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Thinking, learning can be fun

It no longer comes as a surprise that the children of today are at ease handling gadgets like mobiles, iPads and laptops, while their parents struggle to master the same technology. Unlike the previous generation, the children of today have access to these things as well as the freedom and time to fiddle with them to figure out how they work.

Ironically, many of the children who are so adept at handling gadgets, are not so good at academics.

At a recent parents' meet, I overheard a lot of parents praise the way their wards were being taught to look at facts in a new light. Curious, I made myself part of the conversation, and found out that children in primary classes were being motivated to find answers to questions by themselves.

The reason for this change in behaviour was the introduction of a new program in school. This program allowed children to work with a lot games and tools that helped build their thinking process.

Called the "My Thinking Program", it creates live experiences in the classroom for various cognitive, social and emotional situations.

Saranya Katwani, a banker, is impressed by her daughter's clarity of thought. "My daughter who is normally outgoing, has become more assertive and has developed a structured manner of thinking. As a professional, I know it is important to have that extra edge over others and I think this program will help my daughter pick up these skills over the next few years".

Mane, whose son is in the second standard, says, "He comes home excited the day they have these sessions. He wants to do his homework on his own now and I am surprised at his attempts to come up with multiple solutions to a single problem".

Another parent said he was impressed with how his 10-yr-old son was able to make travel plans for the entire family. He felt the children were able to implement the analyzing skills they had been taught and was sure this would hold them in good stead as they grew older.

While all I got was positive feedback, I wanted to check this out for myself. I worked with some of the tools and games from the program and understood they were effectively designed to help children graduate from simple to higher problem-solving techniques.

The program is built on the fundamentals of Bloom's Taxonomy that imparts various levels of thinking skills in a progressive manner from a lower order to a higher order of thinking. It also incorporates the 'Two Dimensional Learning Framework' formulated by Anderson and Krathwohl.

This may sound like a lot of jargon, but simply put, the program delivers 200 thinking skills and 250 thinking processes to learners using various simulative tools. Thinking concepts and thinking models are internalised in learners through scientific delivery and real-life transference of thinking skills in various challenging situations. All this is delivered to children starting from UKG and above over a time frame of 30 hours of activities every year.

The children are assessed periodically and reports are sent to parents. The program involves parents, students, teachers and the school management.

– Mrs Jaya, mother of J Nachiket class V, DPS East