

Family and Education

by Valsan Thampu

The sermon emphasizes the importance of family environment and parental involvement in education, and highlights the need for a holistic approach that integrates spirituality, personal discipline, and mental transformation.

Scripture: Proverbs 1:8, Proverbs 3:11, Proverbs 4:1, Proverbs 22:6, Proverbs 29:17, Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:20, 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Christian Education", "Family Values"

Description

Valsan Thampu emphasizes the crucial role of parents in actively participating in the education of their children, highlighting the need for a partnership with teachers and the impact of the family environment on intellectual formation. He stresses the importance of creating a domestic culture conducive to intellectual growth, viewing education as a sacred process that empowers individuals to reach their full potential. Thampu addresses the need for integrating education with daily life, fostering a sense of mission, promoting personal discipline, and cultivating a contemplative spirit to bridge the gap between action and reflection. He also underscores the significance of listening skills, minimizing distractions, avoiding indulgence, and instilling the value of postponing immediate gratification for long-term fulfillment.

Transcript

Middle-class parents, those who cannot leave substantial legacies to their children, are acutely aware of the importance of education today. They are keen to provide the best possible educational facilities to their children. But most people subscribe to the myth that education is what happens only in schools and colleges. So they assume that their role in educating their children is limited to getting them admitted to prestigious educational institutions and footing the fat bills that land at regular intervals.

There is a need today to educate parents on what it takes to participate in the education of their children sensitively and creatively. They need to be enabled to enter into a partnership with teachers. And, as an important part of it, they need to understand the crucial role that family environment plays in the intellectual formation and facilitation of children. Parents need to know that there are many things that they can do for their children, which teachers cannot and need not do. And if they won't do what they can for their own children, it is not realistic or reasonable to expect teachers to fill the vacuum they create. A teacher who deals with forty or more children at a time cannot address the subtle nuances of a child's formation as sensitively as parents can.

As regards education, the foremost parental duty is to create a domestic culture that is conducive to the intellectual formation of children. This calls for a proper understanding of the meaning and scope of education. As long as parents see education only as a roadmap to lucrative jobs, it is not very likely that they understand the need for maintaining a pro-academic and intellectually stimulating atmosphere at home. Education needs to be seen as a sacred process that empowers human beings to attain their full potential as persons created in the image of God. Education, hence, should not be seen as a sphere of cerebral growth alone. Understood aright, intellectuality is subsumed in spirituality. Unfortunately, spirituality has been superseded at the popular level either by mindless piety that disdains to have anything to do with the intellect or by secular scepticism. This has had an unhealthy influence on education.

The emphases that parents could keep in mind in creating a pro-educational domestic culture are:

Integrate education with the given context. It is because education is seen as a process isolated from the given ambiance of life that the role of parents in this context seems insignificant. "Home work" is a burden that the child brings home from school. It is a burdensome spillover from school to home. The cleavage between school and home parallels the divorce between knowing and doing, theory and practice, which is an aspect of the neurosis of our times. This has several and serious consequences. First, it undermines the social relevance of education. The current approach to education neglects the formation of a social conscience in students; and appropriate efforts need to be made to make up for this lacuna. Second, it neglects skill-formation and erodes efficiency in the practical domain. At the undergraduate level a doctor today learns a great deal more by way of theory than his counterparts did fifty years ago, but is less able to practise medicine. Third, it turns education into an individualistic and selfish enterprise that focuses somewhat wholly on self-advancement. The traditional assumption that education must inculcate a sense of mission, or altruistic spirit, in people is now almost lost. The resultant erosion of social imagination tends to aggravate criminal instincts in the educated class. Surely, an educated criminal is a greater threat to the society than an illiterate one. Fourth, the current approach to education fails to kindle a passion for doing good. It is only when theory and practice, life and learning, are integrated that the energy and motivation for serving the needs of others are created and nurtured. This is also the seed of human greatness and nobility.

