INCULCATING PATRIOTISM AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN

by:

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We often observe movie-goers not bothering to rise from their seats when the National Anthem is sung before the start of the last full show. Many deadly vehicular accidents happen every single day due to disregard for simple traffic rules. Our buildings, lamp posts, bridges, walls, parks, and every available space is filled with either graffiti or litter. Our government employees and officials easily fall prey to the sweet lure of corruption. Filipino netizens are easy targets of historical revisionists.

All these could be avoided, though, if each and every citizen of our country is taught patriotism early on.

Patriotism or national pride is the ideology of love and devotion to a homeland, should be inculcated among our pupils as soon as they enter grade school. Or sooner than that, if possible, for it is the young people who will soon hold the future of our democracy.

Through instruction and demonstration, as an educator, we can instill a sense of pride in the young people who will one day take their own places in those same roles.

As teachers, how do we plant seeds of patriotism into their young minds? How do we prepare them to be active citizens who have an appreciation for our national heritage and the basic values of our country? There are various ways on how to instill national pride into the young generations.

First, we can teach them respect for the flag and for our patriotic oaths such as the Panatang Makabayan and Panunumpa sa Watawat ng Pilipinas. We should make them
understand what the flag stands for and what its design symbolizes. We should also explain to them what each word in our oaths means.

We should teach them to respect and obey our laws, rules, and regulations. As Filipinos, we enjoy certain rights and privileges, but those entail corresponding duties and responsibilities. For instance, all qualified voters have the right to vote during elections. It is our responsibility, however, to vote wisely and according to the dictates of our conscience.

We should teach them to live up to Deped Core Values: Maka-Diyos, Makakalikasan, Makatao at Makabansa. Filipinos are inherently religious and spiritual. Filipinos are inherently kind and compassionate to our fellow men. Filipinos are inherently concerned about our environment. Filipinos are inherently devoted to our country and are willing to fight for it whenever necessary. Now, as teachers, it is of paramount importance that we impress those fundamental values upon our young students’ impressionable minds.

We can provide them with reading materials featuring themes and storylines that celebrate our country and national identity. We can also assign class projects that showcase love for country, like interviewing war veterans in the community.

We should encourage them to visit museums, monuments, and landmarks, and other places of historical relevance, such as the Mount Samat National Shrine in Pilar, the Surrender Site Marker and the Bataan World War II Museum in Balanga, and the Zero Kilometer Death March Marker and the Philippine-Japanese Friendship Tower in Bagac.

We should emphasize to them the sacrifices made by our heroes and soldiers to fight for, guard and defend our hard-earned freedom to show them the cost at which our freedom was won and, thus, how precious our independence is.

We should always find good things to say about our country.
Finally, we should encourage them to serve and to give back to our country and to cherish their birthright and resolve to pass it on to future generations.

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