and needs, are we providing the children today with an education that equips children to do that? In the past couple of decades, society has changed by leaps and bounds. Just the fact that the information technology has boomed, has had major implications: the 'world has become a small village' to use a popular cliché. Computers have become a common 'equipment' in many homes, and more and more children are exposed to their use, a trend complimented by an increasing availability of software programs and games for children of all age groups. This is just one example of how society and in turn the world of children has changed. Is our teacher education, then meeting the requirements and needs of this 'technologically advanced', information packed world of children. Have we trained our teachers to meet these challenges? Is our teacher training up to date? Are the information, knowledge and skills of these teachers out dated? Are we still teaching our children the same things that have been taught for the past so many decades? Is an effective teacher-training program only a one-time affair? And finally - when was the last time our preschool teachers 'upgraded' their knowledge and skills?

Do we not need to update our knowledge and skills to be able to provide a good and effective education for our children? Just like in any other industry, there are periodical refresher courses / training programs geared to increase the productivity and functioning of the employees, we need to also apply the same thinking and vision to the early childhood field. The concept of refresher courses is now well established in higher education, but yet, somehow, we seem to have ignored the need to do so at the level of early childhood.

One way of upgrading our skills is to seek information on the "net". The Internet is truly a sea of information accessible literally at one's fingertips. Usually we think that information available on the net is mainly in the 'technical' fields. But this is far from the truth. A few hours of perusal on the net yields a vast source of information even in the education field. This medium is again extremely beneficial to our needs of updating information that bypasses all the logistical and infrastructural demands of a

training program. The concept of a 'virtual training program' is no longer a futuristic thought. Training with respect to latest research, classroom practices, knowledge about child development and educational practices from all over the world can be accessed by multiple people simultaneously. The chat rooms and email facilities can be and are being used in other parts of the world by the educational professionals and early childhood teachers. These aid in ongoing intellectual growth as well as in networking with professionals around the globe with the sole aim of sharing knowledge and aiding mutual growth, by means of learning from the mistakes and successes of other professionals. Even if one may not have a computer at one's own residence, most institutions do have access to computers and Internet. Can we then think of allocating time to the preschool teachers to surf the net for their professional growth? Can we move from the restricted mindset of what constitutes teacher training and refresher courses?

The next logical step question would be how and where does one find such information? There are various sites that are devoted to education and specifically early childhood education. Some of the useful sites are:

www.naeyc.org (NAEYC is an organization in the field of early childhood development and education)

www.ericeece.org (ERIC/EECE provides information and resources on child development, education and care of children from birth through early adolescence, teaching of young children, and parenting and family life.)

www.udel.edu/bateman/acei/ (The Mission of the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) is to promote and support in the global community the optimal education and development of children)

<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/> (An Internet journal on the development, care, and education of young children)

<http://www.edpsych.com/> (Articles, links and other resources)

<http://www.kde.state.ky.us/> (The Kentucky Department of Education website contains information about the state's

education system. It includes resources for parents, teachers and administrators)

www.theideabox.com (a site for more practical ideas)

Some of these sites also provide useful links to other pages. Again, one is not saying that all the information available on the Internet needs to be accepted blindly or completely. The information available on the Net, like any other source needs to be critically filtered and adapted to the needs of our society and teaching community. Experts and experienced educators could play an important role here, in discerning and adapting the material. Hence once again, it boils down to the importance of networking and co-operative learning amongst the teaching community if we are all to benefit from recent developments in technology and resultant knowledge base.

Thus, 'upgrading' of our skills as teachers of preschool teachers is only at hand's length, and ours to take....it's a matter of reaching out and taking our share! So are we ready to hone our skills? Think about it.....

TRY THIS IDEA FOR THE CLASSROOM

Making classroom teaching meaningful and fun.... Through PUPPETS!

-Prasanna Hulikavi

Dept of Communication Media for Children
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Karve Road, Pune 411 038

A variety of media can be used to stimulate thinking and creativity in children, while simultaneously making learning more enjoyable. Puppets have the magical quality to entice children. Here is one way that my daughter and I used puppets in the context of an English lesson.

