

# Auro Mirra International School



## BUBBLES



## UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD

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Between 30<sup>th</sup> May and 3<sup>rd</sup> June, a five day workshop on parenting was held for teachers and the parents who joined the AMIS family, this academic year. The five days parenting workshop was addressed by the famous author and a multidimensional personality, Chitra Jha. She not only spoke about various aspects of positive parenting but also about understanding ourselves.

During the sessions, Harvinder didi and Chitra Jha asked us to meditate, which was very helpful and rejuvenating. In her initial sessions, Chitra di spoke about some laws which parents can follow and would be useful for their children. Those laws are — ‘Law of unconditional love’ which states that children are to be guided lovingly, showing them appropriate ways to channel their feelings. This law helps her to raise calmer, happier and more secure kids. ‘Law of trust’ which states that care is the bond in any relationship and trust is relationship for independence and freedom and the ‘Law of uniqueness’ which says that each child is unique and his particular abilities need to be encouraged.

Chitra Jha touched most of the crucial aspects of parenting in her sessions. She spoke about the importance of sunlight, fresh air, deep breath, drinking more water, eating local, seasonal and traditional food. Parents should inculcate these habits in their children from the beginning itself. In further sessions, Chitra di spoke about each individual’s personal goal. One should take up those activities which would take them to their personal goal.

One very important mantra given by Chitra Jha was “BE KIND TO YOURSELF” i.e our comfort should be the priority and one should never deprive oneself of the extremely essential “ME” time. Women empowerment according to Chitra di is managing her home and her time preparing in mind that home is a woman’s anchor.

Harvinder didi’s talk was enlightening and through her meditation sessions we felt content. Towards the end of her session, Chitra di spoke about “BOUNDARIES”, by which she meant disciplining a child in an appropriate manner. Instead of using words like ‘good’ or ‘bad’, we can say “you worth it” actually works with children. We can also make a crying corner and angry corner for our kids to control their negative behaviour.

This workshop also included the discussions about importance of reading. If a child is interested in reading his attention span will be more and he would develop a good concentration. This five day workshop left a deep and lasting impact on all who attended it.



# INTEGRAL EDUCATION WORKSHOP



Like all years, this year too, before the academic session commenced at Auro Mirra International School, workshop were held for teachers, in two phases. The first phase of the workshop was held in Pondicherry between 11<sup>th</sup> May and 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2016. The second phase of the workshop was held in Bangalore between 23<sup>rd</sup> May and 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2016.

## PHASE I – THEORY AND APPROACHES

Teachers of Auro schools and from other schools from all over India, got together to undergo a week's training. The training was divided in various sessions. Each session offered something new and unique to all teachers.

### SENSE AWARENESS IN NATURE



The teachers at Pondicherry workshop were taken to a park for a sense awareness activity. At first they were told to explore and feel the different trees, flowers, fruits within a confined region in the park.

Next they were grouped into pairs. One person in each pair was blindfolded, while the other had to guide the blindfolded person to a nearby tree. The blindfolded person had to feel, the

tree with all her senses, apart from the sense of sight and decide whether she felt a connection to the tree. This had to go on, till she felt a real connection to a particular tree. Once she felt the connection she had to accept the tree as her friend. Then the one guiding had to take the blindfolded person to a different spot. The blindfolded person had to find her way back to her 'new friend', based on her instincts. Some teachers who were a bit hesitant at first were being constantly encouraged by the trainers. The same activity was then repeated by reversing the partners, in the next round.

Though the park had numerous trees and tracing our way back to a specific tree in such a dense population of trees, seemed to be difficult even with naked eyes, surprisingly almost all the participants were able to find their ways back to their tree friends with their blindfolds on. It was as if, once we had established our connection with a tree, our new friend our entire being was attracted towards it, once we were taken away from our friend. The activity, though simple, helped to create a bond between the participants and nature. Each of us shared our experiences and by the end of the session, we had gained two new friends, our partners who guided us and a tree.

## INTEGRAL EDUCATION - BECOMING CONSCIOUS OF THE BODY



Shiv bhaiya, gave us an insight into Integral Education which was very enlightening and eye-opening. Integral Education regards the child as a growing soul and helps him to give his best.

