



by the slogan, 'We want to set up our children for success.' It had a powerful impact on me," says the 44-year-old Marketing and Corporate Communications Manager.

"The skills I learnt do not only help my child, but we parents too, especially in the area of self control," she notes. "I use a neutral moment, when my child and I are calm. Such a moment is very fertile for teaching values. I think the skills learnt are especially effective for children between the ages of three and 12."

An example of a successful moment was when Shona shared what she did in school recently. "She said she threw tissue paper at a friend and said she had a 'consequence' for the negative behaviour. She knew she had done something wrong and expected a consequence to follow," describes Christina.

Challenges

Initially Christina and her husband, Benedict, struggled to break away from their old method of parenting. "We expected Shona to follow our instructions. But we did not break the instructions into small steps that she could easily understand," she shares. "She did not know what kind of behaviour we expected from her because we were not specific in communicating our expectations."

Self-control was another challenge, Christina says. "When we were angry with her behaviour and we wanted her to change it, we struggled to put ourselves in her shoes so we did not give her the 'because you are a kid reason'. We explained how she would benefit from her good behaviour in a language she could understand," adds Christina.

"We got the hang of it by the third week of the workshop. We had to constantly reflect," she says.

Theresa Bung, a Family Counsellor at the Family

WHERE TO LEARN

Parenting In The First Year is conducted over four weeks by Fei Yue Community Services. Workshop details can be found on the website, which has events listed till February 2006.

Blk 604
Choa Chu Kang
St 62 #01-53
Singapore 680604
Tel 65631106
Fax 64162182
Website
www.fyecs.org

Life Society, applauds Shona's parents for their willingness to adopt a new behaviour with their child. "Parents are the children's best teachers. If the parents are calm, children will also be calm. The parents' ability to accept the limitations of their children will also limit their frustrations. And the parents' ability to realign their expectations to a more realistic expectation according to their child's age and needs is very important. In that way the child feels respected and she will cooperate well," she affirms.

3 PARENTING INFANTS

New mom Diana Ling, 35, prepared for her new role as (now) seven-month-old Bevis' mother by attending Parenting In The First Year, a four-session workshop organised by Fei Yue Community Services.



"One of the most interesting modules was parent-directed feeding (PDF). We were taught how to establish a routine for the baby, such as when to feed, when to play with him and when to put him to bed," she describes. "I had to change my mindset because I used to believe that babies should eat, sleep and play, in that order. At the workshop I realised that when I encourage my baby to sleep while feeding, he's only able to feed very little. That was why he would fall asleep only for a short while and then wake up again for another feed. Because of that I was also often tired because I had to wake up so often to breastfeed him."

After the workshop, Diana even found time to sneak out for a manicure before Bevis woke up for his next feed. "He actually increased his milk intake and therefore slept longer. And because of that, I had more time to rest and do my own things," Diana adds.