Sadly, the current model of education breeds, barring exceptions, an apathetic elite. The failure to promote the spirit of selfless service is one of the foremost flaws of education today. The split between theory and practice, besides, undermines human authenticity, the consistency between what we know and who we are. The result, in the words of T. S. Eliot, is that "between the intention and the effect falls the shadow". The insularity of the learning process from the rest of life undermines its transformative role and fails to produce authentic human beings who want to make a difference for the better. The spiritual requirement is that the Word must become flesh, the distance between the ideal and the real must be bridged. Education must aim at incarnating knowledge. Knowledge does not become 'power' or produce fruits unless it is harnessed to social transformation. Parents need to integrate their children into their homes and not bring them up like guests. Most parents 'spare' their children of domestic work or even discourage them from participating in it, to ensure that the education of their children does not suffer! The result is that abstract knowledge increases at the expense of practical skills. Knowing and living part company.

This inhibits the spirit of service. The more educated a person gets, the less willing to serve he tends to be. This is contrary to the ideal of a wholesome personality as Jesus sees it: "The Son of Man has come

not to be served, but to serve" (Mk. 10:45). The erosion of the spirit of service through education has serious consequences not only for the society but also for the families that constitute it. Ironically, its worst victims are parents who are neglected by their children when they need love and care most.

Personal discipline. Faithfulness and commitment to what is undertaken is the secret of fruitfulness in life. This is the positive aspect of discipline. Discipline is not a blanket 'no' to what life offers, but a voluntary minimization of indulgence in order to pursue goals. This is also what the Bible means by 'self-denial'. In a practical sense, the 'self' cannot practise self-denial by itself. Genuine and enduring self-denial is a by-product: the by-product of godliness. Accountability to God imparts focus to our outlook. We cannot be godly and at the same time be arbitrary or frivolous in our taste or disposition. Personal sanctity involves uncompromising fidelity, which enables us to overcome temptations. Temptations are pulls contrary to the journey of life. They fragment our lives, dissipate our energies and subvert our scope. The temptations, to which we succumb, rob us of our inner energy and our zeal, without which nothing of value can be achieved in life.

This is a principle of great significance in the context of education. The learning process should not be equated with some techniques either of mastering information or of excelling in examinations. Basic to the education of the mind is the training to engage in an area of study or intellectual pursuit long enough to see the fruits thereof. Intellectual promiscuity, the inability to stay with what one has embraced, is inimical to personal growth and fulfillment. Those who have explored deep and attained intellectual and personal stature are people who have had the strength of intellectual steadfastness. Almost all of them were deep spiritually, even if some of them may have seemed agnostics or atheists from a formulaic religious perspective. Counseling his disciples on the discipline they were to maintain Jesus said, "He who endures to the end will be saved." (Mtt.10: 22). This is as true of intellectual attainments as it is of the discipline of discipleship. Parents, mindful of the long-term intellectual well being of their children, inculcate personal discipline in them.

Discipline, founded on true godliness, enables children to overcome the volatility of their dispositions. Slavery to our likes and dislikes excludes us from success, fulfillment and greatness. Jesus' teaching that we must love even our enemies has immense academic relevance as well. The tendency, otherwise, is to deem a subject -say, mathematics- as one's personal enemy and to close one's mind on it forever. Growing into areas that today seem formidable to us is the key to personal growth. Entertaining prejudices and allergies, on the other hand, is inimical to our development. Freedom from irrational allergies is the yardstick of one's personal stature. Intellectual discipline is, thus, basic to academic excellence; and that discipline is naturally and universally internalized through our relationship with God who demands steadfastness and faithfulness from us. Spirituality involves the overcoming of the arbitrariness and allergies of our dispositions. It is a call to master the whimsicalities of the self and to align it to the path of growth and development, without looking for easy means and instant gratifications.

The contemplative spirit. Life today is marked by an imbalance between action and contemplation. This imbalance predisposes us towards a hectic way of life in which routine preoccupations suppress our inner life. This makes for superficiality in all aspects of life, including our intellectual life. Profundity is a matter of depth, not surface. Also, to the extent that we get alienated from the life within, we also lose the ability to deal with the external world in a wholesome way.

Contrary to the misleading messages about God that people receive from religion, the scripture is emphatic that our communion with God involves a bridge between our inner life and the world around us.

The God within is experienced through contemplation, prayer and silence. God is honoured in the external world through love in action; for God is love. Silence is the inner language of love; compassionate action is the language of godly love in the world outside. Godliness, therefore, cannot be seen as an 'optional extra'. It is, instead, the very source of our life's wholeness.

