

A Letter to the Editor

Schools Should Encourage Children to Be Competitive?

Dear Editor

I am writing to express my view regarding whether schools should encourage children to be competitive. Recently, I have attended a debate on a similar motion. After participating in the debate, I have changed my view on this issue.

Before joining the debate, I agreed that school should encourage children to be competitive. I think boosting competitiveness is necessary because it can motivate children to excel in their performances. I believed that children would have more motivation to do better if there were competitions among peers.

However, after attending the debate, I have completely changed my mind. The speaker has mentioned one point that I have never thought of. We should not forget that in competitions, only few 'elites' can be the topmost. For children who cannot be at the top, they may suffer low self-esteem after losing in competitions. Take competing for good marks in examinations as an example. Only one of the students can be the first in the class. But does it mean that other students have not worked hard enough? Many of them might work diligently but still cannot get a satisfactory result. If the students put much effort into studying and still cannot get any rewards, they will feel they are inferior to the top students. These students may regard themselves as a failure. Having this hard feeling, some children may suffer from low self-image.

On the other hand, competitions may lead to some youngsters becoming conceited people. Some

children are very 'smart', and they may know some tricks to win skilfully. Also, some of them are very intelligent. They can get good marks easily as they acquire appropriate exam skills or scoring techniques. Therefore, they may always be the winners of different competitions. They may find winning is not a difficult task and no one can beat them. So, they might become more arrogant and show contempt to others.

Last but not least, competitions will impose much unnecessary pressure on children. If schools emphasize the bright sides of competitions only, children will have to compete with others all the time. They have to think about how to win over others throughout the day. They will not understand the importance of competitions, which are to give them more motivation and opportunities to challenge and excel themselves. Failure is the mother of success, and we can learn from the failure and make improvement. Moreover, they may feel worried about what will happen if they become a loser. They then tend to be more stressed and frustrated.

We should bear in mind that the most precious lessons come from the process, not just the results. Winning should not be our ultimate goal in competitions. What's more, we should focus on the valuable experience and things we learn from the competitions other than becoming the winner.

Yours faithfully

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