



ISC Views and Voices

“Education is not a preparation for life; education is life itself.” - John Dewey

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A Busy Place!

by Nicolette Groeneveld

Did you notice? We're on Volume 5 of this newsletter... we're in our fifth year! Wow, we've come a long way! From the St. Andrews building for our first two years, to two full years in our beautiful country location and now another year in what a visitor recently called our “mansion” but with ever-stronger visions of our new monolithic dome building dancing in our heads! Despite the excitement, I recently commented to a student that this school is really not so much about the building as it is about the school philosophy, the students, the staff and the parents.

As I look back over the last few years, I remember that we've had close to one hundred students come through our doors. Many who left experienced important changes before choosing another road, and those who have remained have wowed us with their growth and transformations! It's a privilege to bear witness to it all, and it's a joy to welcome and get to know new students who, we feel, won't go away from ISC untouched!

While we hovered around the twenty mark for our first two years, and then danced around thirty in our third and fourth years, this year our school has had an influx of new faces, leaving us hopping at 42!

As I write this, it seems the whole

school is buzzing around my desk! It's noisy and busy! Then the swarm disappears, and it's quiet again. This is a reflection of the constant movement and sound that pervades our building.



Tired out, Hudson fell asleep while waiting to be picked up.

The evolution of our school continues, as changes are happening to match student interests. Two major developments have happened so far this year: Tim has made huge improvements to the shop, cleaning and reorganizing the work space, super-emphasizing safety, re-detailing certification procedures and doing things like installing ventilation units and running more electrical plugs. And in the garage, the left-over stage from the Symmetree event has been set up and the whole music room has been moved there. Even the grand piano was moved, which required a massive collective effort!

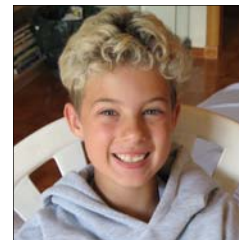
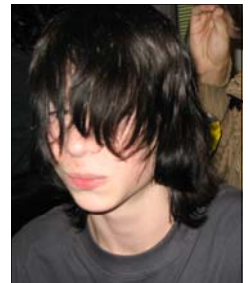
We also have a few new corporations, notably the Mmm Mmm Food Corporation whose members go once per month to a cultural restaurant to try different foods. We also have the Mixed Martial Arts and Workout Corporation, and congratulations are in order to Chase and Mike for the great presentation they did at Campus Meeting to get their Corporation passed!

Finally, the presence of our youngest student, 4-month old Josephine, brings a whole new dimension to the idea of

watching out for the younger kids, although Josephine is almost always to be found in mother, Nicolette's arms! While public schools are inviting infants in as a new program to develop empathy in children, ISC has its own permanently present infant! It's all going beautifully so far, except that Josephine doesn't yet understand “point of order” so she sometimes chatters through JC and Campus Meeting!

Ironing out a few other bumps has also been a part of this new year. ISC's high standards for respectful, responsible, reasonable and peaceful behavior have forced change in some of our new students, but witnessing their quick growth has been moving and inspiring. New parents have also quickly understood how the school “follows students home” as they have found themselves making some adjustments in their own lives.

All in all, we're delighted to be back in action and are looking forward to another eight months (wow, two months have already passed!) of excitement, growth and all the other magic that happens at ISC!



A few of our new faces

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Quotable Quotes

A student was talking with Ric and Mike about his family situation and how it was causing problems for him. Said Mike, "I can't give very much help, but I could pray for her at the sweat."

Kelson: "Nicolette, thank you so much for starting this school!" "You're a happy guy." "Yes!"

Robert (13): "Our school is like a star... It's a bright light in the deep dark night of politics and public school."

A quote I forgot to put in last year: Kris: "Nicolette, does Mark have any extra wood?" "Yeah, probably. What do you want to build?" "A house."

Kelson asked his mother to buy him a dart gun because one of his friends at school had one and they wanted to have dart gun fights together. Leaving the store, Kelson thanked his mother for the gun and she replied, "No problem, consider it school supplies!"