The educational process needs to be situated within this idea of wholeness; lest education becomes a source of social ill health. That ill-health has several symptoms. The arrogance that Paul associates with mere academic knowledge is one of them. (1 Cor. 8:1). Superficiality, and the control-orientation that goes with it, is another. The pathological self-centredness, and its accompaniment of alienation from the life of the people, is yet another. From an academic sense too, the decline of the contemplative spirit is a serious handicap. Teaching students whose inner life is shallow is similar to sowing seeds on the rocky soil that lacks depth. Given the current approach to education it is not feasible to address this lacuna in schools and colleges. In this respect parents need to minister to their children. But there is no easy formula for this. The contemplative spirit is best nurtured through the reading of scripture, worship and prayer life, especially through the spirituality of seeking, all of which need to be supplemented by compassionate action and involvement in the world of realities including human suffering. The tendency to see education as insulated from the social context and living environment is regrettable.

Listening skills. We tend to underestimate the importance of, and difficulty in, listening. The quality of a person's capacity to listen is the key to his personality as well as his growth-potential. A person is either receptive or rebellious. Surely, the former type is more conducive than the latter to learning and growth. The ability to listen is in no way less important than the ability to speak. As a matter of fact, to be a good speaker one has to be, first, a good listener. Even more importantly, being a good listener is a basic requirement for building good relationships. In a hurting world, one who listens sensitively is sure to do more good than those who only want to be heard. Listening, not less than speaking, is a skill which needs to be nurtured. And it so happens that the best way to do that is to learn to listen to God. Rightly understood, prayer is as much an exercise in listening to God as it is in speaking to God. Unknowingly our capacity for listening gets enriched and strengthened through worship. Impatience with worship grows in proportion to the pace of life -genuine or spurious- we maintain. The hectic routine we pride ourselves on is a projection, sometimes, of an inner restlessness. It undermines a person's capacity to focus, to concentrate and to learn. The inability to focus, in turn, aggravates one's restlessness, forming a vicious circle that subverts the potentialities of the person concerned. Patience is a basic eligibility requirement for learning. Patience stems from the orientation of our being, and cannot be cultivated in isolation from it. What Godliness does is not to provide a formula for cultivating patience but to form our personality in such a way that patience becomes its defining quality.

Impatience results mainly from the tendency to take everything on one's own terms and according to one's own whims and fancies. While the world may see this as a privilege, spiritually this is a sign of weakness and poverty; for no one with such a disposition can relate to God. God being sovereign, we have to wait on Him. We cannot take God on our terms, though that is what we like to do all the time. Spiritually, this is an insult to the majesty and authority of God. Even in ordinary human interactions this is a source of offence and hurt. The willingness, and the corresponding skill, to listen to others creatively declines proportionately as we lose the ability to take others as seriously as we would like to be taken by them. Unfortunately, the value-neutral approach to education does not seek to correct this aberration. Education, rather than heal and integrate our scattered and divided existence, tends to undermine its wholeness. The remedy for this can only be spiritual.

A sense of mission. Every individual has a sense of mission. It is only in respect of the scope of mission that a godly person differs from his worldly counterpart. While the former has a sense of mission that is broad enough to accommodate the concerns of God and the needs of one's fellow human beings, the latter is apt to be centred on oneself. In the long-term, this proves harmful to personality. Even in immediate terms, this outlook narrows one's mental horizons and distorts the formation of one's personality formation. Also, for want of an inspiring sustaining and uplifting sense of mission, young people tend to drift from day-to-day, whereas those who work according to a long-term vision rise above the ups and downs to which all people, especially the young, are vulnerable. The most important by-product of the sense of mission is purity or sanctity of life, marked by commitment and consistency.

In all systems of religious thought, especially in the biblical, sanctity is upheld as the foundation of human well-being. As a matter of fact, purity is the basis for physical life. Most of the vital organs in the body -heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys etc.- are meant to safeguard the purity of the body. Impurity that exceeds the organic limit endangers the survival of the body. Purity or sanctity is even more important for the life of the Spirit. It is logically necessary, therefore, that when this purity of the body, mind or spirit is compromised, our well-being is endangered. Because we are a body-mind-spirit continuum, impurity in one sphere necessarily imperils the rest. If the sacredness of the body is violated or compromised, the capacities of the mind and the Spirit also will be undermined. The need to preserve the sanctity of life through a spiritually informed discipline of life does not become obvious to most people, unless they are driven by a godly sense of mission that is too large for the unaided individual powers to attain. Mission as the shaping principle of one's life is the best safeguard against drift and dissipation.

