



AURO MIRRA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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BUBBLES

I was writing some songs for children. I wanted to include images that were not just imaginary but living and sensory, so children could identify with them. The probing led to some disquieting realisations. Most of the 'sensory' experiences children have in general in urban areas are not rich in sensory stimulus, or 'natural' (AMIS children are luckier!). Children today press buttons – remotes and mobiles, mostly. Their experiences are contrived through toys and educational games (well, that's certainly better than not having any worthwhile stimulus). They touch a lot of smooth, cold plastic, not so much flowers and pebbles, shells and tree bark. I would run around barefoot, sometimes on hot tarred roads to buy ice-cream from the vendor who rang a hand-held bell for kids like me. Once, one old man selling peanuts made me stand on the grass because I'd run out barefoot in the hot sun, while he pointed things from a distance so I could choose. I would wake up to my grandmother's soft rendering of 'paath' (scriptural recitation) and slink into her warm lap, as the words fell on my sleepy head. I would hear grandfather's singing of hymns all throughout the day, the stories I heard were directly from him and often selected carefully to 'teach' some timely lessons, like how the monkeys kidnapped the king's daughter who ran all over the place bare-footed! Fortunately our kitchens are still alive and the smell of spices during 'tadka' (seasoning) is still experienced by kids today.

But much of sensory stimulus comes from secondary sources – T.V. computers and other electrical gadgets. Stories are played over computers and music systems, they don't often come from a warm voice of someone who loves you. Of course, a beautiful song, a great movie, even virtual exposure to beauty is better than none at all. But we should not forget how deeply transforming human warmth can be. Grandparents' and parents' stories (even though they not be professionals) can leave a deep impression that will secretly, subliminally transform them. Houses these days are usually matchbox-houses set in tall building. The chains of branded restaurants look the same. Some children are fortunate and are taken out to interesting places for holidays. This helps, yet it is not the same as being able to form a relationship with interesting things you'd see as a part of your life as a child.

Times have changed, children often live in a complex virtual world that is out of the reach of the people (especially 'grown ups') around them. (It's even more difficult for a person trying to make a song to celebrate their childhood!) May be we should think of ways how to make a child's life rich in direct sensory experience... it's invaluable. It is not about just providing varied stimulus, it's about helping a child to connect to life in a way a child can. Senses are acute in childhood, curiosity is natural (you can't stop them exploring!), and more importantly receptivity is high. A child is tender creature, who absorbs the people and surroundings so deeply! We need to give them something worthwhile to absorb, but with the warmth of human affection.

- *Harvinder Kaur (Director, ICIE, Sri Aurobindo Society)*

FRIENDSHIP DAY



"Friendship is like a perennial river which flows forever. It may change its path but will never ever dry up."

The Auro Mirra family celebrated friendship day on 5th August. Children tied friendship bands to each other. New friends were made and old friendships were renewed or revived. Children were so happy and proud to know that they have a friend with whom they can share, as they sang "Friends there caring for you..... friends make you feel happy, shiny and new."



RAMZAN



All religions are different pathways to God... True to the saying, Auro Mirra International School celebrated Ramzan on the 8th of August. Mr. Feroz Islam and a few others were invited from 'The Muslim Orphanage' to share with our children, the significance of the festival. Sharing a few lines of what Mr. Feroz Islam spoke *"The month of Ramadan is considered to be the most sacred month of the Islamic calendar. The predominant practice in Ramadan is fasting from sunrise to sunset. Charity is very important in Islam, and even more so during Ramadan. In addition to fasting, people of Islamic faith are encouraged to read the entire Quran during Ramadan. It is a time of self-examination and increased religious devotion"*. This was followed by an interactive session where Mr. Feroz answered the queries of the kids. Some of the children came dressed in the traditional attire. Dates were distributed as per the tradition.



INDEPENDENCE DAY



15th of August is a day when all Indians celebrate Independence. It is also Sri Aurobindo Sir's birthday and hence the day commenced with the children offering silent prayers to Sri Aurobindo at the Bhavan.

Dressed in white, children marched up to the lawn to celebrate Independence day. AMIS celebrated 15th August with great splendour, joy and respect for Mother India.

