



BRAHMA KUMARIS WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY

Learning to Achieve 'Education for All'

Statement to the

United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board, Special Session

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As we move into a decade of meeting the goals set forth by the World Conference on Education for All, we need not only extend and maximize the available human and technological resources for education, but also to devise more cost – and time-effective techniques for learning.

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU), having observed the learning process in both conventional and non-conventional systems of education, has found a direct correlation between learning acquisition/outcome and the following factors:

- (a) Environment The physical and emotional support a child receives both at home and in the classroom is crucial in the development of the child's intellectual and mental faculties. In addition to commonly recognized factors such as nutrition, health, cleanliness, etc., high priority needs to be given to such factors as a low level of noise and distraction, family stability, appreciation and encouragement by adults and peers and the existence of appropriate adult role models in order to create an adequate learning environment; (b) Positive attitudes and aptitudes Children form attitudes to learning based on the joy and satisfaction they derive from the time of learning, as well as from what they perceive as the end result to their years of learning. Accordingly, children become more positive towards school and education when (a) objects, persons and places they are interested in and like are included in the learning process in an experiential way; and (b) short-term goals and practical incentives are offered during the term of learning; (c) Exercise of cooperative learning skills In keeping with recent world-wide trends in education, and as revealed by responses, especially those from educational institutions, to Global Cooperation for a Better world (a two-year-long Peace Messenger Initiative coordinated in many countries for a major period, by BKWSU), we can reaffirm, while acknowledging each pupil's individuality and specialty, that when pupils think and do things together, deeper and much more meaningful experiences in learning are produced.

Teachers and students in at least 20 countries who used a special school pack that was

created for the project reported the following benefits from its use:

- (a) Achievement of cooperation through the development of personal qualities;
- (b) Fostering of positive attitudes both in classroom situations and out of school;
- (c) Greater insight among both teachers and students into the learning process;
- (d) Opportunities for exercises in imagination and originality;
- (e) Help for children in developing concentration and other learning abilities;
- (f) Making learning a "happy experience";
- (g) Motivating students to be informed and involved in world issues through international exchange.

In view of these observations and its experience over the past 54 years, BKWSU considers itself to be in a position to recommend to the appropriate organizations within States to include in school curricula, wherever possible, training in following basic human skills to enhance the learning process:

- (a) positive/creative thinking;
- (b) practical cooperation and communication; and
- (c) re-examination of values within the context of personal thinking and behavior.

In the long run, such curricula will not only encourage people to become more responsible for learning essential life skills, but also ensure that they enjoy the freedom to learn what is appropriate for them, using methods appropriate for them, thus allowing for the full potential of all world citizens to be realized. Let us not forget: "The process of getting there is just as valuable as the goal itself."

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

The BKWSU is a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and in consultative status with UNICEF.
The University was founded in India in 1937 and has branches in over 100 countries worldwide.
It has been affiliated to the United Nations Department of Public Information since 1980.

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