David and Robert have chores they have to do every Sunday. While doing them, one of the boys said to the other, "Well at least these are just once-a-week chores, not like the every-other-day chores at school!"

Caleb had made a deal with Logan: Caleb would get Logan's cheese bun, and Logan could play with Caleb's sword. Caleb ate the cheese bun, but then didn't want to give Logan his sword to play with. A mediation followed. After a long discussion, Caleb agreed to buy Logan a new cheese bun so he could keep his sword. Logan started saying, "Well, it's okay, I could just play with something else..." I said, "It's important that Caleb follow through on this." Josh added, "Yeah, dude, this is an important lesson for when he's older!"

Kris is thinking ahead. He asked me if former students get two free visiting days. When I said, "No, they just come through the Visit Committee", Kris was satisfied. Someone sitting nearby asked him why he was asking about that. Kris said, "I'm going to want to visit once I'm done here so I figured if I need to change the policy about former students

visiting, I'd better do it while I'm here and have the power to make changes!"

Gaian: "In a couple of years, I'll have 500 million dollars, if I can figure out how to do anything!"



Devonte



Steve



Quinn



Liam



Taylor M



Jordan



Jasper



Taylor H

The rest of the new faces, some of whom joined us late last year.

PLEXIS!



by Dawn Schumacher—ISC Volunteer

I was privileged to witness a true testament to this school. And that was the recent creation of the band, Plexis. Four students came together without thought to whether or not they "can do it" and they just did it. Without hesitation these four, Chase, Steve, Kelson & Marlaena came together and performed for us. In any other environment that I know of, it would have been a very daunting enterprise. These are students who had no previous experience in a band. Steve had never played the drums before, and Chase had had no lessons on the guitar. Yet these four came together and formed a band.

Forming this band was not without its challenges. First was finding the people who would play which instruments and who would be the singer. These challenges were overcome, and the band started to practice. Then the artistic and personality differences started to show up. I don't know how many times the band broke up. But they always got back together. Kept practicing and kept overcoming the challenges.

What struck me most about this was that the four of them did this without adult intervention. They did this without hesitation. I'm not sure they ever stopped to ask "can we do this". They just did it. What power and strength they showed! And the lessons learned are incredible. They have learned to set their minds to something and do it. They let nothing stop them. Even when they were at each other's throats, they didn't give up. They found a way to overcome their differences and continue. They have learned to work with others, even when they don't agree with the others. They have shown an ability to communicate and understand each other. These four have learned how to be successful. Determination, under-

standing, communication, vision, practice—all these things, these four students demonstrated. And the end result for us was a very entertaining performance! The end result for them, who knows, but I do know that the skills they demonstrated and the skills they learned will be carried with them into adulthood and will stand them in good stead with their peers now and in the future. No textbooks, no novels, no lectures could have taught them more than the simple act of doing. This is learning, this is education, this is a true testament to this school and this philosophy!

An interview with our “Rock Stars”:

Q: What made you decide to form/join a band?

CHASE: I have wanted to form a band for a long, long time and haven't been able to until I got here.

KELSON: Seemed like a good idea.

MARLEANA: At first I was hesitant....not sure it was a good idea....but then decided it would be fun to have an activity at the school.

STEVE: Cause I wanted to. Thought it would be fun.

Q: What instrument did you play and how much experience do you have?

CHASE: Guitar. I wanted to play either the drums or guitar, and I figured I couldn't sing and play drums so I chose the guitar. I have not had lessons on the guitar.

KELSON: The band needed a base guitar. I haven't played base before but have had lessons on guitar.

MARLEANA: Wanted to do something with the band and figured singing was something I could do

STEVE: I've always wanted to play the drums so thought this would be fun.

Q: What did you hope to accomplish by doing this?

CHASE: I want to be famous and figured this was a way to start.

KELSON: I just wanted to be in a band and wanted to accomplish something that I wanted to do.

MARLEANA: Confidence that I know how to rock and roll.