It is particularly important that this is understood and appropriated in all its seriousness; for the cultural taste in many areas of life seem to be for the cheap, the prurient and the transitory. Students are quicker and keener, for example, to add slang words of low taste to their vocabulary. They are more likely to imitate negative role-models than emulate great men and women. This is because the emerging tastes discount sanctity and nourish the low and the frivolous. The goal of education should be, for that very reason, to enable the educated to fix their minds on the higher rather than the lower things, tastes and thoughts of life. This may not happen unless a sense of godly or altruistic mission is imbibed that stretches our faculties and energies to the limit and impels us to maximum all-round growth.

The transformation of the mind. In a spiritual sense, the goal of education is the transformation of individuals. This involves, basically, the attainment of fullness of life of which the empowerment to do good is an essential ingredient (Rom. 12:1-2, 2 Tim. 3: 16-17). The key strategy in this respect should be the transformation of human mind (Phil. 2:5). The mind is the "control box" of personal choice and action. It is the lens through which every human being looks at the world, understands its significance and scope. It is also the medium through which we understand ourselves. But the problem is this. What stands in need of transformation cannot transform itself; for transformation involves rising above the inherent aberrations of the entity concerned. The aberrations of the mind cannot be mastered by the mind that is crippled by these aberrations. So the resources and strength for it need to be derived from a source beyond itself. This cannot be the sphere of the body; for the body is lower in the hierarchy of being as compared to the mind. Mind controls the body. The mind can be transformed only if the resources of the Spirit are brought to bear on it.

Readers and students of the Bible will not fail to notice the priority that the biblical vision of life attaches to the human need for mental transformation. The mission of Jesus was focused on this in a special way. Unfortunately, in course of time the emphasis shifted from transformation to conversion. Conversion

without transformation does more harm than good. So it is the case with education sans mental transformation. In such a context, skills are handed over to the people whose minds remain unregenerate and unrighteous. There is no guarantee that they will not use their knowledge for destructive and exploitative purposes. In his public ministry, Jesus attached greater importance to teaching than to miracle working, including healing. Indeed, he believed that healing was incomplete without mental transformation. The same should be deemed true also of education. The Christian approach to education cannot separate skill formation from mental transformation. At the same time, mental transformation needs to be seen as an integral part of holistic spiritual formation.

Balanced personality. The goal of education, in the ultimate analysis, cannot be anything less than the formation of wholesome personality. That this is widely recognized, albeit in a seminal and intuitive way, is evident from the emphasis in all philosophies and approaches to education on value-education. At the level of implementation, however, value-education tends to get stuck. This is because values cannot be nurtured like professional skills in isolation from the total formation of the individual student and the sub-culture of the institution that nurtures him. It is the radical nature of the task involved that makes educational institutions fight shy of this key insight. This lacuna can be, and must be, addressed by parents.

The shaping principle in the formation of healthy human personality is the balance between the interests of the self and the needs of others. The motivation, the compassionate inner urge, to respond to the needs of others can be experienced only through God-awareness. It is because God is the Father of us all that we cannot afford to be apathetic to others and selfish in our dispositions. We cannot love God without loving our neighbours. Love opens our eyes to needs. That is a basic assumption in biblical ethics. Ungodliness can upset the balance between the self and others. When that happens, the ethical bulwark against criminality collapses. Crime is fueled by a disruption of the emotional, social and spiritual balance between the self and the other. If I love others as I love myself, it is impossible that I seek to derive any advantage for myself at their expense.

We should be concerned that the meaner elements in human nature, rather its noble urges, find expression in public life. Commenting on this Jesus said, "No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bushel, but on the lamp-stand" (Mtt. 5: 15). This insight offers a useful way of understanding the scope of education. A student, when he begins his education, is like a lamp hidden under a bushel. The light is there; but it is hidden, not evident. What should happen in the course of education is the removal of what hides this inner light and inhibits its availability and usefulness to the world.

The spiritual insight into human nature that Jesus offers can impart valuable practical wisdom to teachers of every religious persuasion. From him we derive the profound insight that there is a glorious inner potential -the light that can be called forth- in every student and that teaching needs to be a facilitating activity. To educate is, literally, to "call forth". It is to bring out to the open what remains hidden in every child. It is, to use the metaphors of Jesus, to lift the bushel so that the hidden light becomes visible and the lamp gives light to all around.

