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Index

Board Switch: What Parents Should Know	- Keya Sinha	08
Choosing the Ideal Play School	- Moushumi Roy Chowdhury	12
Navigating School Board Options	- Madhumita Seal	28
Recognizing the Child Within	- Swati Sarawagi	40
AI in Education - Friend or Foe?	- Priyanka Mukherjee	48
Social Media Ethics & Etiquette for Student	- Janet Gasper Chowdhury	58
How Can I be a Crorepati ?	- Prasaunjit Mukherjee	67

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Published from 6 Prafulla Sarkar Street, Kolkata-700001
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CP-4, Sector V, Salt Lake City, Kolkata-700091
by Zahra Basrai for and on behalf of ABP Pvt. Ltd.



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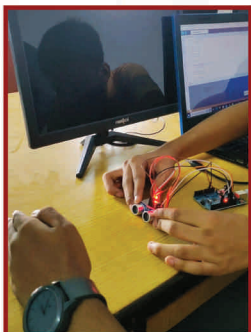
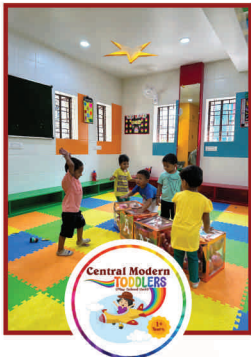
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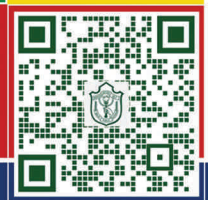
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Switching from CBSE to ICSE to IGCSE: Is It worth the Change?

The question of whether to switch from CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) or ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education, under CISCE) to the IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) often arises in India, especially among parents and schools aiming to provide their children with the best educational opportunities. The decision, however, depends greatly on the long-term goals of the individual student, the family's circumstances, and the school's vision for academic excellence.

Historical Background of IGCSE in India

Traditionally, the IGCSE curriculum was adopted mainly by schools catering to Non-Resident Indian (NRI) families or expatriate communities. These students were already accustomed to international pedagogies, learning styles, and flexible assessment systems. IGCSE became an attractive option because of its global recognition and extensive range of subjects, aspects that were missing in the national boards until recently.

The IGCSE gained importance following the discontinuation of the Senior Cambridge Examination in India during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Rising foreign exchange costs made the examination prohibitively expensive for middle-class families, restricting it primarily to affluent households or high-merit students aspiring for foreign universities. In contrast, IGCSE emerged as a more structured and globally relevant successor, backed by Cambridge University, maintaining international academic standards.

Fast forward to today, access to higher education abroad has widened considerably. Numerous universities worldwide actively welcome Indian students, offering scholarships and need-based financial aid. The admission process, once bureaucratic, is now streamlined via online applications, virtual interviews, and digital portfolio submissions, significantly reducing the barriers Indian students once faced. For such students, globally recognized qualifications like IGCSE can certainly smooth the journey, though CBSE and ICSE are now increasingly accepted worldwide too, with equivalency frameworks in place in many countries.

CBSE and ICSE: Changing With the Times

One of the arguments traditionally favoring IGCSE was that CBSE and ICSE lacked global recognition. However, this claim is no longer valid in most contexts. Reputable institutions abroad, from the US to Europe to Asia-Pacific, now readily accept students with CBSE or ICSE qualifications, especially since the boards revised their curricula to focus more on skill development.

The introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has brought about a paradigm shift in the Indian education system. Both CBSE and ICSE are strongly moving away from rote learning and towards more conceptual understanding, critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Examinations are gradually becoming application-based rather than memory-based, reflecting international standards.

For example:

- CBSE today emphasizes STEM education, coding, financial literacy, and skill-based subjects. It also has clear guidelines for holistic assessment through projects, practical applications, and competency-based questions.
- ICSE, known for its strong emphasis on English and humanities, is broadening its reach with interdisciplinary approaches, focus on creativity, and personalized evaluation.

This shift aligns with global educational norms, reducing the gap between CBSE/ICSE and IGCSE in terms of pedagogy and assessment.

IGCSE: Strengths and Opportunities

The Cambridge IGCSE curriculum offers:

- **Global Recognition:** Accepted by universities worldwide for undergraduate admissions.
- **Breadth of Subjects:** Over 70 subjects, including sciences, humanities, arts, and vocational streams.
- **Flexibility:** Students can choose subject combinations aligning with their interests and career aspirations.
- **Skill-Oriented Assessments:** Heavy emphasis on projects, coursework, practicals, and analytical skills.
- **Critical Thinking and Application:** Learners are nurtured to evaluate real-life scenarios, not just memorize theories.

