

## Nurturing Success: Inside-out

**Today home and school have a critical role to play in keeping children emotionally stable**

My heart sinks as I skim the newspaper. There's violence, suffering and more bad news than good. There is no doubt that violence is rampant, be it the cities or villages...ranging from bullying, ragging, beating, corporal punishment, molestation, and even rape and murder plague our society. We need to think what impact this is going to have on our children along with the negative impact of technology. International trainer and writer, Dr. Stephen Covey in *7 Habits of Highly Effective Families* asks caretakers whether it is realistic to think that children are going to be impervious to the murder, killing and cruelty they watch on TV many hours a day. All media, be it the newspapers, magazines, television programmers including cartoons and video games contain violence. Covey asks, "When hard scientific evidence can support the impact on viewers' behaviour of a 20-second commercial, then what shall we say about children being exposed to a visual and emotional multi-media diet of violence, immorality and sexual pleasure". Will it give way to a realistic and holistic sense of the principles that create good, enduring relationship? Will children learn effective means to conflict resolution as opposed to heartless violence? He asks us to decide "who is going to raise our children" in these turbulent environments where we have emotional starved children turning into angry adults plowing through life for love, respect and "things."

What is the role of home and school in this? If we taken wisdom from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, an individual's basic need is of physical sustenance and includes security that one feels in his environment whether at home or school. If we move up the hierarchy, the next base need is for "belongingness." As a parenting facilitator I have found many psychological studies that indicate misbehaviour stems from a failure "to belong" in positive ways. Further up Maslow's hierarchy, comes the need of love and self-esteem; followed then by intellectual and student success? A meta-analysis of over 50,000 research studies reveals the secret. The number one factor of student success is a positive, effective and democratic procedures which equip children with life development skills such as a sense of good citizenship, responsibility, cooperation, love of learning, and respect all go a long way in building strong character, the meta-analysis reveals (Marzano, 2005). Rather than coercing children by external pressure, the key is building an internal locus of control. In addition, a regular character development program, which teaches the universal values, is essential for budding global citizens. All in all, as Covey would summarise, "in today's alarmingly destructive culture, success can only come from the inside-out. We can and must be the agent of change and stability in creating the supporting structures for our children."