THE BASIC IDEA :

The idea for this activity actually came from my daughter, Ira, who studies in the second grade. Her child-care centre was having a "cultural activities week" that showcased the talents of the parents. {A wonderful way of involving parents, we'll talk about that some more next time - Ed.}

So I offered to do a puppet show. Ira and I got to thinking about what to perform and then she brought up the idea of this story that was in her textbook. We read the story together - it had elements of drama and the



visual quality that was needed for a puppet show. Ira then shared with me her ideas for the kind of puppets we would need to make, the dialogues and the scene break-up. The whole show is her visualisation. We made the puppets, the stage and performed at her child-care centre and later on, in school for her classmates. In this entire process, Ira was using a wide variety of skills:

MOTOR - the making of the puppets, the sets, the manipulation of the puppets during rehearsal and the actual performance

IMAGINATION - scripting and adapting the story, visualising the puppets and the sets

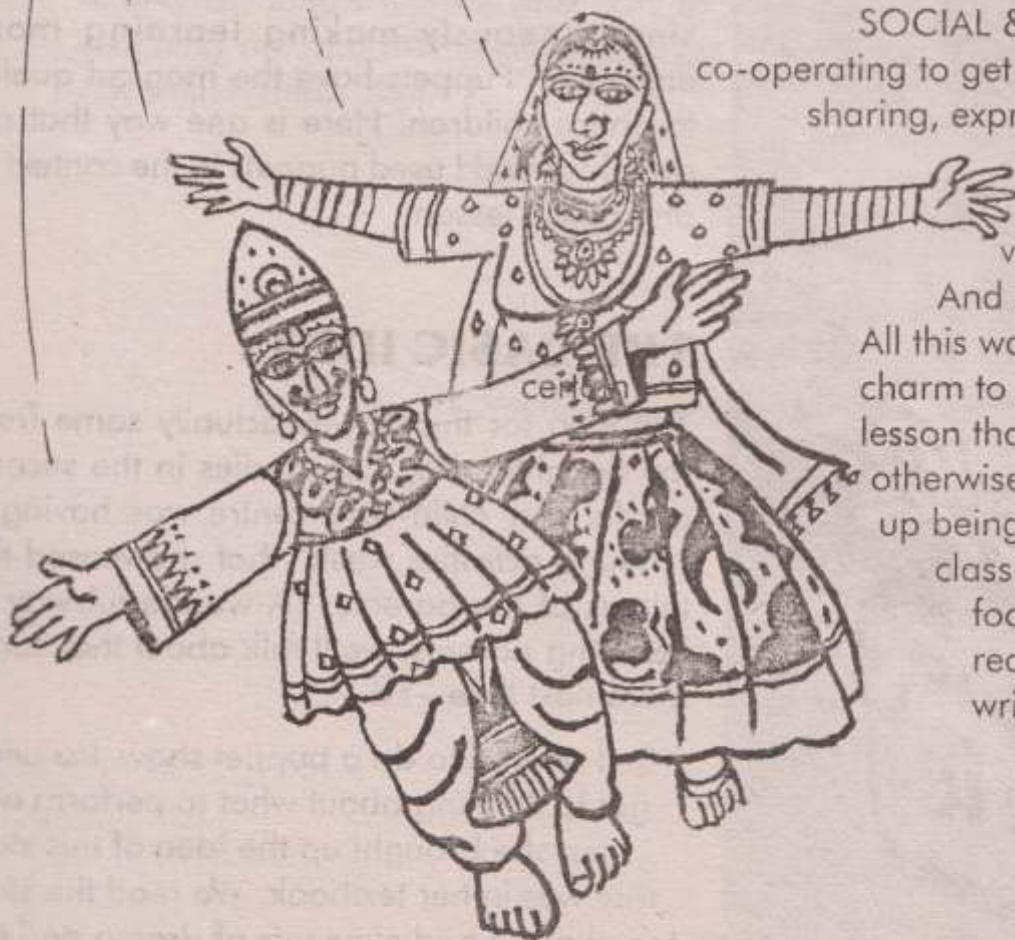
PROBLEM SOLVING & LATERAL THINKING - overcoming restraints in performance possibilities

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL - co-operating to get the show going, sharing, expressing emotions through

voice modulation

And so on and on....

All this was lending a charm to an English lesson that could otherwise have landed up being a mundane classroom activity focusing only on reading and writing skills.