- **English Language Foundation:** Strong focus on communication skills, especially in English, helpful for global higher education.

IGCSE, followed by Cambridge International A-Levels, is particularly appealing for students intending to pursue higher education abroad, especially in the UK, US, Canada, or Australia. It provides an early grounding in international education styles, easing transition later in life.

Challenges of Switching to IGCSE

Despite its clear advantages, the switch is not without challenges:

- **Cost:** International curricula often come with significantly higher tuition fees, examination charges, and infrastructure expenses. This makes them less accessible to middle-class families.
- **Cultural Context:** IGCSE content is global in design, which can sometimes underplay Indian history, culture, and values compared to CBSE/ICSE.
- **Continuity Issues:** Switching boards after middle school can disrupt a child's learning rhythm due to differences in curriculum structure, content depth, and assessment style.
- **University Readiness in India:** While IGCSE is valued abroad, Indian entrance exams (like JEE, NEET, CUET) tend to align more closely with CBSE's syllabus. Thus, students aiming for Indian institutions might be better served by CBSE or ICSE.
- **High Academic Transition Load:** Students who shift midstream sometimes struggle adapting to the new demands, especially if they are used to a structured CBSE/ICSE style rather than IGCSE's flexible approach.

Is Switching Worth It?

The answer depends on each student's aspirations:

- **For Students Aiming Abroad:** If the objective is an overseas undergraduate degree, IGCSE followed by Cambridge A-Levels or the IB Diploma offers smoother acceptance and preparation. The international exposure, research-based pedagogy, and self-learning focus give students an edge in adapting to Western university systems.
- **For Students Staying in India:** With CBSE and ICSE evolving under NEP 2020, the benefits of switching diminish. Both boards now prioritize creativity, analysis, and application-qualities once considered the hallmark only of

international boards. Moreover, CBSE is closest to the pattern of national entrance exams (NEET, JEE, etc.), providing the most alignment with Indian higher education.

- **For Schools:** Introducing IGCSE is a matter of positioning. Schools targeting global citizenry, foreign collaborations, and expatriate communities may find IGCSE attractive. However, the financial sustainability of international curricula remains a limiting factor, especially outside metros.

Expert Perspective: Blending the Strengths

Educationist Swami Vivekananda once said education should not merely fill the brain with information that "runs riot there" but should instead prepare learners to face life courageously and contribute meaningfully to society. Both CBSE and ICSE, through NEP reforms, are striving toward this transformative vision, reducing the gap with IGCSE's philosophy.

Parents and schools must ask:

- Does my child aim to study abroad or in India?
- What financial resources do we have for international fees?
- Which curriculum best matches my child's strengths and interests?

If the student's goals can be met within CBSE or ICSE, making a costly switch to IGCSE may not be necessary. However, for globally mobile families or those seeking strong international exposure, IGCSE remains a powerful option.

The Bottom Line

Switching from CBSE/ICSE to IGCSE is a significant academic and financial decision. While IGCSE offers flexibility, global recognition, and skill-based pedagogy, CBSE and ICSE are rapidly evolving, bridging the gap with international systems. With the NEP 2020 reforms, Indian boards now focus on conceptual learning, analytical thinking, and holistic education-erasing many of the advantages IGCSE once held.

Ultimately, the worth of the switch lies not in the prestige of the board but in the alignment between the board's strengths and the child's aspirations. If the educational philosophy enables children to become confident, curious, responsible, and resilient learners, the investment-whether in CBSE, ICSE, or IGCSE-will always be worthwhile.

Keya Sinha

Academic Director
National Gems H.S. School



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3	ADAMAS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL	KOLKATA	8335008844/8479913763	www.adamasinternationalschool.org	C.I.S.C.E, IGCSE
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The Ethics of Social Media for Students : Navigating Digital Footprints, Misinformation, and Online Etiquette

-- Janet Gasper Chowdhury

In today's fast-paced digital era, social media is an integral part of every student's life. Platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and LinkedIn are no longer just venues for entertainment or socializing; they have evolved into powerful tools for learning, networking, and career building. In India, where over 40 crore young people actively use these platforms, social media holds immense influence over shaping opinions, trends, and opportunities. However, with this influence comes responsibility. For students, navigating the online world ethically has become an essential life skill—one that demands awareness of digital footprints, the risks of misinformation, and the importance of online etiquette.

