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STUDENT EDITION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2021

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TIME TO LET THE YOUNG LEAD THE WAY

The last two years have been tough on the young ones. But they showed exemplary courage, gumption and resilience to handle what life threw at them. In fact, if ever there was a time to test the popular saying - "Child is the father of man", this Children's Day is IT. We profile some **YOUNG ACHIEVERS** and turn to them for sage advice, and ask them how grown ups can "grow up" to make a difference



THE WRITE GUY

JOSHUA BEJOY, 11 | CLASS VI, RYAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, PUNE

"Do what you love to excel"

Joshua published his first novel 'Murder at the Leaky Barrel' in July 2021. The novel became a #1 Best Seller on Amazon Kindle on the day of release. It stayed at #1 in Children's Crime & Thriller (Kindle Store) category in Amazon India and topped the Best Sellers Rank in Australia, Canada, UK and USA

An advice to grown ups

I would say, just do your best in your field! I feel good when I write. So, when others do things they love, they'll excel at them. When we start doing different things, we may or may not excel at the first go, but as we gain more experience, we make fewer mistakes, and then slowly, we become good at it. When he started out, Eddie Van Halen could not afford a proper high-end guitar. His wish was to combine the tone of the Gibson Les Paul and the feel of the Fender Stratocaster. So, he bought a factory reject Stratocaster body and neck, and then bought a Gibson humbucking pickup, and then put them all together to create the legendary Frankenstrat. And it is with this guitar he put together amazing guitar solos from 'Jump' (1983), the 'Eruption guitar solo' (1978) and 'Panama' (1984). He did what he aspired, and he excelled at it. If I were not a child, I might have written my novel differently. The plot might have been different, or the book itself might have been different. As a fact, I know that Jeff Kinney spent about eight years working on the first 'Wimpy Kid' book before turning it out to a publisher. So as an adult, I might have picked up my piece of sandpaper, and smoothened out the finer details.

"When we start something, we may not excel at it. But with experience, we make fewer mistakes, and slowly become good at it"

THE CLIMATE WARRIOR

RESHMA KOSARAJU, 15 | CLASS X, THE HARKER SCHOOL, SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

"Adults are less receptive to change than children"

There is a fire burning inside Reshma Kosaraju, Indian-origin teenager, who has been racking her brains to search for climate solutions, which adults are lazily taking time to find. Did she get one? Affirmative. Reshma also has won herself due recognition with the coveted Children's Climate Prize 2021 awarded at the Nobel banquet in Stockholm, on Monday, November 8. She pipped teen finalists from around the world with an artificial intelligence project algorithm for forest fires that she hopes will one day see the light - as an app.

small they may be, because every good deed counts. By staying informed of the climate crisis and how our choices affect the environment, we can come up with solutions for the various issues we are facing.

If I were an adult, I probably would have approached the problem through more conventional methods. However, I think being young allowed me to be more creative in my approach. I think at times adults are often less receptive to change than children. Adults can take a corrective path by being more open to new ideas and policies that may be beneficial in the long term.

A life lesson for adults

The life lesson I would give to adults (or anyone) is to keep your eyes peeled for what YOU can do for the environment. Everyone can help through actions, regardless of how big or

"Adults can take a corrective path by being more open to new ideas and policies that may be beneficial in the long term"



THE TECHNOPRENEUR

AARYAN RAI, 15 | CLASS X, THE KALYANI SCHOOL, PUNE

"Invest time in adding skills and good traits to your personality"

Aaryan is a teen entrepreneur, tech enthusiast, AI researcher and marketer. He is the founder & CEO of AR Digital Technologies, an IT company that offers next-gen technology and marketing solutions to brands and businesses across industries. He is the Youngest HubSpot certified professional, a Google certified marketer and an International Email Marketing Champion by ConvertKit. He has also been certified by IIT Kharagpur Entrepreneurship cell.

"Treat yourself as a game character, where you add attributes to it to make it stronger"

Advice for adults

Never hesitate to act upon your goals. Many people have a strong passion for something that they want to excel in, but fail to take a step towards achieving it. The reason usually is lack of confidence or courage. Whenever you feel confident in your skills, take immediate action. Forget about the outcome. Even if you fail, you will end up smarter.