THE IMPACT:

We had lots of fun performing for her mates at the centre as well as in class, because the story was adapted from their text and there was a special involvement because their classmate was performing!

Synopsis of the story: The Little Babul Tree.

In a grove full of mango trees there was a little babul tree. The babul tree was sad because it had small leaves and sharp and stiff thorns because of which children did not come near it. So it wished for big leaves.

Next morning the babul got up to find it had big leaves. It was very happy. But soon a goat came by and ate its tender big green leaves.

The babul then wished for gold leaves. As goats do not eat gold leaves. Next day babul woke up with golden leaves and was happy but then a man came along and stole all the golden leaves.

Then babul wished for glass leaves as men don't steal them and goats don't eat them. Come morning, and it had glass leaves and was very happy but then came a strong wind and it shattered the glass leaves. The babul was very sad and wished for its own thorns and small leaves to come back again. Next morning it had its old self back again.

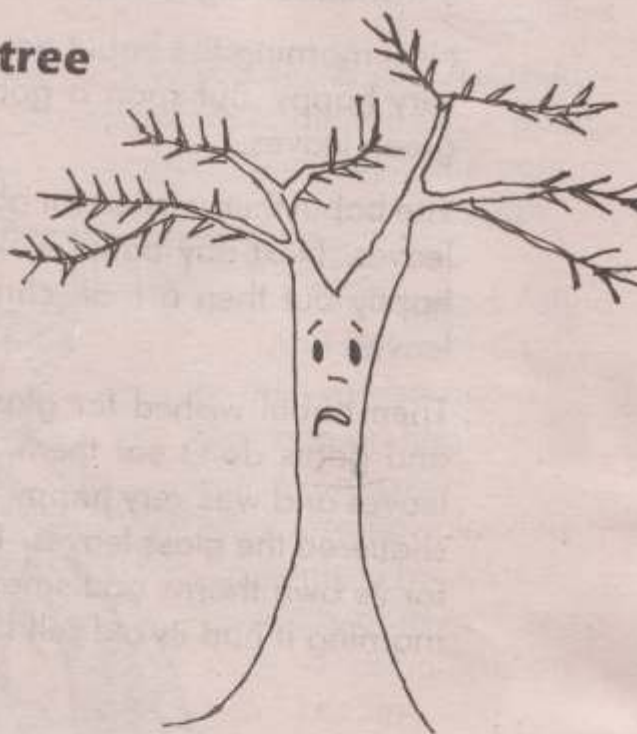
Steps to make the Mango tree



On card sheets draw and cut out two mango trees as shown. (The mango tree should be bigger than the babul tree.) Then stick the rod on the back of one of the card sheets with the help of glue and paper strips. Stick the other card sheet on top so that the rod is between the two card sheets. Colour the tree using water colours. Also add some features such as eyes, mouth, etc.

Steps to make the Babul tree

Once again make two cut outs in the shape of a babul tree as shown. Stick the rod on one of the card sheets with help of glue and paper strips. Glue on the other card sheet so that the rod is in between the two card sheets. The other babul trees can be made like the mango tree. The same tree can have different kinds of leaves like cut outs of gelatine paper for glass leaves, golden paper for gold leaves, and bright green crepe paper for green leaves.



Use your imagination and take this story where you will!

(Would you like to know how to assess the drama element and visual qualities of a story that could then be performed as puppet show or a classroom play? Let us know if you do. We can then request Prasanna to write about that in our next issue.)



BRANCH REPORTS

We were just getting ready to send the material off to the printers when a letter from Fauzia along with the much awaited branch reports arrived! One of our major concerns is that we need to be in touch with each other - personally & professionally. And Balak can be one channel through which this happens. Thank you - all of you - for sending news about what's happening at your end. This time we will put in a summary so we can catch up with lost time!!

There may be ideas that various branches are implementing that others could think about. Perhaps several branches are already working along similar lines. In which case we could think of ways in which to network. So do keep sending in information on special activities for inclusion in Balak (preferably via email it saves both time, typing effort and money! Remember we have a shoestring budget for Balak!! The Pune branch of IAPE has offered their email id for us to use for Balak so here goes :-

Email: IAPEPUNE@yahoo.com

This time we have received reports from the IAPE branches at:

Mumbai, Chandigarh, Coimbatore, Parbhani, Ludhiana, Neyvelli, Pune, Chennai, and Hyderabad

Once again - Thank you all of you!