STEVE: Just did it, didn't really want to get anything out of it.

Q: What was the toughest part of getting the band together?

CHASE: Getting along with the other band members.

KELSON: Getting yelled at. I wanted to quit twice but decided to stay.

MARLEANA: The bickering/disagreements. The conflict in the group and trying to keep it together

STEVE: The two days before the gig, everyone stressed. Kelson and Chase almost quit.

Q: What was the toughest part of the performance?

CHASE: Besides being nervous, when Marlaena accidentally unplugged my cord.

KELSON: I was so nervous.

MARLAENA: There was no tough part.

STEVE: No hard part.

Q: Did you ever think it was impossible/that you wouldn't be successful?

CHASE: The day before.

KELSON: Nope!!!!!!!!!!

MARLAENA: No

STEVE: NO!!!!!!!!!!

Q: What will you take away from this experience?

CHASE: I know that don't cross Steve. Doing a solo without pick shreds fingers. I probably won't do a gig again for a while.

KELSON: Accomplished something & had fun. Got to give out autographs.

MARLAENA: Confidence, fun, loved (absolutely) the cheering. Even though I loved rocking out, I want something a little softer. So I'm thinking we will each go our own ways.

STEVE: Better friendship with Chase.

Q: Was it worth it?

CHASE: YES/really weird feeling everyone cheering and felt great afterwards. Got to give out autographs. It was a rush.

KELSON: It was fun, exciting and a lot of people cheered and I enjoyed that a lot!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

MARLAENA: If someone deleted the conflict it was great.

STEVE: It was very enjoyable. And I would do it again.

Thanks again PLEXIS for the enjoyable performance and for sharing your thoughts and experiences with us.



Getting comfortable during Campus Meeting.



Vacuuming can be fun!



Testing the property's clay to see if it can be used to make cob walls in the new building.

Unconditional Love vs Punishments and Rewards

by Nicolette Groeneveld

Since having become a parent, one of my friends has been sharing with me some of her favorite parenting resources. This weekend, I watched a video by Alfie Kohn called *Unconditional Parenting—Moving from Rewards and Punishment to Love and Reason*. I'd like to share key information from this DVD as food for thought.

Kohn begins his discussion by pointing out that while the word "good" generally means ethical, positive etc, when it comes to children, "good" usually means quiet, well behaved and "not a pain in the butt to me". According to Kohn, the most common parenting styles in North America focus not on making kids truly "good" people but rather on making them "good" in the sense of being compliant and doing whatever the parents want. While most parents say they want their children to grow up to be self-confident, happy, passionate, self-motivated etc, their parenting is inconsistent with those hopes. Says Kohn, most parents in North America treat children fundamentally disrespectfully, and rather than being too permissive—which is a fear many parents have—parents respond overwhelmingly with too much control.

According to Kohn, the problem with control is that it leads either to children being overly compliant or overly defiant. When a child becomes compliant he sacrifices his own self in order to secure his parents' love. When a child becomes defiant, she provokes confrontation in order to prove she still has power.

"Lay-down-the-law" parenting can also create in children a separate identity. In the family environment, a child seems to be a model child, but once away from his family, he "raises hell". I taught a student like this who truly did seem a "model boy", and yet on the side he was running with a gang and packing guns and knives.

Over-control also takes away a child's ability to regulate herself. Kohn gives the example of parents who force their children to eat when they're not hungry or finish their plate even when they're full. Eventually these children lose touch with their body signals and may become overweight as a result of

it.

Many parents try to teach their children right and wrong by intervening whenever their child does something "wrong". The result is that the child doesn't learn to make good choices herself and so, when left to her own decisions, she will often make the "wrong" choice which "confirms" to the parents that they need to intervene. An unproductive cycle continues.

Kohn's last example of the effects of control is that for many children, it kills interest. An experiment was done where children and parents played together. Where parents played freely with their child instead of saying things like, "Why don't you do that, and put that over there and..." the children—when the parents left the room—were still free in their play while the children with the controlling parents showed little interest in playing, even when new toys were introduced.