The tricolour was hoisted by Sri Rajnikanth, the Secretary of Aurobindo Society, Bangalore. The cultural programme comprised of speech in various languages, followed by group songs, dance, skit, fancy dress and PT display. It was a joy to see the happy faces of the children celebrating their freedom with sweets.



VARAMAHALAKSHMI FESTIVAL



Festivals spread happiness and joy in the family. They also impart values to the younger generation to share this happiness with others. Auro Mirra International School makes a conscious effort to instill in children respect for all religions.

AMIS celebrated Varamahalakshmi Vratam on 16th August. Idol of goddess Lakshmi was placed and children demonstrated the way in which the festival is celebrated. One of the didis explained its significance.



Festivals are fun ways of transmitting values to the younger generation. Rakshabandhan, a festival of India, which conveys the message that brothers protect sisters and who in turn pray for the welfare of their brothers, was celebrated albeit differently at AMIS. Rakhis were tied by the girls to the boys and the boys in turn tied rakhis to the girls. Isn't it true that girls often defend their brothers?

The beauty is seeing and sharing the sense of care and protection with each other. Children learn to form bonds of affection and responsibility. It was a beautiful day and colourful threads on the wrists of children spoke of the joy that filled the air.

ANGEL DAY



The beautiful environs of Auro Mirra International School appeared transformed into an enchanted place. Reason? Angels walked in with a bewitching smile, clasping their wands lightly.



Each one of them had wings specially made for them with care and devotion by their parents. Every being stood dazed at their sheer beauty. Cameras froze spellbound gazing at the angels in action. Even the rustle of the leaves seemed to whisper “Angels, Angels...” There could be no better way to show each other the sweetness of being angelic in action.



KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI



AMIS celebrated Janmashtami on 28th August. The place was decorated beautifully by the didis which resembled brindavan. The Krishnas and Radhas added charm to the place. Gopikas danced around Krishna, who enjoyed all the attention that was bestowed on him. Harvinder didi played the flute mesmerizing every one with her sweet music. It was a joy to see Krishnas and Radhas eating butter and soon all the others joined in to have their share.





FLOWERS DAY



AMIS celebrated 'flowers day' on 30th of August. Lively flowers walked into the campus in clusters and pairs. The garden looked glorious with the flowers moving around in happiness looking curiously at the other flowers, trying to learn more about flowers they did not know existed. Hope you guessed by now that these flowers are none other than the children of Auro Mirra! The children also recited songs on flowers and shared information. It is worth mentioning here the effort taken by the parents to make it a day for the kids. "School has more flowers than Lalbagh!" was the response of the children from pre-primary who went on a field trip to Lalbagh. The didi's who are also mothers realized how little children are conscious and appreciative of the nature around them.



TEACHERS' DAY

Wishes echoed everywhere. Greetings and flowers awaited the entry of their favourite didis. This is how the children welcomed the teachers of Auro Mirra International School on Teachers day. They took the initiative to show their gratitude for the wonderful work done by the didis. The whole place resounded with the voice of the children calling out their didis names. Entertainment programmes were conducted by the children making it a memorable day for the didis.



QUIZ

A general quiz was conducted on Teachers' Day. All the four teams were named after the four great teachers as Aristotle's team, Ramanujan's team, Radha krishnan's team, Socrates's team. Each team had four members. There were four rounds. Question round, audio round, visual round and rapid fire round. In the beginning children were nervous but once the quiz started everyone participated actively. Even the audience was eager to give answers! In the end, Ramanujan's team won with maximum points.

We know
it all !



ONAM



Onam, the harvest festival of Kerala was celebrated on 17th of August. A beautiful pookalam adorned the premises, decorated with diyas. Children from various classes spoke on the significance of the festival. Girls of the primary section, dressed in the traditional attire, danced beautifully. Drawing and colouring was also conducted as part of the occasion.



While taking the UKG children out on a school tour for the topic "My School". The didi explained about different rooms and aspects of the school. When they reached the reception, the didi said, "this is the place where parents come for meeting everyone and admitting their children". When the didi asked them if they knew the name of the place, a very enthusiastic boy raised his hand and answered "Marriage Hall"!

Dear Parents,

Please ensure that the children are wearing clothes that cover them well. This is necessary to protect them against mosquitoes and the cold weather.