It also helps the child to develop all facets of his/her personality. Integral Education is not just about information and skill acquisition but also about self development, supported and nurtured by teachers and parents. It also helps the child to integrate with his surroundings, society and also with his true self and every experience becomes a learning tool. Based on the temperaments and capacities of a child it helps to develop his intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, moral and spiritual being. With the help of practical examples, Shiv bhaiya explained the true essence of the three principles, of Integral Education. By the end of the session, each of us were geared up to provide for our children an integrated environment, to the best of our abilities.

## THINKING HOLISTICALLY - THE INTEGRAL PROJECT



The word 'project' reminds oneself of writing pages and pages of information from some 'reference book' or the internet, without much understanding, thinking or introspection. The project session with Harvinder didi helped create an entirely new and different perception of 'project'. It was a spellbinding session that aroused curiosity among teachers. Teachers eagerly participated in preparing and presenting their projects. Her capsule session was in-depth, which explained that this method enables the children to understand the topic, explore and be an independent learner. The session included brainstorming, group work, discussion and presentation. By the end of the session, each one realised that no subject exists in isolation. Through simple things that we see around us, we can help the

children learn about various subjects, without actually categorising the learning under different heads. Through project, the children are not only eager to learn on their own but they also get an opportunity to express themselves in their own unique ways.

## SAMSKRITAM VADHAMA VEDHAMA (संस्कृतं वदाम वेदाम) - SANSKRIT SESSION



A session conducted by Sri Sampadanand Mishra on Sanskrit language was an informative and inspiring experience for the learners. He explained the difficulties faced by the language and stressed on the need of using innovative techniques to make the learning of the language attractive and interesting. He made us realise how Sanskrit automatically teaches a child and anybody else studying it, to pay special attention, due to its uncanny precision. The intention was not only to motivate the learners but also to develop an additional skill and to make them experience the depth and the beauty of the language.

Our facilitator told us that the way the rules of the grammar of this language has been decided by scholars like Pāṇini, has made Sanskrit one of the richest literature of all languages. It introduces students to vast epics, profound scriptures, mythology and much more. Study of these works offers students a wider perspective to enable a better understanding of their own tradition. In the light of integral education, he explained that the literature of this rich and ancient language contains a comprehensive map of the human makeup: spiritual, emotional, mental and physical.

The early morning chanting sessions of Sanskrit shlokas was extremely beneficial and delightful.

## SKILL GAMES

Sushantoda's session on skill development through games was full of fun and excitement. Teachers got the opportunity of being children and play the games. Balancing a glass filled with water on the head, balancing marbles on a plank, opening of lids without making any noise, bouncing balloons and picking up things and many more games which involved concentration and focus made us realise that through these we can develop many mental faculties in the children like patience, concentration, precision, etc. The children will learn to focus on tasks without getting distracted, through these games.



## AWARENESS SESSION

Uttama Di led us into an 'awareness' session through Craft (White on Colour) and a session on 'concentration' with Art (Wizard of Oz). Each one of us had to first visualise and then draw and colour on a white sheet of paper, our ultimate dream and a pathway to our dream. Along the path we had to depict all the difficulties or hurdles and all the help that we foresee. She mentioned that imitation and emulation is the best way to inculcate values in children. Later we shared with each other our dreams and our journey to our dreams. This was an intense and heart touching session. By the end of the session, some of us realised how well we are aware of our own selves.



Some shared that what they put on paper, was a revelation to them, about themselves!

## UNDERSTANDING THE TINY TOTS - KG SESSION

Teachers were enriched and empowered as an educator as well as a person, by attending a transformational session with Shankar da. An experienced educator; with a child like smile; each word shared by him was so inspiring and self explanatory about his in-depth knowledge and deep understanding of a young mind. He not only gave clarity to different misconceptions that we suffer from, about early childhood education but also enlightened us on how to get in touch with ourselves to have a deep insight within us.



He shared different techniques in the form of activities and games to make learning a fun experience for a child, for e.g. squirrel game, different ways to make circle time interesting and empowering was really amazing and helpful. He gave us all a whole new outlook on early childhood education. Shankar da, his passion for teaching, his vision for mentoring and using the available resources, guided us towards a great opportunity to grow as a learner.

## THEATRE IN INTEGRAL EDUCATION



Ravi Shankar's Theatre in Integral Education helped participants feel confident and express their ideas in rhythmic movements using props and jingles to enhance their expression through creative drama. The session ended with a final showcase of the participants performing an advertisement which geared towards the development of self and the community. Through the session, we realised how we could tap the underlying talents in our children and help them become more confident and spontaneous.

