TIPS IN IMPROVING SELF-DISCIPLINE AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN

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One of the most important life skills that must be developed among school children is the skill of self-discipline. It is like a superpower that a person need in order for him to succeed in life. It is a challenging aspect that many people are trying to develop. Whether a person is trying to improve his skills, lose weight, achieve either short or long-term goal, there is always going to be resistance that sways a person away from being disciplined. If a person does not have self-discipline, it causes many problems like health problems when a person is prohibited to eat such unhealthy foods, financial problems when a person cannot control himself in buying anything he wants to buy, unfocused in making decision and many more.

Self-discipline is the number-one trait needed to accomplish goals in life and also the key to help kids become responsible adults. It is the ability to control a person’s desires and impulses for long enough to stay focused on what needs to get done to successfully achieve his goal. It is about taking small consistent daily actions that help you form critical habits that support his objectives. Self-discipline is about finding compelling reasons to do something then committing yourself to see that task or activity through the very end. Possessing self-discipline requires a person to have internal desire, drive and motivation that propels him to forward toward his goal. In a nutshell, self-discipline involves committing to long term gains without falling prey to pitfalls of instant gratification along the way. Truly an ingredient to succeed in life where teachers would love to see their students having the ability to monitor and control their own behavior but unfortunately not all of them do and not every student has.
Studies showed that students who have strong sense of self-discipline outranked their peers in terms of academic performance. Students with high self-discipline also behaved differently, had fewer absences, and did more homework than that of their less-disciplined peers. Self-discipline is not only related to a student’s academic success, but to their behavior as well. Another study found that students with a high level of self-discipline were less likely to have behavioral problems in school and lower rates of alcohol and drug abuse. Thus, as an elementary teacher, it is a must for us to develop self-discipline among our school children. We should not only teach them the 3 R’s (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic) of what the formal education system offers but more so, teach them to dream and set achievable goals in life.

There are tons of techniques that teachers can use to develop or improve the self-discipline among their pupils and students the like.

First, provide structure to your pupils. This means creating similar schedules or activities everyday for your pupils to get used of the routine. Pupils must be oriented on what are the things expected from them to do and accomplish everyday. For examples, giving them individual responsibilities like watering the plants, cleaning the comport rooms, swiping the floor, cleaning the windows and many more. This will lead them to become more responsible individuals will be great help in developing self-discipline. Keep the child's routines simple. Through practice, the child will learn to implement the routine without the assistance of the teacher.

Second, explain the rules set. When it comes to helping your pupils learn how to make healthy choices, its best to help the kids understand the reasons behind the rules. They should not only follow the rules just because you said to do so but because they understand that it is the right thing to do. The teacher must be able to present scenarios that will help them to realize the reason behind it. This will help them to do the certain task more. At home, to parents, instead of saying, “Do your homework now because I said so,” explain them the underlying reason for the rule. Say, “It’s a good choice to do
your homework first and then have free time later, as a reward for getting your work done.” This will teach them to understand the underlying reasons for your rules. Of course, we don't like to go for a lengthy explanations or lectures because this might bore the children. But a quick explanation is important and can help your child understand choices better.

Third, give consequences. A child must realize that there will always be consequences that await him for whatever decisions he make. A child who constantly forgets to do the assigned task to him must see the effects of his action. It may cause delays or even accidents depending on the assigned task given to him. Sometimes, natural consequences can also teach people of life’s greatest lesson. For example, the teacher always tell her pupils to bring their umbrella so that in times of unexpected rain they can use it right away. If the child did not follow the teacher, he might get sick because he was not able to protect himself from the rain. This has something to do with natural consequences. It is also important to avoid power struggles. Forcing your pupils to do something will not teach them self-discipline. Remember that the child needs to learn how to make healthy decisions on his own, by examining the potential consequences of his behavior. It is better to explain the negative consequences that might happen before letting him to make choices.

Fourth, molding the skill one at a time. Self-discipline is a skill that could not learn overnight. It is a process that will take years to hone and refine. The teachers must be aware of the child’s developmental stages. The teacher must use age-appropriate discipline strategies to shape behavior one step at a time. Any time your pupil is learning a new skill or gaining more independence, help him do so one small step at a time.

Fifth, the power of praise. Praise your pupils every time they have done or shown good behavior. Recognize their good acts as much as possible. Provide positive attention and praise whenever your child demonstrates good sense of self-discipline. Always point
out the good behavior you want to see from them more often. Praising them on their good acts will motivate them more to repeat same behavior.

Sixth, be a super model. Just like a super model, people idolized the models the way they present the products they are promoting. In real life situation, if we want our pupils learn to develop self-discipline, we must model what we preach. We must do show them how to do it because kids are really great learners. They can easily learn by watching adults. That is also a reason for us adults, teachers to be more cautious of our actions because kids always look at us to imitate.

Seventh, creating classroom environment that will reward self-control. Children love to be recognized. They love rewards. The teacher shall give recognition to the effort done by the student in behaving properly in every situation. This can motivate them to improve more of their self-control that leads to self-discipline.

References: