

Parenting From the Inside Out

More than a hundred parents participated in the first group session for the year. This month's focus was on "Parenting from the Inside Out", which is based on a book by Dr Daniel Siegel. Parents who have been attending the sessions since last year will be familiar with Dr Siegel because of his books on parenting, working with children and teenagers.

"Children need to be enjoyed and valued, not managed. When we are too busy doing things for our children, we forget how important it is to simply be with them." – Dr Daniel Siegel

The quote is a reminder to how we interact with our children especially in this busy world that we live in. We have a tendency to focus on what needs to be done instead of connecting with one another and building the relationship. The interaction pattern is often one of "interrogate – judge – fix" which does not facilitate making connections. Instead, we should try "explore – understand – join" in order to promote the pathway to collaboration. As parents, we have a tendency to react to our children's experiences according to our beliefs and past experiences, and our need to protect our children from difficulties. Hence, the session explored areas where parents can gain greater self-awareness through self-reflection and internal understanding. Parents started the process by reflecting on some questions in the exercises provided and had the opportunity to share their thoughts and insights with one another.

"It is important to take responsibility for our actions, but not to condemn ourselves because we are not able to act in some idealised manner. We, just like our children, are doing the best we can at that point in time..." – Dr Daniel Siegel

As there will be times when we react instead of respond to our children, we have to acknowledge that we are not perfect and will make mistakes from time-to-time. It is not helpful if we become too critical of ourselves and end up "beating" ourselves up for our "failings". However, we can reflect on those experiences, understand ourselves more, and explore ways to make amends and repair the relationship.

I will focus on "Tech-savvy Parenting" for our sessions in March and you can choose to attend any of the sessions which will be held on: 18 Mar (Sat) 8:30 – 10 am, 10 – 11:30 am; 20 Mar (Mon) 12 – 1:30 pm; 21 Mar (Tue) 7:45 – 9 am & 30 Mar (Thu) 7:45 – 9 am. I would like to invite more **fathers** to join us for the group sessions – you are welcome to sign up online: <http://tinyurl.com/SJII-parents>

Group session for students

I've also started running groups for students where they will be able to learn more about topics related to psycho-social-emotional well-being. The groups will provide an opportunity for students to develop a greater level of self-awareness through interpersonal learning. By sharing experiences within a group, students will feel that they are not going through something alone, which can be reassuring and validating. The group setting will also provide a safe and supportive environment for students to develop their social skills and explore other aspects of their life.

If your children are interested to join us, please do encourage them to sign-up online: <http://tinyurl.com/SJII-students2017>

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