My strong advice to all adults: treat yourself as a game character, where you add attributes to your character to make it stronger. Focus on adding skills and good traits to your personality to make it stronger every day and invest time in doing the same. This will eventually make you a stronger player to enter the tough game called 'Life'.

If I were a grown up, the plus point, I would have much more time to invest in my ideas and business, and would have access to plenty of resources and opportunities. I would not have faced the restrictions that I am facing being under-18 regarding official documents, or current bank accounts, etc. But, as a teenager I can take my decisions freely, which would not be easy as an adult, as I would have had too many responsibilities.



THE VOICE OF REASON

NAV AGARWAL, 14 | CLASS IX, THE SHRI RAM SCHOOL, MOULSARI

"Be more mindful of your consumption"

On February 2018, brothers Vihaan (then 14) and Nav Agarwal, at age 11, started One Step Greener - an organisation that works on waste management, recycling and tree plantations. What started in their colony in Delhi now services homes, schools and offices in more than 14 colonies across Delhi and Gurugram. Nav is also a recipient of many awards, like Children's Climate Prize, 2019; Global Social Leaders in 2019, Eco-Hero Awards in USA 2019, and BBC Young Earth Champions Top 10. He was recently shortlisted for Children's Peace Prize by Desmond Tutu.

10 courses? Mindful consumption will ultimately reduce our carbon footprint on earth. The stem of all problems comes from consumers who create demand for unnecessary and polluting items. If adults can reduce their demand, then fixing climate change would not be such a far-off dream. Most consumers (almost all) are adults, so if they can limit their needs, climate change will not be such a distant reality and I think is a very important life lesson for adults.

In my opinion adults should take a corrective path in their thinking and approach towards life. This would not just help the environment or help reduce the massive amounts of pollutants we are releasing... it'll also create a better world for everyone.

Life lessons for grown-ups
Grown-ups should be able to identify what is needed and what can be avoided. For instance, does one really need 10 clothes or

"As an adult, I would focus on creating a sustainable world rather than earning more money and creating a money-driven world"

THE CULTURE KEEPER

LACHI PRAJAPATI, 15 | CLASS XI, JAYSHREE PERIWAL HIGH SCHOOL, JAIPUR

"Success depends on the moves you make, not the more you have"

An international Kathak and Bhawai dancer, Lachi is no girl next door. Besides being a dancer, she's a writer and a sportsperson. She has two world records to her name: one, of being the Youngest Author in the world for her book 'Sit A While With Me' and second, for dancing with 125 pots balanced on her head. She's also a National level 10m air pistol shooter. She has a litany of awards to her name: Bal Shrestha Award-2014, 'Woman of the Future'-2018, National Nritya Kala Bal Ratna-2020, and many more.

Life lessons for adults

Take risks. For me, dance is the definition of discipline, devotion and determination. Taking Bhawai as a dance form had been a difficult task. Bhawai is believed to have

originated in Gujarat. When I started performing Bhawai, it was not that well-known. Even today, many people are aware of this art form. So the lesson that I would like to give to adults is that take your chances; like I took by opting for this little-known dance form. I tried to make it popular by performing it on different platforms and focussed on my vision. As a result, now my art is not just getting recognised on multiple platforms but also getting appreciated by national and international leaders.

Stop overthinking

I find that psychology plays a major role in adults and children. I have found that if an adult creates a vision, their overthinking of calculating the success supersedes the possibility of taking risks to manifest the vision. I inculcated this learning and thought in my book: 'Sit A While With Me'. The book shows that the power of intention in a child's mind is undoubtedly pure and repels the negativity of calculating risks. This can help them sail through the journey to their success. I write in my book: "Everything we imagine we can do and whatever we dare to dream will surely come true."

"If an adult creates a vision, their overthinking of calculating the success supersedes the possibility of taking risks to manifest the vision"



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Children are not things to be molded, but are people to be unfolded."
– Jess Lair, author



HAPPY
CHILDREN'S
DAY

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THE ALL-ROUNDER | PALAASH JADAV, 13 | CLASS IX, CHILDREN'S ACADEMY, MUMBAI

"Reinventing oneself and trying out new skills is the key"



Ranging from entrepreneurial skills to winning art competitions and inventing a robot (for helping the farmers), Palaash has many achievements to his credit. He was named the Child Artist Of The Year 2020 by Artville Academy, represented Robotex India at a conference, in China, to present his prototype, 'Kisanobot'. This robot reduces the farmer's workload by doing the

work in extreme climatic conditions – by automating the process of ploughing, sowing, watering and harvesting. He is also the co-founder and writer of popular blog 'One Last Chapter' and co-author of 'Café Au Lait' on Wattpad.

