

Child Care Awards of Excellence 2016 Nomination in BC

One Letter of Support

Dear Evaluation Committee:

As a parent, I am more than happy to share my thoughts with my fellow parents and friends: when the heart of a child is filled with love, joy, kindness and respect, his moral standard will be raised; he will be able to tell good from evil; he will seek actively to be a good role model, to be kind, to be positive, to be helpful and to work hard. I have witnessed the positive change on my son Atom during his half-year time with Choo Choo train.

“Di Zi Gui” is a book detailing the code of conduct for youngsters based on the teaching of Confucius – a famous ancient Chinese teacher and philosopher. The book was written more than 300 years ago. In Choo Choo Train, Ms. Cheng strives to explain the concept of morality to young children using the book that is deeply rooted in Chinese culture and tradition. Her teaching helps my child understand the expectation of proper behaviour, enables him to consciously follow the code of conduct, respect his parents, love his brothers and sisters and keep his promise. Also, he has learned to get along with other children in the day care, to show courtesy and respect others. Some parents may dismiss the significance of moral teaching, thinking that they are not different from ordinary nursery rhymes. What I have noticed is that as Atom learned and remembered the text in Di Zi Gui, he started to observe his surroundings and implement what he has learned in his daily life. Sometimes he pointed out our own conducts that did not comply with the teaching in the book. He was able to candidly express his thoughts and feelings, which formed a positive way of communication between Atom and us. Ms. Cheng not only teaches kids “Di Zi Gui”, but also helps and encourages parents to study and understand the teaching by uploading the content of the book to the day care Wechat every week. She helped us to realize how we parents can gain trust from our children by improving our own behaviours, which in turn motivates the children to check and improve their own conduct on daily basis (As a matter of fact, in the mainland China, generations of Chinese have missed these traditional moral teaching due to failures in the education system. Ms. Cheng gave us an opportunity to rediscover these lost treasures).

In order to help children better grasp the concept of morality, Ms. Cheng uses multiple approaches. Besides teaching the book of “Di Zi Gui”, showing Cartoons on moral stories, she also takes older kids in her daycare to watch traditional Chinese music and dance performance known as “Shen Yun”. We are very grateful that Ms. Cheng has introduced to us such wonderful performance that promotes kindness and inner beauty. We were astounded by the

beauty and power of the performance. I remember that on the way home, Atom kept talking about the performance excitedly. To my surprise, he was able to tell precisely the “good guys” from the “bad guys”. It gave me great comfort knowing that he was starting to form a sensible criterion of right and wrong in his young heart.

Every day in Choo Choo Train, before learning Di Zi Gui, kids are asked to do a 10-minute quiet meditation. The meditation not only helped Atom to calm down and get ready for the lesson, but also improved his immunity. Based on some recent discovery in medical science, meditation could form an “a ray” energy field, which is beneficial for boosting one’s immune system. A healthy body helps Atom to stay focused on and enjoy what he is doing.

Moral lessons are just part of what was taught in Choo Choo Train. Kids are also exposed to broad academic learning based on the methodology of Montessori education. During the days when Atom was with Choo Choo Train, he often shared with us new things he learned from the day care. His favorite subject was cooking western and Chinese style food. Every time after he came home from the cooking lesson, he would be eagerly picking healthy ingredients for the whole family and asked us to help him cook the food. The quality time we spent together preparing and enjoying the food was a true blessing.

Although Atom stayed in Choo Choo Train for only half a year before he moved on to the kindergarten, we have witnessed significant improvement on him. Thanks to the solid foundation Ms. Cheng helped him to build during his days in Choo Choo Train; he was able to do well in the kindergarten. It was exciting to see him getting fast progress in English as he only spoke Chinese before attending Choo Choo Train. Meanwhile, he retained the ability to think in both Chinese and English and is getting proficient in switch between the two languages. More importantly, he is very keen to tell parents what happens in school and his interaction with fellow students.

I remember vividly that after the first day of kindergarten, Atom told me excitedly “Mom, I can understand everything the teacher taught today because I have learned all of them from Ms. Cindy!” Looking at the happiness and confidence on his face, I am convinced of the effectiveness and success of Ms. Cheng work.

Ying He

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