



***"Greater energy and greater passion is more extraordinary than greater genius."***

**— Lt. General Arjun Ray, (Retd.), PVSM, VSM**

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**Dear Friends,**

## **Early Years Learning**

Even the world's most famous child development psychologist, Jean Piaget, believed that infants were irrational and lacking in perspective. Recent scientific findings invalidate this view. 50 percent of human learning is over by the age of ten. This period also provides the greatest "window of opportunity." It is in these first 10 years that a child's moral foundations are laid, concepts of life and mind are learnt, language and grammar is developed, and musicality is aroused. It is, therefore, no surprise that infants are now described as "scientists in the crib" and "philosophical babies."

90 percent of the human brain develops by the age of six, yet we spend 90 percent of our money on children above the age of six. It is during this period that a child experiences the greatest spurt in brain development, in particular, concepts of life, mind, and matter; languages; grammar; and values.

As a result, the entire philosophy of preschool learning is shifting from just "care" to "care and learning." We believe that preschools must get children ready for school. Readiness implies that by the time children join Grade1, they are proficient in reading and writing, arithmetic, values like respect and structure, creativity, and foundations of leadership. This achieved by a more exploratory approach based on play, hands-on exploration, and encouraging questioning.

At Indus, leadership is a key strategy in child development. We believe that leadership development starts early. At the end of school education when one has learnt everything about mathematics, the sciences, and liberal arts; the big differentiator in life ahead will be leadership - only leadership.

Our strategy for leadership development is three-fold:

1. First, children should be happy, by nurturing them in a safe and enriching environment that strengthens the synaptic connections in their brains.

2. Second, the gift of a child's imagination is wonderful. Picasso once said, "It took me four years to paint like Raphael, but a lifetime to paint like a child." Early learning should encourage development of imagination by play, by reading, by listening, and by questioning. Imagination is not an escape from reality as many may think. Imagination helps in creativity and enabling to child to pursue her passion. Creativity is the master survival skill in the 21st century; yet for the first time we are seeing that creativity scores in children are falling.

3. Third, according to popular wisdom even today, there is only one type of intelligence, namely, cognitive intelligence which is measured as IQ. It is now scientifically well established that man is endowed with multiple intelligences that range from mathematical-logical, to linguistic, spatial, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intra-personal intelligences. At this age this is whole-education and talent development.

Reinventing how all children experience their first five years is everyone's business. I leave you with the thought, "The first five years last a lifetime!"

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arjun Ray". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

**Lieutenant General Arjun Ray, PVSM, VSM (Retd.)**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Indus Trust**