

Inspire, Inquire and Require

A 360 degrees look on the parenting and educating approach of “Inspire, not Require”

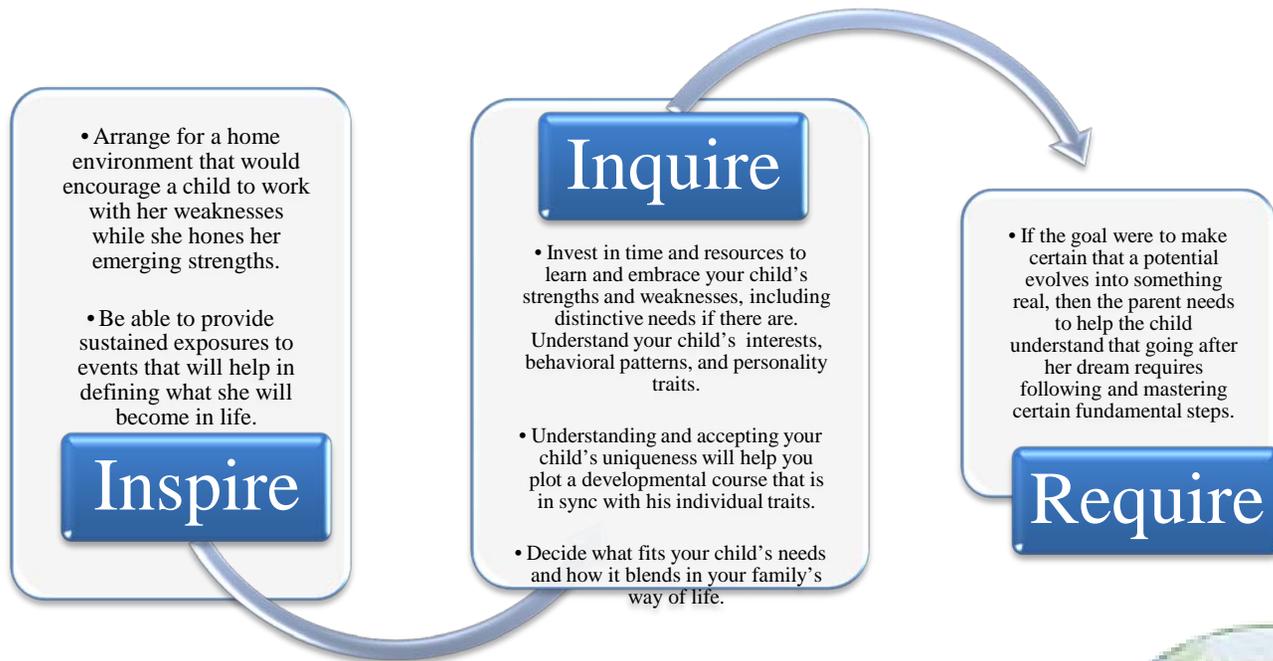
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There is a plethora of brilliant and effective learning and parenting concepts. Just looking at the varying positions of parenting spectrum is enough to lose sight of what is crucial to every process. I illustrated in the model below a concept that is probably out there from the beginning, but has not been recognized enough given that, by large, the world leans favorably on the notion of *either-one-or-the-other-works*. You may call this illustration an audacious attempt to balance the extremism of "permissiveness" and "strictness," and a tweak in the so called middle approach.

The relationship between a parent and child, and how this relationship connects to the family, significantly affects a child's perception of what she is, and what she will choose to become in her adult life. The issue to raise is: Do either "inspire, not require" or "train and drill" learning and parenting concepts adequately support and prepare the children for meeting the growing global trends of their time? If neither could provide an advantage without a hefty cost, then what would?

While it is true that I should encourage my children to follow their dreams, it is also my job to help them live a life that would bring out the best in them. It is imperative, as a caring and responsible parent that I make sure that they get the necessary tools and life skills. It is essential, that I assist them in understanding that going after their dreams, and becoming the best person they ought to be would require following fundamental key steps. In helping my four kids reach their full potentials, I do not only need to be both requiring and inspiring. At the center, of these two processes is a vital component of what I call a key to effective parenting. I need to be an inquiring parent. I have to be able to check for any inconsistencies within a child's potentials, abilities, goals and dreams. I have to be out there finding out and learning, not only what would benefit the children and our family, but also see how any of it relates to their dream and the world we live.