This time we are just including a brief overview of the kind of activities most branches seem to be involved with. We know you are doing lots more out there. Keep up the good work and do send in information about it regularly so we can put in more details about it.

The forte continues to be training workshops whether they are short one-day programs (for example - Chennai, Neyvelli, Pune) covering a wide range of issues or longer duration regular features focused on a specific theme (Mumbai). Another commonality, and hearteningly so is the emphasis on experiential activities during the course of training, with one branch (Mumbai) even having an innovative program like a 'preschoolers day' for the adults to experience, while others (Hyderabad - Puppetry, Ludhiana - theatre) organized workshops for the children themselves. Inclusive education and developing appropriate programs (integrated and otherwise) for children with special needs has been a thrust area in some branches (Parbhani, Coimbatore). Branches (Coimbatore, Chennai) have also directed their efforts towards the issue of appropriate curriculum.

Yet another area of concern seems to be the need to reach out to the community at large (including medical doctors - Parbhani) and parents (all branches!) in particular with many branches organizing outreach activities as well as more specifically designed inputs for parents. Some branches have also become involved with preparing resource material based on developmental curriculum (Chandigarh) while others (Hyderabad) are beginning to consider the child's world in the context of multimedia. Yet others have begun to look towards the 3 R's of Environmental Awareness (Mumbai) and others are getting involved in research (Ludhiana).

An effort to collaborate with other professional bodies in order to lobby for children's well being is also showing up (Neyvelli - and the Indian Academy of

Pediatrics). Advocacy for children and their ultimate well being is manifest more and more in the programs of some of the branches (Chennai, Ludhiana). Perhaps many other IAPE branches are also making efforts in a similar manner. Developing IAPE into a prominent and powerful lobby group for children's rights and welfare may be a distant goal but certainly one that we need to make a concentrated effort towards. Carry on the good work! Let's hope that many more of us will join in.

Several branches, including Baroda have sent representations to the education ministry as well as other organizations at the national and state level pertaining to childrens' right to education. Yet another example of advocacy!

Last, but certainly not the least, our Parbhani branch has taken charge of the National Central Office since February 2000. Belated congratulations and here's wishing them all the best. The Baroda and Pune branches have also had their elections for the new EC committee recently and we wish them the best.

More next time and with specific details. Do keep writing in and sharing your ideas.

-Suneeta





BOOK REVIEW

Shweta Joshi - Masters Student

Dept of Communication Media for Children, SNDT, Pune

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
(A Harper & Row Publication)

(An intriguing MUST READ for all Parents,
Children and all those who love children)

This book is probably one of a kind. Shel Silverstein has startlingly merged facts with fiction and illustrations. This "faction" provides a thought provoking account of all that a child should know about human exploitation of mother nature - what it is, how it happens, and what it can lead to.

"Once there was a tree... and she loved a little boy." Thus begins the story of insightful perception, beautifully written and illustrated by the versatile author himself. Everyday the boy would come to the tree to eat her apples, swing from her branches, or slide down her trunk — and the tree was happy. But as the boy began to grow older, he began to want more and more from the tree, and the tree gave and gave and gave.

This is a tender story, touched with sadness, aglow with solace. Shel Silverstein has created a moving parable for readers of all ages that offers a touching interpretation of the gift of giving and a serene acceptance of another's capacity to love in return.

One is not sure which aspect of the book - the fact or the

fiction is more heart rending. But what one can be certain of is that the book is bound to raise a truckload of questions and thoughts in every child's mind - ranging from love, friendship, and the quality of being human to - the needs of the environment, the relationship between humans and nature, and the need to protect nature and the environment. The book could also be effectively used to introduce certain concepts like afforestation, deforestation; as the book subtly establishes the inadequacy of the entire 'man use nature' process.

A must read for all parents and others who love children and hate environmental destruction - and of course children themselves!

