

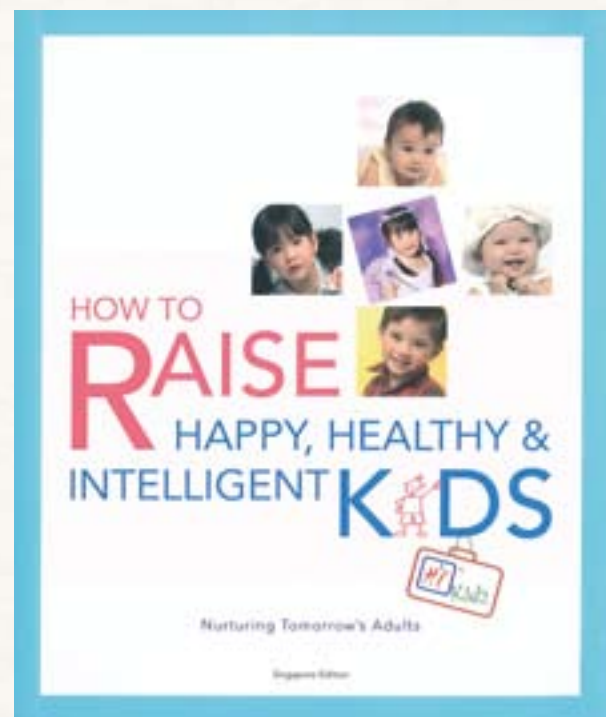
THE FATHER OF FUTURE PARENTING BOOKS

To develop a more gracious society, the education of our children is of paramount importance for they are our future. The first step is to nurture happy, healthy and intelligent kids. The second step is to have a practical and easy-to-read reference book.

Life is a learning experience; an experience that throws both the good and bad at you along the way. How we deal with what life throws at us in adulthood is in some way or another related to how we were raised and educated during childhood.

Have an ill feeling that you are being taken advantage of? In an instant, this will be viewed as a negative feeling for many of us. Not necessarily so for Fu Siang Jeen, director of Wen Ken Drug, who is able to look at it in another way. "... he [my father] told me it was alright when someone took advantage of him once for it allowed him to see the genuineness [the real side] of the person," he recalls.

With such an experience, you will then be better prepared in the future to deal with opportunistic individuals. In fact, observing his father's behaviour during his formative years had a "... profound effect" on Fu who now tries to "model" himself after his father.



How to Raise Happy, Healthy & Intelligent Kids
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[Editor's note: Fu Siang Jeen's father, Fu Weng Leng (of the Wen Ken Group of Companies), passed away in June 2009. PenWerke extends its condolences to Fu on his bereavement. We were filled with deep respect when the family made the public announcement only after the funeral service was over. The family sought the "kind understanding and acceptance" of friends whose lives his father had touched, reasoning that it was "his desire to pass on quietly and not trouble his friends over his passing".

His family went on to organise a "Celebration of Life" event in memory of Fu Weng Leng. The public announcement even went on to explain how Fu Weng Leng "led a business based on a profoundly simple Chinese idiom... **yin shui si yuan** which means "Remember the spring and source of life when drinking water". We figure that such an exemplary role model explains the success of the Wen Ken Group over more than 70 years.]

There are other father and son anecdotes which supplement the reference material in the parenting guide book, 'How to Raise Happy, Healthy and Intelligent Kids'. The book is the brainchild (pardon the pun) of Cheong Wing Kiat. As the project director of the book, Cheong has even roped in his three children to provide their very own inputs.

"The written word stimulates the child's creativity, intelligence and communication skills, which is why developing a child's reading skills and fostering a love of reading is so important", says Bryan Cheong, the eldest son of Cheong Wing Kiat who wrote these pearls of wisdom at the age of 13 years.

Photo courtesy of Media Health International



The confident look of five-year old Lu Ou Chen

"Kids need parents who will boss them on weekdays but be bossed on weekends."

- Lu Ou Chen

There are even real single-mum stories which reveal the true meaning of unconditional parental love, serving as a gentle reminder to all of us not to take our children – our own flesh and blood, for granted.

With this book, age is no barrier when it comes to voicing out one's thoughts. One unforgettable child is four-year old Lu Ou Chen who says, "Kids need parents who will boss them on weekdays but be bossed on weekends." Of course, parents must also heed his very candid and friendly advice: that they must buy their kids "lots of chocolate".

After the first read, this book shouldn't become another statistic on the bookshelf; rather it makes for a good reference book, maybe even placed by one's bedside or favourite reading spot at home, for the occasional reminder or check on certain topics or recommendations.

“Developing a child’s reading skills and fostering a love of reading is important because the written word stimulates a child’s creativity, intelligence and communication skills.”

- Bryan Cheong, 13 years old

Cheong’s two younger kids, Cherry and Desmond (referred to as ‘Rangers’ in the book) have even given their top picks of places to visit in Singapore (this being the Singapore edition). Apart from the ‘usual suspects’ being the Singapore Zoo, Jurong Bird Park, the Singapore Botanic Gardens, how about Qian Hu Fish Farm and the Mint Museum of Toys for a change? To be honest, I have not even visited the Mint Museum of Toys located at Seah Street and this book serves as a reminder.

Professional advice can also be gathered, as in the article by Helen Marjan, Educator, Joint Managing Director & Director of Studies, Lorna Whiston Study Centre, who encourages parents to spend time with their children playing games.

“Games are great motivators and are a great way to make learning stick. They are successful because when we play a game, we tend to become

very involved in it. When we are involved and having fun, we are motivated. And if we are motivated, we learn successfully,” says Marjan, citing games like ‘Boggle’ and ‘Scrabble’ which can help develop a wider vocabulary and is useful for those weak in their spelling.

There are even articles from product manufacturers with enlightening information. Did you know for example, that “... Contrary to popular belief, research has shown children who consume milk and dairy foods are likely to be slimmer than those who do not”? The reason being that “... milk is not a high fat product”.

As to the secrets for happy, healthy and intelligent kids, Cheong Wing Kiat lists five key influences: family, schools, government agencies, other countries (like the US and China) and the providers of products and services for children, while noting that “money is not one of them”.

We like the book for its easy-to-read articles, the involvement of not just one expert but many, from the professionals to experienced parents and even the kids themselves, the localisation of the content (for Singapore in this context) and most importantly, the very practical advice offered.

*The practicality of the content is the key selling point and that rightly explains why this is a localised version and why this book should not be another static display on the shelf. We figure that this book will be the ‘father’ or reference point for future parenting books in the region. **P***

Photo courtesy of Media Health International



Cheong Wing Kiat and his wife Laraine, eldest son Bryan, daughter Cherry and youngest son Desmond