Education on “Emotional Intelligence”

Human Development ---A new and experimental elementary school subject

“Development of the educational program called ‘Human Development’ to foster ‘interpersonal intelligence’, ‘intrapersonal intelligence’ and ‘nurturance’ responding to a society with fewer children”

---We have been conducting a practical study as a pilot school for research purposes designated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). (Term: from FY2002 to FY2007)

Research Brief

In 1997, Mr. Takashi Kosugi, Minister of Education, Science, Sports and Culture at the time, consulted the Central Council for Education on moral education from early childhood, saying that “it has been pointed out that children these days had not cultivated enough social skills and self responsibility, so they fail to recognize that socially-prohibited actions are not acceptable for children to do either”. He continued, “It is also said that it becomes more difficult for children to have empathy and warm-feelings towards others and build good human relationships.” Because of this, there are serious social problems such as bullying, juvenile crimes and child abuse. These issues of children’s behavior and parents’ attitudes do not separately exist, but are closely related to each other. According to the surveys conducted by the Ministry of Justice and Japan Federation of Bar Associations, it is suggested that there is relevance between juvenile crimes and abuse in childhood. A research studied by the National Institute for Educational Policy Research also cited inappropriate nurturing attitudes of parents at home as the most commonly observed problem in early developmental histories of children who easily lose control of themselves and suddenly become violent. In addition, it is well known that abusive parents were likely abused children themselves in their childhood.

Our elementary school has been designated by MEXT as a pilot school for research purposes since 2002 to carry out the newly-developed special educational program “Human Development”, which is designed to foster “interpersonal intelligence” and “intrapersonal intelligence” (“emotional intelligence”) as well as “nurturance” in children. Implemented as one of the school subjects at every grade level in our school, the class of “Human Development” provides children with the opportunities to acquire scientific knowledge about human development as well as to enhance their “emotional
intelligence”. We encourage children to examine how they and their peers have developed in physical, emotional and cognitive aspects. For example, in the classes of “Human Development” at certain grade levels, children often experience interaction with various people, such as babies or students of different ages, have opportunities to explore human development in the context of comparison and learn to have caring attitudes towards other people. Through this carefully-designed program, children will develop conflict-resolving skills, become more successful within their interpersonal domain, and enjoy working together with other people. We believe that fostering children’s “emotional intelligence” will lead, in the future, to create a safe and caring society where there is virtually no bullying, violence, or child abuse.

**Practice up to now**

1st grade: Reflection on how they improved by creating life-sized paper dolls

2nd grade: Learning about how they have grown and developed in their families

3rd grade: Learning about stages of human development through comparison activities with students of different ages

4th grade: Regular observation of infants through interactive activities
5th grade: Learning about emotional development

6th grade: Learning about cognitive development

So far after 5 years of implementation, we are convinced that children have surely developed their interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences in our school. We have observed the process in which children had deepened their understandings on human growth and development, assumed caring attitudes towards infants, and have become able to think from the perspective of others. Effects of the class of “Human Development” on student behaviors are the following:

> Children become more interested in human development.  
(Promoting children’s interests in development of themselves and others)

> Children deepen understandings of the process of human development and become aware of the influence of the environment they are in.  
(Enhancing greater understandings on development of themselves and others)

> Children come to know the joy of working with various people.  
(Fostering sociality)
>Children become able to sense the feelings and needs of others, express their own feelings, and control their own emotions. (Fostering “emotional intelligence”)

>Children become able to control the way they interact with others according to the knowledge of developmental stages of different ages. (Fostering “nurturance”)

**What do we mean by “Nurturance”, “Interpersonal & Intrapersonal Intelligence” and “Emotional Intelligence”?**

**<Nurturance>**
According to A. Fogel, G. F. Melson and J. Mistry (1986), “nurturance is the provision of guidance, protection and care for the purpose of fostering developmental change congruent with the expected potential for change of the object of nurturance.” Objects of nurturance include not only children but also adults, the elderly and sick, someone who temporary lacks the sense of efficacy (for example, someone who is very tired or feels down), as well as animals, flora and fauna.

**<Multiple Intelligences>**
Howard Gardner, a professor of the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University, examined human intelligence from the aspects of brain research, human development, evolution and cross-cultural comparison, and developed the theory of multiple intelligences (MI), which identifies eight intelligences, introducing an alternative perspective of human intelligence besides so-called intelligence which is traditionally considered to be measured by IQ test.

Eight intelligences which consists MI theory are following:
> **Linguistic Intelligence** (related to usage of languages)
> **Logical –Mathematical Intelligence** (related to analysis and logical thinking)
> **Musical Intelligence** (related to the perception and production of music)
> **Naturalist Intelligence** (linked to perception of nature and the environment)
> **Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence** (associated with movement and usage of the whole body)
> **Spatial Intelligence** (related to the perception of space)
> **Interpersonal Intelligence** which plays important roles in understanding other people
> **Intrapersonal Intelligence** which enable someone to understand his/herself deeply
Looking at elementary school education system in Japan, current structured school subjects, such as Japanese, Math, Music, Science, Art, PE, and so on might help foster the former six intelligences in the list above (from “Linguistic Intelligence” to “Spatial Intelligence”), but they don’t seem to be able to cover the latter two intelligences (“Interpersonal Intelligence” and “Intrapersonal Intelligence”) under the current Japanese elementary school curriculum. We believe, however, fostering “interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences”, (or “emotional intelligence”) play a key role for children to have academically, physically and emotionally successful school lives.

<Emotional Intelligence>

“Interpersonal intelligence” and “intrapersonal intelligence” posited in Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences are akin to “Emotional Intelligence” proposed by J.D. Mayer and P. Salovey. Daniel Goleman also wrote a book “Emotional Intelligence” (1995) and contributed to expand the concept of “emotional intelligence”. Both concepts of emotional intelligence are actually slightly different in their definitions but similar in part.

Definitions of Emotional Intelligence

by Mayer & Salovay (1997)

“Emotional Intelligence is the set of abilities that account for how people’s emotional perception and understanding vary in their accuracy. More formally, we define emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others”

<Major areas of skills and specific examples>

Perception and Expression of Emotion
*identifying and expressing emotions in one’s physical states, feelings, and thoughts.
*identifying and expressing emotions in other people, artwork, language, etc.

Assimilating Emotion in Thought
*Emotions prioritize thinking in productive ways.
*Emotions generated as aids to judgment and memory.

Understanding and Analyzing Emotion
*Ability to label emotions, including complex emotions and simultaneous feelings.
*Ability to understand relationships associated with shifts of emotion.
Reflective Regulation of Emotion
* Ability to stay open to feelings.
* Ability to monitor and regulate emotions reflectively to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

by Goleman (1995)
“The abilities called here emotional intelligence, which include self-control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself” […] “There is an old-fashioned word for the body of skills that emotional intelligence represents: character”

<Major areas of skills and specific examples>

Knowing one’s Emotions
* Recognizing a feeling as it happens.
* Monitoring feelings from moment to moment.

Management Emotions
* Handling feelings so they are appropriate.
* Ability to soothe oneself.
* Ability to shake off rampant anxiety, gloom, or irritability.

Motivating Oneself
* Marshalling emotions in the service of a goal.
* Delaying gratification and stifling impulsiveness.
* Being able to get into the “flow” state.

Recognizing Emotions in Others
* Empathetic awareness.
* Attunement to what others need or want.

Handling Relationships
* Skill in managing emotions in others.
* Interacting smoothly with others.