So how is this control exercised? The first means Kohn discusses in detail is the use of punishment, and here he includes what people call consequences and logical consequences. Kohn says punishment says to a child: "Something bad will happen to you if you don't do what I want". He says parents essentially make a child suffer in order to teach him a lesson.

Does punishment work? It often ensures temporary compliance but, says Kohn, it's very illogical to think that deliberately making a child unhappy will lead to positive results. He also raises the question, if punishment is so effective, why do parents have to use it over and over again?

Punishment often forces a problem underground so while a child may seem, for example, to have improved at home, at school he may act out more.

Corporal punishment (including spanking) teaches that the way to get your way with people with less power than you is to hurt them.

While corporal punishment works on children at a physical level, what Kohn calls forcible isolation—otherwise known as "time outs" - works on children at an emotional level. Time outs were originally used with laboratory animals as a way to get results by giving animals time away from positive reinforcement; in the

case of children, Kohn says time outs are simply love withdrawal; the parents' love, affection, attention etc is cut off in an attempt to create compliance. But as with all forms of punishment, the effects, if any, are only temporary.

Kohn points out that, generally, the more punishments fail to work, the more the child is seen as the problem, or parents think they need a different punishment. People rarely consider that the problem is the use of punishment itself.

Kohn continues his discussion by sharing his perceptions on why punishment doesn't work.

Firstly, he says, punishment makes children angry and resentful, and on top of that, their powerlessness is pushed into their faces since they can't do anything with their rage.

Secondly, punishment teaches that the way to solve a problem is by using power to make a person with less power unhappy.

Thirdly, punishment eventually loses its effectiveness. Parents often find that over time their threats no longer work.

Fourthly, punishment erodes the parent/child relationship. Parents become enforcers to be avoided rather than allies to be consulted. Children feel they can't trust their parents and aren't safe with them, feeling that "the people who are supposed to love me sometimes make me feel bad on purpose".

Fifthly, punishment distracts children from the real issue. Kohn gives the example of a child who hits her little sister and gets a time out. She doesn't spend her time thinking about her wrongdoing, rather she's likely to be thinking about how much she hates her sister and how she will get her back when her parents aren't looking. In this case, punishment just encourages children to escape detection and lie in order to avoid punishment.

The last point Kohn makes is that punishment makes children self-centered. The question children in a punitive household ask is "What do they want me to do, and what will happen to me if I don't?" Rather than focusing on the effect of their actions on others, they focus on themselves. They don't think, "If I hurt you, you'll feel terrible." Rather, they think, "If I hurt you, I'll get in trouble and I'll

feel terrible.”

So if punishment is futile and ultimately negative, what about using a system of rewards? According to Kohn, rewards and punishments are two sides of the same coin. Both work to get temporary compliance and, as with punishments, rewards create self-interest; in this case, the child asks, “What do they want me to do, and what will I get if I do it?”

Kohn doesn't have time in this DVD to go into detail about the negative effects of rewards, however, he does have a book written on it: *Punished by Rewards*. What he does share is that children learn to “do good” not for the value of doing the right thing, but simply because they'll get something for doing it. He says rewards also create insecure children as they become dependent on their parents' approval. As with punishments, rewards create children who are extrinsically rather than intrinsically motivated.

The last part of Alfie Kohn's DVD offers his alternatives to punishments and rewards. He says his parenting suggestions are essentially based on the question “What does my child need and how can I meet those needs” instead of “How do I get my child to do what I want?”

The first of the ten alternatives is for parents to reconsider their request. If their child does not respond to a request, there may be a very good reason for it; it may be untimely, unreasonable, overwhelming or something the child feels he cannot do. Some negotiation may be required.

The second is for parents always to put their relationship with their child first. If the child does something the parent doesn't like, how can the situation be handled so the relationship isn't damaged, so the child doesn't feel less loved by or less safe with their parent?