Without layers of goals and sub goals and proportionate steps to fulfill each one, a dream would remain just that - a dream.



Let us inspire children to aspire to be the best of what they will become. Create an empowered parenting through thorough and objective assessments of their skills, potentials and talents. Make sure that they understand that every developmental milestone requires a certain amount of mastery of the basic processes. Every person plays a role in making the world a better place to live. A child's journey towards recognition of her relevant self begins at home.

A Happy Child's Bracelet of Vital links



A happy child with positive behavior has a clear understanding of his place in society. He is warm and gracious. He has empathy, sense of responsibility, confidence and ability to realize gains from failure. He is consistent, yet he is accommodating when there is a requirement.

Bringing out a happy kid in a child requires that she gets all the components displayed here. This figure demonstrates a procedural linkage of a child's essential needs for a well-lived and adjusted life.

The 10 Essential Needs of a Happy Child

1. Stability, Security and Consistency.

A child's social and emotional development depends on the quality and amount of stability, security, and the consistency of the two in the relationship she is exposed to during the early and developing years of her life.

2. Diet and Nutrition.

Eating the right kind and amount of foods not only promotes a healthy body and mind. Researches show that it also brings out positive emotions from the child.

3. Sports and Exercise (Physical Activity).

Regular and adequate amount of physical activity help a child feel less stress, think better, sleep well, and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints. Sports help in the development of leadership, team work, and confidence.

4. Sleep and rest.

A child's body need an adequate amount of sleep, so her muscles, bones and skin can grow and recover from stresses. The amount of sleep a child needs depends on how old she is. Babies should sleep between 16-20 hours a day. Preschoolers should sleep between 11-13 hours. School age kids up to 12 years old need 10 to 11 hours of snooze time. And teenagers' bodies require 8.5 to 9.25 hours of sleep. (<http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/how-sleep-works/how-much-sleep-do-we-really-need>)

5. Life Tools.

Our parenting standards must always be higher than the expectations we set of our children. Often, we expect our children to behave or perform in a certain way without realizing that we have not invested in providing them with appropriate tools and training to succeed in life. The following is a situational example: we expect our kids to do well in science, but we have not adequately supported their need to read and comprehend written materials; let alone, encourage their curiosity. A child's academic advantage, and skills or values that highlight leadership, global awareness, responsibility, and socioeconomic consciousness are examples of the tools our children need to tackle life's challenges.

6. Goals and Expectations.

The goals and expectations must be clearly understood by all parties. The goals and expectations by parents from a child should be aligned and complementary to the child's eventual understanding of her own goals and expectations. Set goals and expectations that are reasonable and within the extent of her abilities, training, and potentials.

7. Purpose.

A young child's purpose is to be a child. Our children are not an extension of us, that being said, their purpose should not be a continuation of our dreams, goals, and expectations when we were young. A fellow parent from a Karate class explained it best when he said that life is best lived "with our children" rather than "through our children".

As the child approaches puberty, the two key questions she would ask herself are: "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" As parents it is our responsibility to assist our children in finding and choosing what will define them. Expose the child to various events and opportunities that support and raise high ethical standards, value formation and character development.

8. Freedom within a Structure.

Allow the child to discover her identity by knowing when to step back, and when to offer assistance. Also, whenever possible, encourage the child to be involved in the process of making decisions (especially if the event will affect her in any way). This way, she will not only feel empowered, but also, she will be encouraged to take responsibility over her part in the decision making. A lifestyle without structured parameters is anarchy. Freedom is never absolute. Having said this, make certain that there are parameters, and that these parameters are understood and respected by all parties.

9. Challenges.

A child should be allowed to be exposed to varying challenges. These challenges are opportunities to test her skills, strengthen abilities and develop potentials.

10. Accomplishments in defeats.

A young child is usually unaware of the stakes in competitions and contests. All she cared about was whether she felt happy in the event. However, as the child is exposed to the stresses and rudiments of winning and losing, the child begins to focus her energies on winning (most often as a result of urging from people, grown-ups in particular). Wanting to win is not a terrible thing; in fact, it should be encouraged. It only becomes detrimental when the child becomes too focused on winning, and downright missed out on how this is relevant to her life goals and purpose. It is even catastrophic when the child starts correlating defeats to what she will become in life.

In events where a winner is declared, it is crucial to guide the child, so she would develop a winning perspective in losing situations.