Greetings Parents,

It was nice to see so many parents at the Parent Coffee. We had a good turnout. If you have any particular topic that you’d like us to discuss at the November session, please email it to me.

Each morning I stand at the bus gate for about 30 minutes greeting students and parents. It is a very enjoyable part of my day. It is exciting to see the young students begin to greet me. I would like to ask parents’ help with this. It is my hope that all students will be able to say hello/good morning before mid November. Please encourage your child to say hello in all situations when he/she is greeted as a sign of respect. Before heading to school in the morning, have a short dialogue about the importance of greeting. Teachers have been practicing and encouraging this in the classrooms.

I will meet with the parent coordinators tomorrow to discuss and plan the upcoming events mainly the Halloween Bake Sale and the Winter Carnival.

**Backpack Drive**

ACS has teamed up with Virgin on a project with Hayda Baytak NGO. They are aiming to collect 500 second hand schoolbags for them to be donated to less fortunate children. They are still 200 bags short and the school year has almost started. If you have any extra school bags that you do not need and would like to donate them, please drop them off in our racks in two locations: Lower School Office and Upper School Building entrance.

**Halloween**

Halloween is fast approaching and each class is going trick or treating throughout the school on Friday, October 30th. Students cannot wear masks or bring any type of weaponry. Costumes are to be fun and child friendly so please avoid any scary types of costumes. It will be a fun time for children and adults alike.

A Halloween Bake Sale will be organized sometime during the last week of October. More info regarding this event will be sent to you in a separate letter later this week.

**Parenting Tips**

Setting limits for children is healthy. It doesn’t have to be done in a disrespectful or hostile way; on the contrary, it has to be done firmly and kindly. Keep in mind firmness doesn’t mean intimidation. The following is the second article that provides parents with some tips on how to foster firm and loving parenting.
Kind and Firm Parenting

A foundation of Positive Discipline is to be kind and firm at the same time. Some parents are kind, but not firm. Others are firm, but not kind. Many parents vacillate between the two—being too kind until they can’t stand their kids (who develop an entitlement attitude) and then being too firm until they can’t stand themselves (feeling like tyrants).

Opposites Attract: When One Parent Is Kind And The Other Is Firm

It is interesting to note how often two people with opposing philosophies about kindness and firmness get married. One has a tendency to be just a little too lenient. The other has a tendency to be just a little too strict. Then the lenient parent thinks he or she needs to be more lenient to make up for the mean old strict parent. The strict parent thinks he or she needs to be more strict to make up for the wishy-washy lenient parent—so they get further and further apart and fight about who is right and who is wrong. In truth they are both wrong. The trick is to be kind and firm and the same time.

Putting kind and firm together can be a challenge for parents who have a habit of going to one extreme or the other.

The Importance of “And” In Kind and Firm

One of my favorite examples of kind and firm at the same time is, “I love you, and the answer is NO.”

Other examples:
I know you don’t want to stop playing (validate feelings), AND it is time for _____

I know you would rather watch TV than do your homework (show understanding), AND homework needs to be done first.

You don’t want to brush your teeth, AND we’ll do it together. Want to race? (Redirection.)

I know you don’t want to mow the lawn, AND what was our agreement? (Kindly and quietly wait for the answer—assuming you decided together on an agreement in advance.)

You don’t want to go to bed, AND it is bedtime. Do you want one story or two stories as soon as your jammies are on? (Provide a choice?)

I know you want to keep play video games, AND your time is up. You can turn it off now, or it will be put in my closet. (A choice and then follow through by deciding what you will do.)

Kind Is Not Always Nice

The mother bird knows instinctively when it is time to push her baby bird from the nest so it will learn to fly. If we didn’t know better we might think this is not very nice of the mother bird. If the baby bird could talk, it might be saying, “No. I don’t want to leave the nest. Don’t be so mean. That’s not fair.” However, we know the baby bird would not learn to fly if the mother bird did not provide that important push.
Kind is not always nice. It would be very unkind to allow her baby to be handicapped for life by pampering—an unkindness practiced by many parents today.

I think we all know the mistakes made in the name of firmness without kindness. In a word, it is punishment. However, many do not know the mistakes made in the name of kindness such as:

- Pleasing
- Rescuing
- Over-protecting
- Pampering—providing all “wants”
- Micromanaging in the name of love
- Giving too many choices
- Making sure children never suffer

All of these parenting methods create weakness.

You may be surprised to see, “making sure children never suffer,” as a mistake in the name of kindness. The following story of the little boy and the butterfly may help you understand how rescuing children from all suffering creates weakness.

A little boy felt sorry for a butterfly struggling to emerge from its chrysalis. He decided to help so he could save the butterfly from the struggle. So he peeled the chrysalis open for the butterfly. The little boy was so excited to watch the butterfly spread its wings and fly off into the sky. Then he was horrified as he watched the butterfly drift to the ground and die because it did not have the muscle strength to keep flying.

Like the little boy, parents too often (in the name of love) want to protect their children from struggle. They don’t realize that their children need to struggle, to deal with disappointment, to solve their own problems, so they can develop their emotional muscles and develop the skills necessary for the even bigger struggles they will encounter throughout their lives.

It is important that parents do not make children suffer, but sometimes it is most helpful to “allow” them to suffer with support.

For example, suppose a child “suffers” because she can’t have the toy she wants. Allowing her to suffer through this experience can help her develop her resiliency muscles. She learns that she can survive the ups and downs of life—leading to a sense of capability and competency. The support part is that you validate her feelings, but avoid rescuing or lecturing.

It isn’t helpful when parents engage in “piggy backing”—adding lectures, blame and shame to what the child is experiencing. “Stop crying and acting like a spoiled brat. You can’t always have what you want. Do you think I’m made of money? And besides, all I got in my Christmas stocking was nuts and an orange.”

Instead, parents can offer loving support. “I can see this is very upsetting to you. It can be very disappointing when we don’t get what we want.” Period. I say, “period,” because some parents even overdo validating feelings—going on and on in the hopes that validating feelings will take away the suffering.
Validate a child’s feelings and then allow her to recover from those feelings. “I can see you are very disappointed that you didn’t get a better grade.” Then comes the tough part—no rescuing and no lectures. Simply allow her to discover that she can get over her disappointment and figure out what might increase her chances of getting what she wants in the future.

*Kindness Without Firmness Is Permissiveness*

Many people who are drawn to Positive Discipline err on the side of kindness. They are against punishment, but don’t realize that firmness is necessary to avoid permissiveness. Permissiveness is not healthy for children because they are likely to decide, “Love means getting others to take care of me and give me everything I want.”

Have faith in your children that they can learn and grow from suffering—especially in a supportive environment. Understand that kind is not always nice, short term. True kindness and firmness together provide an environment where children can develop the “wings” they need to soar through life.

- See more at: [http://blog.positivediscipline.com/2012/08/kind-and-firm-parenting.html#sthash.JDi16URD.dpuf](http://blog.positivediscipline.com/2012/08/kind-and-firm-parenting.html#sthash.JDi16URD.dpuf)

Respectfully,

Sawsan Yaseen
Early Years Principal

**Upcoming Events & Dates to Remember**

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