ISSUE

In the balance —

Dr. Suneeta Kulkarni
Editor, Balak

I was distressed to read in the Indian Express (Pune Edition, dated 5th October, 2000) a special report by Arundhati Bakshi who laid bare the plight of 17 year old Dhanna from the Paharganj area in Delhi. Dhanna's tragedy lies not in the fact that he is mentally disabled but that he has created an unrealistic dream - the dream of being a "film star". An impossible dream arising from his being cast in the role of a mentally disabled child in Deepak Roy's film titled "Assi, nabhe, pure saun". The daydream may have begun then, but was probably even further crystallised when yet another film maker Amit Kumar, touched by his ambitions and unrealistic perceptions of life went on to make a documentary on Dhanna's life.

So Dhanna roams the bylanes of his neighbourhood, living in a dream world where he sees himself in Bollywood - as a famous film star.

Now, you might ask, what does this have to do with our role as ECCE personnel or parents? That's exactly where we

need to pull ourselves short and consider the wider, lasting impact of any activity, program we carry out with children. After all, the children we are focused on are even younger, perhaps even more impressionable. It is essential that we consider way in advance what are the real messages that are being communicated - whether our intentions are likely to work out - what is our responsibility for rectifying situations when they go awry? These are ethical concerns that we cannot, in all fairness, shut ourselves to.

Still further, we could examine this issue with reference to the media in particular. Let us recognise the power of the media to do either "good" or "bad". It is for us, the users - senders as well as distributors - to be careful about its use. There are probably many other Dhanna's that exist that we haven't heard about. It's up to us to ensure that we are responsible enough to create a balance between realism and ambition, to help children cope with life's difficulties. Not all the children in our care are mentally disabled, but the underlying concern is still the same. What are we as caregivers of young children really doing? Think about it.

Knowing Yourself

Exercise - Personal Values

Contributed by Veena Sant,
Dept of Human Development,
SNDT College of Home Science, Pune

The following list includes some things that you might value. Think about each one in turn and rate it on a scale of 1 to 10 in terms of the value you attach to it (1 indicating low value, 10 indicating high value). Once you have completed this list, you can think about other things that are important to you and add them to your list, along with your rating.

VALUE	LOW										HIGH
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Achieving your goals											
Adventure											
Affection											
Being creative											
Competing with others											
Cooperating with others											
Financial security											
Family happiness											
Freedom											
Friendship											
Getting on											
Having inner harmony											
Health											
Improving society											
Integrity											
Involvement											
Loyalty											
Order											
Personal development											
Recognition											
Religion											
Responsibility											
Self respect											
Wealth											
Wisdom											

This is a cut out page. Make a copy of it and fill it up again after an interval of 6 months. Have your values changed? What experiences have brought about these changes if any?

Book Review

-Dr. Suneeta Kulkarni

The Power of Story Telling: A Step - by - Step Guide to Dramatic learning

By Harriet Mason. It's a 1996 Corwin Press publication.

Story telling is (or should at any rate!) be an integral part of a preschool set up. Even the most creative of teachers is occasionally stumped for new and fascinating ways of telling a story or using the art of story telling to help children develop new skills.

Harriet Mason's book does this and a lot more. Not only does the book give examples of actual stories, but it also provides valuable tips on:

selecting stories to tell

reworking story ideas

and - communicating these to children effectively

This even includes ideas on using stories to develop mathematical skills!

A good addition for the school library. Try Mason's ideas and come up with more of your own.



We are looking forward to letters from you

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POST A QUESTION SHARE A CONCERN

- The Maharashtra Government plans to teach English from Grade I in Marathi medium schools. What do you think about the appropriateness of this?
 - What are your opinions on children using computers in the preschool years?
 - Based on some of the components of the Ram Joshi Commission, the Maharashtra Government had passed the PRESCHOOL ACT. The same Act now stands scrapped due to pressure from a certain section of schools. But in all this has the CHILD been considered?
 - What is your opinion on this? A debate amongst ourselves on this matter would be useful. Once we have clarity in our ideas, we could lobby again in the children's interest.
-



Networking

LETS GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

- UPDATE ON MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

Several IAPE members are extremely dynamic and involved in various activities in their professional lives. This time we bring you information on two of them.