The counter approach to teaching assumes that the mind of a student is like an empty slate on which the teacher inscribes a prescribed volume of information. This is the secular idea of the teaching-learning process, and it sees the student as a passive recipient of information. Education then ceases to be a shared pilgrimage in which the student is an active participant. Such an idea of education is tenable only within the materialist-consumerist approach to life.

Jesus never treated his listeners -his students in the school of life- as the passive recipients of mere information. He assumed that the light was inside of them. The teacher's task was to lift the blanket of alienation and disability that had fallen on it on account of the Fall. That was why Jesus taught through parables. The parabolic method of teaching envisages the active participation of the listener in the learning process. The conclusion and application -the moral and the mandate of the parable- are left wholly to the audience. Jesus' watchword as a teacher was, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear". It is when an attempt is made to bring the hidden light into the open that education brings about "enlightenment". Enlightenment, rather than employment, should be the primary concern in the Christian approach to education. This does not imply that employment is unimportant. What this assumes is that employment need not exclude enlightenment, but that the most constructive contribution to nation-building is to prepare people for enlightened employment. This is a task that needs to be shared by parents and teachers alike. And it needs to be addressed within the ambiance of spirituality.

Parents and teachers need to wake up to their role as social healers. This is all the more important and urgent when a society is in crisis, as is the case with our society today. Homes and classrooms need to be seen as the healing centres of a society. Parents and children: some practical suggestions

Parents as counselors. The benefit of parental counseling is available less and less to children today. This is due to the wasting of family. Children, especially in their adolescence, need clear guidance, even if they may not appreciate it readily. Parents cannot help them if they are confused about the basics. Young people have no use for wishy-washy opinions. Now-a-days parents, insofar as they are unsure of their authority with their own children, palm off the counseling responsibilities to teachers. This is not a feasible alternative. For parents to be able to counsel their children effectively they need to (a) deepen and strengthen their mutual relationships (b) be clear and consistent about the basics (c) safeguard the foundation for their authority with their children and (d) participate imaginatively and sensitively on a continuing basis in the growth and development of their children, and not just remain financiers of their education.

Parents, if they are to stimulate the growth of their children, need to be committed to their own continuing intellectual and spiritual growth. Only those who are committed to growth and are growing can stimulate growth in others. It cannot be that parents lead a lazy and indolent life and, at the same time, expect their children to be geniuses. Children cannot but imitate their parents. When the parents are not worthy of imitation, children become vulnerable to peer-pressure.

Minimize distractions. Life today is beset with loud and diverse distractions. Modern life does not make for sustained concentration, which is essential for intellectual growth and academic well-being. Parents need to avoid distractions or at least minimize them at home. It is a pity that most parents are not even aware of the distractions and negative signals they send to their children. Take for example the habit of either grumbling, gossiping or loose talk, all of which waste time, energy and dissipate concentration. Parents must do all they can to ensure that the atmosphere at home is wholesome.

Beware of indulgence. Parents who feel guilty about neglecting their children, pressured by the demands of the outside world, make matters worse by indulging them in order to compensate them. It does not help to lose sight of the distinction between love and indulgence. While love inspires, indulgence breeds inertia. It prevents children from acquiring the mental and physical stamina to struggle and to grow. As a result, looking for the line of least resistance becomes second nature to them. This encourages an escapist orientation and weakens them as human beings. Children who are brought up in indolence tend to have a

distorted idea of reality, as though life is an extended cartoon film. So when it comes to engaging reality they tend to dodge it or give up the struggle tamely.

Postponement of pleasure. Immediacy of gratification is a mark of childishness. It does not come naturally to a child to barter a pleasurable experience in the present for a higher fulfillment in the future. But this needs to be inculcated in the process of growing up, because postponement of pleasure is basic to developing a sense of responsibility. Those who allow themselves to be driven by the craving for immediate sensations lose the ability to apply themselves steadily to an effort spread over a period of time. And all of human experiences and enterprises that yield anything valuable and enduring exist in a time frame, which is true also of education. The strategy of immediacy, by which one prefers instant rewards and gratifications, is incompatible with the logic of growth and greatness. Intellectual and spiritual discipline involves the willingness to balance the claims of the present against the possibilities in the future. Pleasure-seeking breeds satiety and blunts the motivation to struggle and excel. Those who live for pleasure have their dividends today, but could be bankrupt tomorrow.

