

# **“We are the champions of the world”**

**Mythili Hazarika**

A very good morning to everyone present here. This is a very special day for me and I am deeply honored by the invitation to be the chief guest in this amazing sporting event today.

First of all, I would like to thank “Royal Global school”, our very dear principal Ma’am Mrs. Anubha Goyal, the dignitaries on and off the dais, distinguished guests, parents and my dear children for such a warm welcome.

The atmosphere here takes me back to my childhood days in school where we had so much fun on the playground and I am sure you all are experiencing the same kind of fun as we all believe that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy! Right?

Sports is fun not only for these little kids but also for us. But if parents, intrude and instill fear among children to compete and win no matter what then unfortunately it loses all its meaning. In today’s world I see competition more in our parents than the kids. The kids get scared, anxious, sad for not being good enough. It’s because we have not created a mind set to enjoy sports and in turn enjoy life.

In my field of psychology, problems among kids are diverse. There are not only problems in reading, writing, spellings, maths but also in behaviour and attitude towards elders. So, psychological and social problems are very common along with other health issues. Let me throw some light into the problems of parents related to sports as today is “Sports day”.

Many times parents come to me asking questions like, my child loves to only play and he doesn’t study at all so could you tell him to stop playing? When I ask them why? Then they answer that in today’s world if he doesn’t fare well in academics then there is no place for him anywhere in the world? And moreover, he cannot be Sachin Tendulkar, MS Dhoni, or Milkha Singh so why try?

I get perplexed to answer their concerns as they come with great hope to me to change their child’s mind....

But are we justified as adults to live our dreams through our children?

Yes, we all agree that we all do the best for our children but in sports most of us are biased so to answer the parents queries we have to change our belief system; our mind set: We have a belief that if kids play they will be lazy to study and intense exercise and sports will leave them exhausted but this has been proven wrong by research. Physical exercise pumps more oxygen through our blood and makes our entire system more active, which gives more energy to accomplish everything else to manage one’s busy schedule.

But Today, in this platform this is not the case and I am not here to be a psychologist trying to only express what is wrong than what is right and positive. As we all have gathered here IT MEANS we all love sports and encourage our children to love sports. And more so I believe these sets of parents really love sports as they are even participating with their kids.

So here, I would like to congratulate the teachers and the management staff who had put

together such an event where these little wonders are actually putting their best efforts.

The victory of the underdog over the favourite team, the last minute penalty shot that wins the tournament, the high energy training sessions, people glorifying the victory on the plain field, cheering for their favourite teams are important dynamics of sports. But again THERE IS ANOTHER question that arise in people's mind: should we all be so obsessed with sports and is sports as good as it seems? Or is it just a fun and entertaining past time?

Let us see what science has to say? First of all, exercise is good for our body and mind and that is definitely true. Exercising especially when we are young has double the benefits in strengthening our bones, muscles, cleaning out bad cholesterol from our arteries, decreasing the risks of strokes, high blood pressure and diabetes. Our brain also release a number of chemicals when we work out and these natural hormones that control both pain and pleasure response helps in mental health. With moderate exercise, food too matters! When you eat unhealthy food you will put on a lot of extra fats and become obese. Obesity is a big health issue nowadays because of the children's habit of junk food. So fruits, grains, vegetables, proteins, healthy fat, and overall healthy food is important.

Many asks me that does going to the gym has the same benefits as being in any sports? Again an interesting question? Because, it turns out that if you find a sport and a team you like then studies show that there is a lot of benefits that go beyond the physical and mental benefits of exercise alone.

Some of the benefits are the psychological ones both in the short and long term and also social benefits. Some of them come from the communal experience of being in a team, like learning to trust and depend on others, to accept hope, to give hope, to work together towards a common goal. In addition to commitment to a team and doing something which is fun sports can also make it easy to establish a regular habit of exercise. And school sports participation have also found to reduce the risk of depression for up to four years. Childhood depression is a common phenomenon. Nowadays a child as young as 5 years comes and says that she or he feels sad, lonely, lost and rejected. Many times these children need medicines too for sadness and decreased interest in games etc. Sports can boost up one's self-esteem and confidence.

One very interesting learning experience is learning thru failure. This is one of the most transformative benefits of playing sports. The experience of coming to terms with defeat can build up our resilience and self-awareness which is necessary to manage academics, social and physical hurdles. Children in today's world cannot face failure, defeat and they need rewards instantly. They cannot wait. Sports teaches one to be patient and inculcate discipline and tolerate frustration. So even if your team is not winning there is a real benefit to your experience. Sport is about bouncing back, and learning from mistakes. The earlier kids can learn these skills, the better for them.

Now, again not everyone will enjoy sports, one team could be too competitive and another not competitive enough, one child may show a lot of interest and motivation while other's could be weak in certain skills, so it is important to take time to find the sport that could live up to the child's strength.

To the young people out there, It is completely okay to keep trying new sports because if you spend time looking then you will be able to find out what fits your needs, what you actually want and then you will gather the benefits.

Interestingly, in my experience I have seen that most parents are concerned about this too. They ask questions like “I put my child into one sport and she lost interest in that and then opted for another and here again she failed so what do we do? She seemed to have no motivation.

A little suggestion to the children here:

One is about finding the right sports to fit one’s need and another is about consistency/and being persistent/and to keep trying.

Yes, every new activity loses its charm with time if one is not passionate about it but doing it over and over again increases the likeness and interest in them as found in research.

It is advisable to set yourself some goals. Make sure they are:

S – Specific (clear)

M – Measurable – you will know when you’ve achieved them

A – Achievable – you can achieve them

R – Relevant – they mean something to you

T - Time-based – you set yourself a time limit to achieve your goals.

Always remember, nobody’s perfect. You will have setbacks when you can’t meet short term goal, or just feel too tired to do anything. Recognise it when it happens, but don’t worry about it. Tomorrow is another day and simple short term failures are no big deal. So keep trying! And success will follow.

Today, most kids are content with video or computer games to while their free time away. I have nothing against computers and the Internet because we need these to be competitive in this cyber age, but please strike a balance between these and activities which require you to go out of the house and flex your muscles because you also need these. Your blood needs to circulate!!!

I leave with the message: Study with an open mind, work with a productive mind-set, and get into sports to release those toxins and enjoy life!!!

Congratulations to all the kids for winning the first match today i.e. the match to participate in sports have been passed by each one of you. You are all winners ALREADY.

In a long run your active and continued participation in sports and athletics would pay you rich dividends in terms of fitness, well-being, to be a part of the supportive community i. e. family and friends, you will be building your self- confidence, you will be exercising your body and also nurture your mind and not to mention the fun that goes with it.

So everyone shout with me “We are the champions of the world”.

Thank you!