The third suggestion is about unconditional love. Kohn stresses that a child should always know that even if she does something “wrong”, she is loved. Kohn feels children should know their parents' love will always keep coming and that their affection is not something the children have to earn.

The fourth suggestion is that parents look at a situation from their child's perspective. Kohn shares that when his child was two, people would say, “Oh, you must be hearing a lot of ‘no's'”; he would respond, “No, it's my *child* who is hearing a lot of no's.”

The fifth suggestion is that parents be

authentic by expressing their feelings honestly and apologizing when they've made a mistake. Not only does this enrich the parent/child relationship, it's great role modeling.

Next, Kohn suggests parents talk less and ask more. He points out that this is actually a key to success in any relationship. This reminds me of my favorite definition of humility which says, “There is something here I do not know, the knowing of which could change everything.” Often problems are a result of miscommunications or assumptions so if parents take the time to get more information from their child, a peaceful resolution will likely be found.

Kohn's next point is about assumptions: he says, “Always attribute your child the best motivations consistent with the facts.” This means assume the best while keeping in mind the reality of the situation.

Kohn's eighth suggestion is for parents to try to say yes as often as they can. We often automatically say no, even when there is not really a good reason to. It may not always be convenient for us to say yes, but the enhancement and enrichment of our relationship with our children may be worth the inconvenience.

Kohn's ninth suggestion is to be flexible. He says, “Bend the rules sometimes, do things differently...” This makes me think of many of our ISC parents who have had to reconsider sleepovers—why not on a weekday now?!

Kohn's last suggestion is to allow children to make choices. He points out that if we want children who can make good decisions when they are with their friends, they need to practice making decisions at home. By the same token, if we want children who are strong enough to say “no” to their friends, they need to be allowed to practice saying “no” to us once in a while!

That completes the alternatives to punishments and rewards Kohn offers. I've also written quite a detailed account of his thoughts on punishments and rewards. If it's been interesting to you, I do suggest you get the DVD to get the full value of the presentation. From the horse's mouth is always best!



Year Calendar (what's remaining that is!)

Christmas holidays:

Friday, December 22—Last day of school

Monday, January 8—Return to school

Family Day

Monday, February 19

Spring Break:

Friday, March 23—Last day of school

Monday, April 2—Return to school

Easter holiday

No school Friday, April 6 & Monday, April 9

Victoria Day

Monday, May 21

Last day of school

Friday, June 29

Snapshots: An Inside View of ISC

by Nicolette Groeneveld and Ric Rosborough

The school is a-buzz with activity, as usual, and while many of the activities are things we see on a regular basis, there's always a new "flavor", depending on which students are involved.

September saw a whirlwind of activity in the sewing area; without patterns of any kind, students made t-shirts, bags, vests, leggings and little people. One student made a kimono for baby Josephine.

The living room was upside down almost daily as gangs of boys made forts and played all kinds of imagination games using the forts. Sword-fighting and the use of dart guns was often part of their play.

Among the younger boys there is also a long hair trend happening; straight and curly locks are getting longer and longer! Our older students, however, continue to have haircutting and coloring sessions.

Our older students also wowed many by organizing and running a food stand during the Symmetree event. They sold chicken kebabs (which involved a trip in Ric's truck to pick up four barbecues!) and various other treats. The students donated the money they earned to Arcatribe for future events they plan.

Our older students are also working with a member of Arcatribe to create a presentation aiming to raise massive amounts of money for furniture, decorations and supplies for the new building. They were also the driving force behind the new music room that's been set up in the garage of our current building, and they've been trying to maintain last year's small school feeling by working with new students to help them adjust to ISC life and by organizing and supervising a "super clean up day" which left the school virtually spotless.

Food remains a favorite thing and experimental cooking and baking along with bread making in the bread machine and the making of standard school lunches keeps the kitchen "fires" burning.

A fire corporation has been formed, along with the Mmm Mmm Food Corporation, the Mixed Martial Arts and Workout Corporation, and the Safety Corporation.

To practice safety, we had a fire drill which left many students running to the

shop in socks. A discussion ensued about proper footwear for cold-weather emergencies.