A positive spirit. It is commonplace that two children coming from almost identical socio-economic backgrounds perform and achieve differently. What makes the difference between them is the negativity or positivity of their outlook. In this, their respective homes have been the decisive influence on them. Chronic grumbling makes the atmosphere of a house oppressive and it stifles the child's capacity for initiative. On the other hand, a spirit of thanksgiving and a positive attitude to opportunities, equip the child to fight odds and prevail. It is tragic how parents unwittingly cripple their children by infecting them with negativity, cynicism or pettiness.

Banish boredom. Hard work does not have to be boring. As a matter of fact, work can be a source of stimulation, a catalyst for joy. Boredom results from a mechanical and mindlessly quantitative approach to work. It indicates that learning has been degraded into drudgery, which does not have to be the case. It is here that at least educated parents can make a difference for the better. There is a need to complement formal course work with extra-curricular intellectual and creative stimulants, if a child's educational morale is to be sustained. Very often a child gets bored or burdened because the work that is thrust on him does not seem to make sense within his range of awareness. A child is not able to connect the given task with what lies ahead. It is this linkage that parents can provide. They also need to help their children understand the value of discipline and enable them to value hard work as an investment into the future. This is, comparatively, an easier thing to do than pumping the children to perform better day after day. Most parents now tend to equate the whole of education with the marks that children score. In the process, the need to lay the foundation for life-long learning and higher achievement is forgotten. An alternate and healthier approach is to enable the children to do their best every day for their own development and progress. If each day is lived well, the future will take care of itself; for the future is built up, one day at a time.

Mind quality not less than quantity. There is no necessary correlation between the marks a student scores in examinations and the quality of his studentship. Assessment has become purely quantitative. The taste a student has for a subject, his native talent or special aptitudes, his potential to be a leader or a sensitive, compassionate human being, are all overlooked. At the same time, most people also know that, in a long-term perspective, the positive attitude of a student or his special aptitudes are far more important than the marks scored in examinations today. This however prevents none from getting neurotic about the sore sheet. This attitude is harmful to the holistic development of children.

Inculcate the right priorities. Most people tend to drift from day-to-day, being tossed to and fro by emerging situations. For want of a clear sense of purpose or mission, people fail to prioritize. One's order of priorities cannot be separated from what one lives for. If one is not living for anything in particular, it is not likely that the need to define priorities will make sense. The ability to identify the right priorities and the character-strength to stick to them is the backbone of personality. This is truer about the life of a student. Almost always it is those who do not prioritize their academic responsibilities and allow themselves to be moulded by the happenings around them that come to grief academically. As a matter of fact, education should nurture in young people the ability to form and adhere to right priorities. Our spiritual life is also a matter of priorities. It is to this practical truth that Jesus draws our attention when he says, "Seek first the Kingdom and God's righteousness". Sensitive parental supervision over the character formation of their children is required in this respect. Too late in the day parents discover that their children have been living according to priorities that were not conducive to their progress. They need not always be wicked or dishonourable preoccupations. Some of them may even be altruistic. If a student deems his academic work secondary to social service, he cannot be said to be living according to the right priorities, even though social work is undeniably noble in itself. Except for rare exceptions, the hidden truth in such a situation could well be that the person concerned uses priority for social service as an escape-route from academic responsibilities. The priority of a student must be academic excellence for the time being and he should devote himself to social or political action only to the extent that it does not amount to neglecting his school/college work. Parents have a role to play in helping their children to maintain wholesome priorities.

Home-orientation. Children who tend to wander foot-loose and fancy-free fare poorly in studies. Arguably this is a problem more acute among boys, though in the cities this picture is now undergoing a change. While healthy out-door life is desirable, it should not be allowed to erode the home-centredness of a young person's life. Those who wander about will not develop the mental concentration it takes to do justice to their studies. This vagrancy in respect of home has serious consequences also in later life. Such young people tend to play truant in respect of the responsibilities in married life later, creating considerable suffering especially for the immediate members of their families. But nurturing the home-orientation of young people is not a matter only of imposing restrictions on their movements. More importantly, it is a matter of creating and sustaining a healthy, happy family atmosphere that would not prompt young people to seek relief from the boredom or misery at home in the impersonal world outside.

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