## ART AND CRAFT SESSION



Art and craft session with Kiran Didi involved creativity and imagination with colours, papers and items gathered from nature. The process of making one's own craft provided an opportunity to recognise one's own strengths and abilities in creating designer wall hangings and vibrantly colourful umbrellas. Teachers got innovative ideas, which they could take back to the children in their classrooms. Simple and easy techniques were taught which made each one of us work with ease and complete the activity skilfully.

## UNDERSTANDING MATHEMATICS



Dilip Bhai, a veteran member of the ashram school, shared his experiences with us. By sharing some of his unique experiences with his children, he revealed to the teachers techniques of handling students and the skill of answering their queries. He advised teachers to give in their hundred percent in whatever they did and that will bear them the fruits of their hard-work. He also shared with the teachers some tricks for teaching tables to children in a fun and interesting way.

## THE MOTHER'S GARDEN - VISIT TO MATRIKUNJ



As a part of our workshop, we teachers, were taken to 'Matrikunj' for a visit. 'Matrikunj' is also known as "The Mother's Garden" in Sanskrit. It is an organic farm located near Pondicherry. Babaru, is the man who takes care of the farm and lives there. He very eagerly took us around the farm and explained to us the important and uses of all the plants that he has nurtured on the farm. He spoke about the beauty of being in tune with nature and our surrounding environment. We were amazed by the passion, intelligence, and consciousness of Babaru. The experience we had, visiting this farm is hard to put in words. Inspired by the serenity, and beauty of the place, one of our teachers of AMIS, have penned down her experience in the form of a poem.

*Fortunate was I to visit this land of garden.*

*Not just any ordinary garden  
A garden of abundance with the bounty of nature;  
One felt and smelt, saw things and experienced things one had never*

*thought of or felt earlier.*

*It has truly enriched my life.  
One realized what a selfless giver nature is and so very unique  
One thought occurred in my mind  
That if we as human-that is each and everyone*

*Did a bit to preserve the nature,  
How beautiful this world would be.  
Our planet Earth and our provider like a mother would be saved  
From distress that we have and are causing it.*

*-NANDINI Teacher*

## PHASE II – BANGALORE WORKSHOP

After an extensive and intensive workshop in Pondicherry, it was time for the teachers at AMIS, to gain some insight into theatre, art and craft and parenting, between 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2016 and 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2016.

### TO ACT OR NOT TO ACT - THEATRE WORKSHOP

Though we are all facilitators, somewhere, just like our children, we tend to nurture our inhibitions and are hesitant to open up, in front of a larger audience. The workshops that have been organised in AMIS, by Ravi Shankar have inculcated in us values and methodologies that has helped us to express ourselves without any inhibitions and have, over time, brought about changes in our perspective as



teachers. Learning the art of improvisation along with the essentials of body language is something that we have developed over the three sessions.

This session gave a further boost to our confidence to speak in front of a larger crowd. We learnt new ways in which we can imbibe in the children the beauty of team work and in the process, make them realize how easy and comfortable any task becomes, with the pooling of talents, ideas, creativity and above all, the cooperation of each other.



### UNFOLDING THE CREATIVE CELLS - CRAFT WORKSHOP

The art and craft workshop facilitated by Kiran didi was fun to attend, where we learnt to make our craft classes more innovative and creative. Origami butterflies, clutches, imaginary drawings and paper decorations were a part of our craft. Making of our own face mask using Plaster of Paris was the heartening activity of the whole session. It was amazing to see that by changing one fold we can make different objects.

During this workshop we not only learnt how to bring out our creative sides but, we were made aware of the faculties developed in a child while doing craft, like eye-hand coordination, fine motor skills, creativity, patience, comprehensive skills and imagination. We got an opportunity into our childhood while doing these craft activities.



