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Dear Parents,

Good day.

In three weeks', we will be celebrating Children's Day on Thursday, 2 October 2025. It is a time when we honour the joy, curiosity, and potential of every child in our Mee Toh Family. Beyond gifts and performances by our school staff, this day reminds us of the importance of nurturing the right values in our children which will be the compass to guide them to navigate the future, and to grow into responsible and caring citizens of Singapore.

Children's Day is a meaningful opportunity to emphasise the value of **Responsibility**. We hope that our children in our MTS Family, will learn to take ownership of their learning, their relationships with family members, teachers, school staff and peers, as well as their use of technology for learning. Responsibility helps our children to grow into trustworthy individuals who care for themselves and others as well as their family, community, Singapore and our environment.

Let me share a short familiar Aesop's fable – the Bundle of Sticks.

A father had several sons who often quarrelled with one another. To teach them a lesson, he gave each child a stick and asked them to break it. They snapped the sticks easily.

Then he tied the sticks into a bundle and asked them to try again. No matter how hard they tried, the bundle could not be broken.

The father said, "Alone, you are weak. Together, you are strong."

In our Singapore context, this story reminds us that responsibility is not just a personal matter taken at the individual level, but also a shared responsibility within our community. Each child must learn to take responsibility for her or his thought, speech, actions, behaviour, and screen habits. At the same time, parents and school must stand together like that bundle of sticks, we must stay united in guiding our children to grow with strong values.

On 12 September 2025, the Straits Times reported the findings of an inaugural Ministry of Digital Development and Information (MDDI) survey. One of the findings released mentioned that for children aged between seven and nine, 27 per cent spend more than the recommended two hours on devices on weekdays. This figure doubles to 55 per cent on weekends. The Ministry of Health provided the stricter screen use guidelines in January 2025 as part of a national health strategy to encourage children and adolescents to adopt healthier lifestyles. The report also revealed that parents are seeking guidance to help their children to reduce screen time at home.

If we are still in control of our children's screen time, it would be wiser if parents would not use screens to occupy or distract their child/children. I understand that parents would be

Vision : Touching Souls, Challenging Minds

Mission : To maximise students' potential and develop in them a passion for life-long learning guided by compassion, conscience, purity and righteousness.

Motto : Compassion, Conscience, Purity, Righteousness

愿景 : 净化心灵, 挑战思维

使命 : 以校训慈、良、清、直为指引, 激发终身学习之热忱, 务必人尽其才。

校训 : 慈、良、清、直

very tired after a long day's work and would barely have the energy to continue to engage in a conversation with their children. Try your best to invest at least an hour of quality time with your child to have a sweet conversation, play a game, take an evening walk or read a book together.



(Source: Internet)

Likewise, it is not wise to use screens during mealtimes. Sometimes, it is sad to see parents and children are each engaged with a device, and they have stopped talking to one another over a meal. Mealtimes are a great opportunity to strike up a conversation with your child, to understand your child's challenges, joys and aspirations. Such moments will go away very quickly when our child stops talking to us.

In fact, we hope that our children will not be too engrossed in screen time that they see nobody, hear nobody and speak to nobody. This is very dangerous as they become caught within an echo-chamber. Excessive screen time addiction can affect one's health, well-being and ability to foster quality relationships with others.

Parenting Tips to Nurture Responsibility

1. **Model responsible habits** – Show your child how you keep promises, manage time well, and use devices thoughtfully.
2. **Guide screen time** – Help your child understand that she or he can be responsible by minimising time spent online, and that excessive screen time can affect health, sleep, and learning.
3. **Encourage reflection** – Ask your child what went well in their day and what they could do better. Reflection builds self-responsibility.
4. **Affirm values, not just results** – Celebrate your child's honesty, care, and resilience alongside their academic achievements.

School-Parent Partnership

At school, we teach our children that responsibility means making wise choices in their studies, friendships, and digital use. We invite you to partner us by:

- Reinforcing routines and boundaries at home, especially in screen use.
- Encouraging your child to share with you what they learn in school.
- Working together with our teachers if your child struggles with managing habits or commitments.

This Children's Day, let us celebrate not just who our children are today, but who they are becoming — young responsible and caring individuals with aspirations and hope. Thank you for your trust and support as we partner with you in your child's education journey in our Mee Toh Family.

Partnering with you,
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