

Inspiring Learning in Little Ones

One of the most rewarding things about being a Teacher is that you are always working in a positive place. That is, there is no-one anywhere, anytime who doesn't love to learn. The trick is to provide learnings that grab a child's attention. So, how do you do that for every single, happy individual and unique child? As a parent how do you inspire your own child to learn? What makes *you* want to seek new information or new skills? If you can answer that, then you understand the drive and motivation for learning at any age. Learning should be a joyful experience; learning how or what is a pleasure to be enjoyed.

The most important principle to follow as a parent or teacher is to talk to your child positively about their learning. Support them with encouragement when they are trying something new, but struggling a little. Celebrate with them when they have discovered something new. Praise them when they have solved a problem. However great or small, little ones' problems' importance is very relative to their experience. Because learning is a fundamentally positive experience for humans (and animals for that matter), the acknowledgement and celebration of it will encourage further exploration and goals. For some, that may be catching Pokemons in odd places, seeking gaming treasures, spelling a difficult or big word, or shooting three-pointers from outside the key in basketball. Does the learning's value make much sense on its own? Who knows what skill a young one will have that will make them a fortune, a life of happiness and worth, an expert in some soon to be discovered field.

Enthusiasm and rich or deep learning will take a child to a whole new place of positivity. There is a classic story about the books that were a major world hit in the 1990s and beyond. The story goes that the little boy who used to doodle little pictures in intense complex miniatures of hundreds of people packed together made a fortune in creating Wally of 'Where's Wally' and the international phenomenon. That is not to say that ignoring learning in school is a good thing – the point is that any person will love exploring new things, as long as they can see some gain for them, some purpose. Relevance, goals, achievement, and enjoyment are everything!

Seeing little ones in Kindergarten with Mrs Sneesby mastering number sums with hands-on activities; recognising the phonics; working with their peers in solving problems and creating things together, is a great place to be. Four-year-olds who love learning purely and enthusiastically, their sense of pleasure at achievement is as powerful as a winning goal by Tim Cahill for the Socceroos with the thrill of achievement. The celebration is everything to encourage further exploration and seeking new things. At Caloundra City Private School, we believe strongly in learning the fundamentals of numbers and words for communication, literacy and numeracy skills. We teach these 'basic skills' explicitly, for each child, at whatever point they are at in their development. However, the joy of learning here is not about routine and rigour, but rather it is about new things, achievement, and celebrations for each person (and that includes for our Teachers). Caloundra City Private School Teachers are unique. There is no one size fits all Teacher practice

here because each Teacher is an individual, just as your child is too. We love teaching the fundamental skills of communication, problem solving and social activity with the children. But we have our own characterful ways of doing this. We love it when children enthusiastically announce they've found what they wanted. As Einstein stated, "Information is not knowledge. Learning is experience. Everything else is just information." It is how you use the learning with social skills, communication, relevance to your life and joyfulness that will bring the best success for your child in their life.

Dr Dirk Wellham
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