# RAMZAN EID

विद्यालय में रमजान का उत्सव सुबह की प्रार्थना सभा में मनाया गया। बच्चों ने एक छोटी नाटिका के द्वारा रमदान के इस पावन महीने व इसके महत्त्व के विषय में जानकारी दी। उन्होंने बताया कि इस्लाम में इसे सबसे पाक महीना माना गया है। ईदुल फितर का त्योहार एक मास के रोजे रखने के पश्चात आता है और ईद का चाँद सब के लिए विनम्रता तथा भाईचारे का संदेश लेकर आता है। इस त्योहार के मौके पर शीर तथा मिठाइयों से मुसलमान भाई एक दूसरे का स्वागत करते हैं और उल्लास से एक दूसरे की सफलता की दुआ खुदा से करते हैं। ईद का त्योहार हमें यही शिक्षा देता है कि किसी भी व्यक्ति के साथ

भेदभाव नहीं करना चाहिए। रमजान इस्लामिक कैलेंडर का नौवा महीना होता है और इसकी समाप्ति ईद के त्यौहार की खुशी लेकर आती है। इस दिन लोग सुबह सामूहिक नमाज अदा करके नये कपड़े पहनते हैं। नमाज पढ़ने के पश्चात् सब एक दूसरे से गले मिलते हैं और ईद की बधाइयाँ देते हैं। कार्यक्रम के अंत में कुछ मुसलमान बच्चों ने नमाज पढ़ी व सब बच्चों ने मिलकर "लब पे आती है दुआ बनकर तमन्ना मेरी" गीत गया। सभी बच्चों व दिया में खजूर वितरण किया गया।



## WONDERS WITH THE HANDS

The children of grades six and seven have recently been introduced to juggling lessons, every Wednesday morning. They are being trained under the able guidance of Mr. Gunjan, a professional juggler, with years of experience in training school children. While some children appeared to be a natural at it from the very beginning, for the others, it was a new sport. But there was no dearth of zeal and enthusiasm among them. Most of them picked up the tricks quickly and expressed eagerness to learn and practice more. Based on the aptitude displayed by the children in the initial sessions, some of them will be trained further, to learn newer tricks and will be guided to learn how to juggle with finesse.



## SMILE VERSUS TEETH

On the 24th of June, 2016, a workshop on oral hygiene was held in AMIS, for the children of class four as part of the curriculum. Dr. Girija Meti, was the facilitator, who is a dentist, a homemaker, and also happens to be the parent of one of our children, in AMIS. The workshop started informally and was followed by a basic discussion on the different types and number of teeth that we have. Children took turns and wrote down the points discussed, in the form of a chart. When asked about the uses of teeth, children came up with simple but beautiful observations. Among various other things, they said that it is because of their teeth that they look so beautiful when they smile or speak. Within a very short time, the children had eased up to Dr. Girija and few of them even went up to her, asking her to examine their teeth, to check whether they were healthy. This was followed by a discus-



sion on the type of food that we should eat to keep our teeth healthy. Next, the facilitator demonstrated how we can take care of our teeth. She also shared a few tips in the form of a rhyme, on how we should brush our teeth, so as not to injure them, but to clean them effectively. The session ended with a vote of thanks to Dr. Girija for her time and efforts, by one of our children. The importance of oral hygiene for a healthy living, was reinstated among the children, through this workshop.

## NEW BEGINNINGS



The academic session for the year 2016-2017 was kick started with an orientation program for the newly admitted students of Auro Mirra International School. Our parents, who joined our family this year, were eager to know how their child's life and growth would be, at our school. Indeed this was their day to imbibe the culture and values of AMIS and join us in helping their children realise their dreams and aspirations.

To begin, this day had a beautiful and lovely weather. The event was held at the lawn near the kuteers. The area was aesthetically decorated with white satin robes. Red colored chairs were placed in multiple rows for the parents and teachers to be seated. The compering was done on this day by our students. They gladly welcomed the parents to our world that believes in "nothing can be taught" as told by Sri Aurobindo. An earnest thought went out to honour Rajnikanth sir on this day.

Auro Mirra shines in its own glory because of Harvinder didi's passion her vision and her values. The comperers acknowledged her precious presence on this day and she addressed the parents, sharing with them the values and philosophies that form the backbone of our school. Yamini didi, briefed the parents with important details about the day to day functioning of our school. The compering children introduced all the diyas, admin and support staff to our parents.

To conclude, it was some fun time for our parents as they were divided for two activities. One activity involved planting of sapling, which signified the way we welcome the children to our family, like saplings, whom we would nurture with our love and care and help them grow to their full potential. For the other group powers of mind game was organised, to give them a glimpse of how we start a regular day at AMIS. The day concluded with informal interaction of the parents with the teachers and some refreshments.

