



The Idea of Modern "Mother of Mencius": Finding the Best Learning Environment for Children

現代孟母之想 ——為孩子找到最好的學習環境

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Hello, Dharma Master,

I am sorry it has taken me a while to respond to your email. When I read it, I wanted to share some of my experiences as a CTTB Boys Summer Camp teacher, a public school teacher, and a mother.

First, I have been teaching summer camp for the past six years and I have met many people who are interested in our school. They share they are interested in our school because it offers Virtue Studies, Buddhist Studies, Spiritual Development, Meditation, and the opportunity for their children to be around monastics and good people. These experiences, they share, cannot be found in many other places. They are especially interested in meditation, Buddhist Studies, Virtue Studies, and children having classes with monastics.

Secondly, during camp we often offer a Buddhist Studies class that is taught through age-appropriate Read Alouds by a monastic. This summer DM Jin Kai taught a meditation class and the Buddhist Studies class. Many of the Buddhist and non-Buddhist parents asked if they could participate in the class. Additionally, this summer a laywoman taught simple age-appropriate Buddhist songs, mantras, and texts. Again, Buddhist and non-Buddhist parents would come early during the day to hear the teachings. This has been my common experience during summer camp.

As a public school teacher, I have met many families who come in and are asking for help to raise their children. I also meet parents who are looking for character and moral development in the public school system. At the present time there is a big emphasis on test scores and the academic development of children. The state is pushing for the children to learn more and more in shorter periods of time. I have heard over and over again that students should be prepared to compete in the economic global system. However, the

法師，您好：

很抱歉，拖延了一陣子才回覆您的電子郵件。拜讀您的信函之後，我想以萬佛聖城男校夏令營老師、公立學校教師、及母親的身分，分享一些個人的經驗。

首先，過去六年我都參與夏令營的教學，遇到許許多多對我們學校感興趣的人。感興趣是因為我們提供道德教育、佛法研習、心靈啟發、打坐等課程，讓他們的孩子有機會處於僧眾與善人的環境中成長。他們體認到這些經驗，在其它地方不太可能獲得的。他們尤其對打坐、佛法學習、道德教育，以及孩子由出家法師來教導感到興趣。

其次，夏令營期間，我們提供適齡的讀本為教材，由僧眾來教佛學課程。今夏，近開師教打坐和佛法研習。許多佛教徒或非佛教徒的父母，也詢問是否可以參與學習。此外，還有一位女居士負責教簡單適齡的佛曲、咒語以及經文。相同地，不論是佛教徒或非佛教徒的父母都在上課日早早來到學校旁聽。這是我在夏令營的經歷。

身為公立學校教師，我遇到不少家庭前來要求協助教養子女，當然也碰到希望在公立學校體制中，期待加強品格道德發展的父母。當今普遍的評量趨勢，對於孩子們的考試成績與學業成就非常強調，迫使孩子在越來越短的時間內盡量做更多的學習。我一再聽到，學生應該



student's emotional and spiritual well-being is disregarded.

In my classroom, we meditate or play the "freezing game" for 1-2 minutes. I share with children that in learning how to freeze they are learning how to be calm, make better choices, and be better friends. I have seen much improvement in children's overall well-being just by meditating a few minutes a day. In a public school, I am very cautious on how I approach the children's emotional and spiritual development. I can't wait to teach at CTTB Summer camps because I can teach meditation and talk about Buddhist principles freely. What an opportunity!

This Fall my ten-year-old son started at the Boys' School. I moved five hours away from my family so that he and I could be closer to CTTB and the school. I want my son to learn meditation in a kind, compassionate, age appropriate manner. I want my son to study Buddhism (with age appropriate and applicable materials) and learn mantras. Per my conversation with other parents I know I am not the only one who wants their child to have these wonderful experiences.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my experiences and starting these discussions. Please feel free to share this email with others. I did not know how to send the email so that others could read it.

Peace,
Graciela Rodarte Sept. 3, 2011

為全球經濟體制中的競爭力做好完善的準備！然而卻全然忽視學生情緒與精神的健康。

在我的課堂裡，或打坐或玩「止靜」遊戲一兩分鐘。與孩子分享學習如何靜止、如何從容不迫、做更佳的判斷、如何成為彼此更好的朋友。僅藉由每天幾分鐘的打坐，孩子的整體狀態上就有很大的改善。在公立學校裡，我對處理孩子情緒上與精神上的問題非常小心謹慎。我是多麼迫不及待聖城夏令營的到來，因為可以開懷地教導打坐和佛學相關課程。這是多麼殊勝的機緣呀！

今年秋天，我十歲的兒子到男校就讀。為了距離聖城和學校更近，我搬到距我家五小時車程的地方。希望我兒子以慈悲、適齡的態度學習打坐，也希望他學習佛法(適齡與適用的教材)與咒語。在與其他家長的談話中了解，我不是唯一期待孩子有這種美好經驗的人。

謝謝您給我這個分享個人經驗以及討論的機會。請您自在地與他人分享此郵件。我不知如何寄送才能讓更多的人讀到。

法安
格拉謝拉·羅達特 寫於二〇一一年九月三日