Madhuri Deshpande (member and secretary of the

IAPE - Pune Branch after the elections in September) has been pushing the cause of integrated education through her school. Ankur Balmandir began as a setup catering to Preschool children. It has now diversified into the primary school upto grade 7 and also incorporates a therapy centre, vocational training centre and the Drishti teachers training center

Kathputli Bahulikaam: A book on puppetry in Marathi (A Handbook for 8th standard teachers) This book has been prepared for Bal Bharati by Maneesha Ashtaputre keeping in mind the optional subjects offered under the work experience category. A special mention of it is being made here because the book is equally useful for nursery school teachers and parents. Maneesha is currently also a member of the newly elected executive committee of the Pune Branch of the IAPE. Congratulations - Maneesha!

MEET SOMEONE SPECIAL



A chat over coffee with Dr. Vinita Apte an expert in Early Childhood Education, currently the Director of the Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan's Pre-primary Teacher's Training College, Pune, and Dr. Meera Oke. She was selected to attend a workshop in Haifa, amidst the shelling! Vinita had a very enriching experience at Haifa, her reminisces...

- Q. Vinita, what was this workshop about?
- A. "I was lucky enough to be able to attend and complete.....an intensive course on SCIENCE EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD from 15 Nov -16 Dec 1999 at Haifa. The program was a joint effort of the ministry of foreign affairs MASHAV [Center for international co-operation & The Golda Meir Mount Carmel Int. Training center.]"

Q. Where were the participants from? How many?

A. "The selection was done from amongst 300 Indian applicants related to ECCE in some way or the other. "I HONESTLY FEEL I was plain lucky! There were 26 of us from 22 countries, 23 women and just three gentlemen. Representatives from countries like Belarus, Mauritius, South Africa, Turkey, Cyprus, Morocco, Japan, other south east Asian countries attended the workshop.

Q. What is the ECCE framework like there?

A. "A large number of 2 yr. olds & almost all 3 & 4yr olds attend some kind of preschool framework, which is neither compulsory nor free. The interesting bit for 5 yr olds kindergarten is free & compulsory. The curricula guided by the ministry to ensure quality."

Q. So, what did you do there?

A. "The basic idea was to expose the 26 of us to different preschool programs & teacher resource centers in the state. There are about a dozen standard programs & one can opt for any. The two most impressive science programs I saw were called MATAL, & NUA-DA."

Q. What exactly is MATAL and NUA-DA?

A. MATAL program {Hebrew initials for A science program for kindergarten and Elementary school children} and NUA-DA {move and know} approach combines body movement and a bio-neuro system with cognitive functioning. The skills were developed through a program of interactive activities. In fact without using the word science we learnt about science... using everyday life experiences. In one of the sessions...the facilitator gave us all clay dough and we kneaded it and twisted it between our fingers (no instructions were given), and after a while she took it back from us (we were wondering what she was going to do), she then joined all the pieces together and cut them with a string..... and then showed us what the different layers of the earth look like. In another session we were given papers to fold, and we were asked to fold them to the tiniest size possible, soon after, we

discussed the concept of symmetry. I particularly liked the ease with which concepts were taught through an experiential mode.

Q. What did you experience there different from our set up here?

A. I WAS PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY the way teachers encourage kids to observe tape analyze, document & exchange the documentation of projects & experiences with others. I also found that most themes truly evolved something practically non-existent in our programs. One of my all time favorite was the DOLPHIN THERAPY to improve cognitive & emotional dev. in disabled children, these doctors of the soul, broadcast wave frequencies that increase production of a chemical in the human brain that induces a sense of well-being. The ENRICHMENT centers house anything & everything a kid can ask for! Most have provision for science arts and math. Another fascinating experience was a visit to an exhibition of paintings done by psychiatric patients. While we were watching the paintings, the artists spoke with us, and described what they had done. This was fascinating, and provided an opportunity for psychiatric patients to interact with other so-called normal persons.

Q. What is its applicability in the Indian educational set up?

A. Most science experiences here in regular schools are rigid, and do not necessarily involve the integration of complicated cognitive experiences, multi sensorial information and linguistic development. In fact, we do not seem to go beyond concepts of "sinking and floating", we need to talk about other science experiences like body balance and gravitational forces etc. ...The two programs that I had the opportunity to experience, recognized that patterns of logical thinking and abstract understanding does not occur overtime, but merely by 'growing up' and there is therefore a need to employ targeted scientific learning programs. I can now implement some of these ideas in teacher training.

BOOK-POST

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