What I would like to tell the grown-ups
Overall, more than 300,000 farmers have killed themselves in the country since 1995. Most of these suicides were due to low yield. When I came across these devastating numbers in 2019, I decided something needs to be done. This led to the production of the robot,

'Kisanobot' which helps farmers plough the land, sow the seeds, water the plants, sprinkle fertilisers and much more. A lot more needs to be done for Indian farmers. All adults, government and non-government sectors must work for the upliftment of Indian farmers. I had mentors during the exploratory process of engi-

"Rome was not built in a day. Likewise, success is a journey and never a destination – all adults must realise this simple truth"

neering the 'Kisanobot'. My father helped me in various aspects, such as preparing for the viva test and questions and 'Science Kidz', my robotics class, helped me explore my concepts further and convert my ideas into reality. If I were an adult, my resources would have been better and more exhaustive, and therefore, I would have been able to reach across all villages in India. All adults can follow some global role models and truly make efforts to emulate them in their day-to-day lives. I, personally, look up to Michelle Obama for her leadership skills and philanthropy, Tim Cook for his ideas and how his mind works, Selena Gomez for her charismatic personality and PR.

THE ASSIMILATOR

AAMISH AHMAD BEG, 17 |

CLASS XII, CITY MONTESSORI SCHOOL, LUCKNOW

"Grown-ups need to change approach to community progress"



A budding techie and someone who's trying to get a deeper understanding of human history and culture, Aamish is the founder and lead trainer (App Development) at AlphaDev and also founded Tethered – a micro-story writing app. He holds many positions, like Chief Technical Officer and founding member at EchoLeap (US based start-up), founder-The Education Mission, Each One Teach One, President of Entrepreneurship Society (Ideate) and did a software development internship at Rathh, a Hyderabad-based start-up. He is also founder/host of podcast and internship programme-Experience and ExperienceX

driven by this purpose.

One of the major reasons for this is my own background and experience as part of the Indo-Nepali-Muslim community, a minuscule persecuted minority in the Terai. Being an Indian with ancestral and historical ties with Nepal gives me this duality of identity, which is a big part of my life. This makes me an active participant of culture. But most importantly, it gives me perspective. It helps me to understand cultures more intricately and engage with contexts effectively. I would like all adults to know

How grown-ups can get inspired by my work

I would like to communicate my ardent calling for studying and working on understanding various human cultures and their histories. Most of my efforts – be it with the community around the micro-story writing app or a new communication dynamic I experimented with at EchoLeap, creating a new student community at AlphaDev, NeoTech and Ideate and my research in the adoption of Chinese user experience elements in the Western world – have all been

"Adults need to ensure that all get their share of knowledge and progress collectively"

about my growth as a communicator while working on Experience – a podcast where I invite professionals in design, development and marketing, to interact with my school's students. Adults and leaders need to work upon their thinking towards community progress and try to rework themselves in a digital manner. That is where the future is. We need to spread education in a community-based manner, ensuring everyone gets his/her share of knowledge and progress.

Ardent and zealous reformer of change, Aarya is an author, illustrator, speaker, heritage and environment crusader. She fundraises for various causes and donates her art proceeds for the welfare of underprivileged cancer patients. Author of eight books, she raises awareness on relevant topics such as heritage preservation, current climate cri-

THE CAUSE CRUSADER

AARYA CHAVDA, 12 | CLASS VII, ANAND NIKETAN, AHMEDABAD

"Never too late to make a difference"

sis, girl child education, and children's fundamental rights and duties, while leaving the message of peace by depicting the ideologies and legacy of Mahatma Gandhi. Her books have been published by UNESCO New Delhi, introduced by United Nations, India, and published by UNESCO Digital Library

"High time adults realise that by saving our planet, they are saving themselves"

Message for grown-ups

Earth has a limited capacity to satisfy humanity's unlimited needs. Meeting the challenges posed by the climate crisis is our global responsibility. Adults need to know that by saving our planet, they are saving themselves. Humans, especially

adults, need to stop transforming nature and get on with transforming mankind's relationship with nature in order to address the crisis of climate. If I were an adult, I would have chosen the path of setting up my own NGO to collaborate with worldwide organisations, connect with the youth to enhance their capabilities, and create an eco-conscious community, and design to effect a transition to a more sustainable future. Adults should take a corrective path in their approach towards life and change their behaviour towards nature. This would not only help the environment and help in reducing the carbon footprint we are releasing, but also create a better world for each and every one of us.