Phys. Ed. continues to involve trampolining and bicycling, and yet another group of students made the long trek to Gaian's house (a six-hour walk from the school!)

Students wanting to get around a little faster practiced driving, and one teenager recently did driver training and got his driver's license.

A number of students completed a questionnaire on extrasensory perception, and this coincided with the group of girls who were putting together the haunted house for Halloween (a great success once again this year!) A real-life gooey experience happened when students found a dead shrew and dissected it.

The computer room was "under renovations" for a while as a new server was set up. I've also noticed new words coming out of the computer room, like "pone" (correct spelling not quite determined), which means to beat or overcome. (Boys coming in from Snowball Wars I and II said to each other, "We totally poned you!")

Organizing Christmas presents inspired math, as one student figured out how many people she had to buy presents for as well as how much money she could spend on each person.

The JC room has been busy with meditations, as students address problems and negotiate solutions. Fear of confrontation is beautifully absent, among friends as well as between older and younger students. We've also seen several students (and their parents) explore EFT (emotional freedom technique) as a way to deal with personal issues.

Interest in Pokemon has been reborn amongst some younger boys, and a group of older boys were involved in a Dungeons and Dragons game. A group of teens has also been focusing on developing their own video game.

One student has done extensive experimentation with our vacuum systems and with other electronic devices. We also created a design team for our new building project and several students are part of that.

Out in the work world, we have two

teens working at the Princess Theatre, one working at a fabric store, and two of our young men are involved in a house renovation project. A few other teens are learning the ins and outs of real estate investing.

With winter here, we have a student who has taken on snow blowing while other students have been learning how to test the ice on the pond for safe thickness.

That about covers most (some?!) of what's been going on these last two months. Oh... one more thing: Mars recently walked by me saying, "This is the perfect school day! We're in the garage singing ABBA! It doesn't get better than that!"



Steve built a catapult to launch the giant pumpkin!



Cousin love!

Announcements

- A call to our parents! I would love to offer a "Parent Perspectives" newsletter in December. ISC Parents, if you'd be willing to share your experiences having your children here at ISC, I'm sure all our readers would find your perspectives interesting, helpful, inspiring etc! Any length of article is fine. I know Mothers may be more inclined to write, but Fathers, I'd love your perspectives too! Feel free to share stories, quotable quotes, celebrations, fears etc.
- If you have working pens to donate, we'd love to have them!

Prepared by Nicolette Groeneveld

* * School Shirt Order * *

We are offering our school shirts for sale! Here are the details:

Covering the front of the shirt is our **logo** and on the back it says: **Our 3 R's: Respect, Responsibility, Resourcefulness** (If you're wondering, our school rule *is* Be Respectful, Responsible and Reasonable, but on the shirt we prefer to put the school's ultimate goals.)

You can order a shirt by filling out the form below and either dropping it off at the school or mailing it to Site 4, Box 35, RR1, South Edmonton, AB T6H 4N6. I will be placing the order **Friday, November 24th** so please have the order in to me before then! All orders must be paid in full up front and once the shirts are in, we will make arrangements for pick up with you. Sorry, no exchanges or refunds.

Shirt styles and Prices: (Note: Please **add \$3** for any order of **XXL or larger**.)

T-shirt	\$15 + GST= \$16.05
Hoodie	\$37.65 + GST= \$40.29
Sweat shirt	\$30.50 + GST= \$32.64
Long sleeve with mock neck	\$29.50 + GST= \$31.57
Long sleeve with crew neck	\$23 + GST= \$24.61

Standard sizes are available and available colors are: white, black, grey, light blue, light olive green. *If you would like a different color, please check with Nicolette as an extra charge may be applied if a color change has to be made during the printing of the logo.*

Standard and youth sizes are available.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Order:

Quantity	Style	Color	Size	Price with GST

Total number of items:

Total price:

Paid by: _____ **Cash** (preferred!)

_____ **Cheque** (payable to Indigo Sudbury Campus)