

FPSPi

PARENT PERSPECTIVES



A monthly informational publication designed for the PARENTS of Future Problem Solving Program students across the globe!

Please send your questions or comments to the Parent Committee via Chair, Deb Woythal at dwoythal@gmail.com



The FPSPi Way To Learning For All In The Future.

By Lalitha Nair, Affiliate Director for Malaysia

Education today means so many different things to many different people. Parents worldwide look at it as a ticket to better academic results, better employment opportunities, better careers and sometimes fulfilling their (parents') dreams in the future. Children view it differently too; some share their parents' views. Some think it is unnecessary, and some even feel it is punishment. Teachers are constantly being challenged as they all face a daunting challenge in preparing the young for today and tomorrow.



There is never a dispute when it comes to the crunch - education is important to a child's future. Yet that future is unfamiliar for most or pretty preconceived. We all know the world is interdependent and borderless. Changes to the world are so fast that developments and discoveries appear archaic within short spans.

In many countries, graduates are being churned out to meet their dreams of being employed or being in a career or for the national agenda of "human potential development". We need to go beyond the boundaries of the very rigid exam-oriented systems to be able to create more thinking individuals in society. Otherwise we will be encouraging mediocrity, conformity and, worst of all, no real love for learning and discovery. **Sir Ken Robinson** is of the opinion that education is meant to develop people's natural abilities, among other things. (See the

information on Sir Ken Robinson at the end of this article.)

So where does FPSPi fit, given this scenario? Is FPSPi only for the bright and talented? I, as a parent of former FPSers and coach to many others, definitely do not think so. In the Malaysian context, it is a much needed program but introducing it is an uphill task. I know for sure that my children and those who have had the opportunity to experience the program have gained invaluable intangible skills. These skills should be at the core of the education systems, not just scores and grades.

Why is FPS relevant? It sees many, if not all, disciplines integrating and allows most children to deal and delve into a wider range of interests to discover their latent talents and innate abilities. It creates opportunities for them to apply - thus allowing them to focus on developing their interests and talents into something of value to contribute to society. It helps them to anticipate and plan for a "better positive future" for themselves and their world. **Sir Ken Robinson** believes the key to anticipating change "is by seeing our creative capacities for the richness they are, and seeing our children for the hope that they are. Our task is to educate their whole being, so they can face this future." (1)





FPSPI develops the desire to know for the sake of knowing, not to pass exams or gain employment. It helps every individual child increase input by questioning, investigating and analyzing the world and themselves in depth. Students then have significant empowerment to do what they can for themselves and their community through the process of problem solving. In Malaysia, it will serve the purpose of shaping our young to be what they wish to be, not what they should be. If schools are not able to consciously help children work and mould their cultural, political, and moral identities, then we may be failing to educate our children to reach their greatest potential.

Education should prepare children for their uncertain futures. The goals and processes of FPSP will be one way forward in

equipping all children with skills such as flexibility, self-reliance, communication and collaboration, along with higher-order thinking.

“It helps bring out the energy of young people in a way that you would love to see happen in every classroom and situation...gives opportunities to put learning to work in very meaningful and very enjoyable ways” (Renzulli, 2)- through multi-disciplinary educational and learning activities.

FPSPI - The way to go with education!

1. Sir Ken Robinson, PhD is an internationally recognized leader in the development of creativity, innovation and human resources in education and in business. In 2011 he was listed as “one of the world’s elite thinkers on creativity and innovation” by *Fast Company* magazine, and was ranked among the Thinkers50 list of the world’s top business thought leaders.
2. Joseph Renzulli is an American educational psychologist. He developed the three-ring model of giftedness, which promoted a broadened conception of giftedness.

The students in the photos in the article are from the Malaysian affiliate.



Wherever you are across the world, whatever your faith, we wish you a joyous holiday season of peace, joy, family, friends, and fun!