GROWN-UPS, PULL UP YOUR SOCKS

As the face of tomorrow, our young achievers share some ideas which adults can emulate to create a better world. After all, as the popular Native American Indian proverb goes: "We have not inherited the Earth from our parents, we have borrowed it from our children." Inspiring young thinkers and doers across various fields and disciplines share their learnings on how adults can still unlearn and make a difference



THE UPCYCLER

TANAY JAIN, 16 | CLASS XI, ST JAMES SCHOOL, KOLKATA

"Adults need to be more responsible with the resources at hand"

Kolkata-based Tanay was perturbed by the sheer amount of fabric at his father's factory being dumped into the landfills. In 2018, he started the Katran Foundation, where he could use the waste generated at the family workshop to clothe underprivileged children.

selves initiate the process of upcycling waste fabric. If every adult in every fashion house makes it a point to do so, it can create a huge impact in society at large.

As an adult, I would...

Like to tell every child that in the years ahead the world will be yours. You need to give back so that it can sustain you and the generations to come. Every child can start at home and try to make a difference in a small way. For instance, one can talk to parents or persuade the local tailor to minimise waste and start upcycling cloth. They may even donate used

clothes (in good condition) to the needy. One may harness the power of social media and educate others, including adults around us on the need to maintain sustainability and start making a difference.

Advice to grown-ups

I believe adults need to realise that they must be more responsible with the resources at hand because nothing lasts forever. The need to use resources responsibly and keep them for future generations to enjoy must be imbibed into their thought process. This is possible by following sustainability and discipline in daily lives – in both personal and professional spheres. Adults, by the virtue of their position, can actually voice their opinions and create an impact. They may teach children best practices and encourage children to plant trees, save electricity, reduce carbon footprint, etc. This can go a very long way.



"Adults have a lot more experience in life, but sustainability is something which every individual needs to understand and practise"

Life lessons for adults
We know that adults have a lot more experience in life and know the nuances of the world better. But I think sustainability is something which every individual needs to understand and practise. I am sure those who run fashion industries or are at the helm of operations are aware how their actions and decisions affect us, and even a slight modification in their operating procedure may create a lot of impact. The fashion houses can them-

THE THINKER | DEEPSRI, 17

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OPEN SCHOOLING, VISAKHAPATNAM

"Support your child's dreams"

Deepsri from Vizag is an avid environment and social activist, a trained classical dancer who has turned vegan and has been vocal against animal cruelty. Her fight against climate change has become the talk of the city.

Advice to grown-ups

Under capitalism, we equate human worth with hard work. However, isn't it foolish to think hard work makes us successful? I see construction workers, factory workers, and employees, etc. working themselves as much as humanly possible but they and their families continue to suffer. Being denied basic rights, a fair chance, a safe upbringing, or the privilege to follow one's dreams has put us in a vicious cycle where

we don't matter if we don't win. Close your eyes for a minute and think of how your life would've been if your par-

ents let you choose your dreams over standards made by the system. It still isn't too late. And it's also not late to break this wheel. It's not too late to support your children's dreams.

Don't let your children continue with the same patterns. Perhaps, if adults opened their eyes and started with conscious parenting, homeschooling, or adopting kids, or even leading childfree lives – that would be a start for healing the world.

What if...

What if parents break the gender binary? What if daughters are taught finances and sons are given household chores? What if children are not just

raised to be strong but also soft? What if parents take their children to cal protests, foster animals together, grow vegan gardens, and paint canvases? That sounds more like family to me. Innocent children deserve some safety. Rise together for your kids.

Adults often feel ashamed to be flawed, emotional or sensitive. But isn't that true? Perhaps, if adults failed to realise the oppression we are working under, we still can unlearn behaviours. If adults still choose to live with their blindfolds on, neither will you find peace or joy, nor will you be able to give us (children) a better world than what you grew up in.



"I always think of how adults have made life a competition rather than the sacred experience it is"

