

Dear Editor,

I recently attended a debate on the motion 'Schools should encourage children to be competitive.' Speaking for the opposition side, I agreed that instilling competitiveness in kids will give too much pressure on them, forcing them to win all competitions. Losing them seems to be the end of their world. But during the debate, my point of view changed.

At first, I believed that encouraging school kids to be competitive will make them feel defeated and disappointed. As they are required to win every competition, losing a single one equals having all efforts gone in vain. Hence not only does it create negative feelings, but it also lowers their self-esteem. But the affirmative side raised an argument during the debate: encouraging kids to be competitive is contrary to requiring them to win every competition. It is acceptable that they do not win, but instilling competitiveness in kids helps them to learn from failure. Nowadays, many children are afraid of failure. They give up before they even begin, just to avoid the possibility of being defeated. Why? They lack experiences in losing. When the school does not encourage kids to be competitive, the competitive aspect of every activity is then removed. Therefore, everyone becomes the winner, but losers do exist in reality. Kids who have grown up in such an environment do not know what failure is. Therefore, they avoid any new endeavours, or reject trying again after the first loss. Children should learn from failure to understand they are not perfect and there is always room for improvement. Thus, instilling the idea of competitiveness in kids gives them chances to experience failure and undergo recovery. Through this, improvements can be made and their opportunities to success can be boosted.

Moreover, I originally insisted that children should learn to cooperate with others, which does not involve competitions among schoolmates. But the affirmative side pointed out that collaboration is required in a team, and competitions exist between teams. It raises a new point that there is no contradiction between cooperation and competitiveness. Yet, they are complementary. Working individually nowadays seems inefficient and unproductive. A more effective way is to work with your teammates, which doubles or even triples the productivity and maximizes the efficiency. But

the more essential point is, you must compete with other teams for career prospects. Hence school should encourage children to be competitive to prepare them for the future career. The school should at the same time educate children about skills of cooperation. If only cooperation skills are taught, they will lose competitiveness and they may be defeated in competitions between teams, which reduces their recruitment chance.

To conclude, competitiveness is an indispensable element during their growth, and we should not deprive them of the chances of being polished to be competitive.

Your faithfully,
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