Age and Maturity Requirements for Social Media

Globally, most major platforms set 13 years as the minimum age to create accounts, in line with international child online safety laws like the U.S. Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). India does not currently have a universal legal age for social media use; however, platforms enforce age restrictions as per their terms of service. Despite their exposure and familiarity with technology, many youths lack the maturity to handle issues like cyberbullying, misinformation, and addictive usage effectively. Compounding this, most parents have limited understanding of the social media platforms their children frequent, making it harder to guide them. For instance, teenagers around 15-16 years rarely use Facebook nowadays—they prefer Snapchat or Instagram, platforms their parents may hardly know how to navigate.

Impact of Online Profiles on Student Visas and Careers

Many students are unaware that every post, like, or comment contributes to their digital footprint, leaving a permanent trace on the internet. Employers, universities, and scholarship committees regularly review social media profiles during selection processes. One illustrative case involved an Indian student from Maharashtra applying for a U.S. F-1 student visa. She dutifully disclosed her Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter handles on the visa application form but inadvertently omitted her

Reddit account. During the interview, the consular officer flagged this omission and placed her application on hold under section 221(g), despite the Reddit content being innocuous. This incident highlights that even private or anonymous accounts must be disclosed in visa processes, as per U.S. regulations.

Online Opinions and Their Long-Term Consequences

A single inappropriate post, offensive joke, or controversial opinion shared impulsively can severely damage a student's reputation years down the line. In India's highly competitive job and education markets, maintaining a clean and professional digital presence is crucial. Students must think carefully before posting on sensitive or political topics and avoid oversharing personal details. For example, a 20-year-old student from Kurla, Mumbai, faced arrest after posting anti-India comments on Instagram criticizing "Operation Sindoor," resulting in a case under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Information Technology Act. A useful guideline is: "Would I be comfortable if my teacher, parent, university, or future employer saw this post?" Curating a positive online identity allows students to reflect their values, achievements, and aspirations responsibly.

Combating Misinformation in the Age of AI and Viral Content

The spread of misinformation is a growing challenge on social media. False news can go viral within minutes, often leading to dangerous real-world consequences. India has witnessed tragic outcomes such as mob violence triggered by fake WhatsApp messages and widespread panic during the COVID-19 pandemic. The advent of AI-generated content has complicated matters further, making it harder to discern reality from fiction despite convincing visuals.

In West Bengal recently, an AI-generated video of tigers roaming school corridors caused panic among students and parents. Created by a geography teacher to raise awareness about deceptive digital

content, the realistic video went viral, causing many students to skip school for two days. Such incidents underscore the urgent need for digital literacy.

Students, often at the forefront of digital trends, must take care not to amplify misinformation. Before sharing sensational headlines or emotional stories, they should verify authenticity using reliable sources or fact-checking platforms like PIB Fact Check. Developing a critical mindset towards biases, clickbait, and unverified content is essential to self-protect and prevent harm to others.

The Importance of Online Etiquette: Netiquette

Online etiquette, or netiquette, governs behavior in the virtual world much like social norms do offline. Unfortunately, cyberbullying, trolling, and hate speech are rampant among Indian youth. A 2023 Norton report revealed that nearly 80% of Indian children between 8 and 18 have faced some form of cyberbullying, which harms emotional health and creates a toxic digital environment.

Tragically, cyberbullying has had fatal consequences. A popular 12th-grade social media influencer from Kerala died by suicide, with reports attributing distress to online harassment after a personal fallout. Another final-year MBBS student from Kozhikode reportedly ended her life following disparaging comments on a Facebook confession page. Such cases highlight that students must use social media to foster constructive dialogue, respect diverse opinions, and avoid hurtful language. They should also protect themselves by reporting abuse, blocking harmful users, and setting strong privacy controls.

Role of Parents, Guardians, and Teachers in Building Social Media Responsibility

Parents and teachers are vital in fostering appropriate social media awareness and etiquette among young users. Parents act as primary guardians by introducing social media at the appropriate age and guiding constructive usage at home. Open communication about online activities,

without punitive reactions, encourages trust and better understanding.

Parents can set screen-time limits, device curfews (such as no phones during meals or homework), and rules around device use to create healthy boundaries. Monitoring must balance with respecting privacy to maintain trust. Education about not oversharing sensitive information, watching for behavioral changes that may indicate online harassment, and seeking school counseling support are also important.

Schools increasingly raise teacher awareness to identify students struggling with social media trauma by recognizing signs like withdrawal or anxiety. Digital literacy workshops covering safe browsing, fact-checking, and misinformation detection equip students to navigate online spaces wisely. Reinforcement of values such as empathy and kindness, along with clear anti-bullying policies for offline and online behavior, help create a safe educational environment.

Most powerful of all is sustained collaboration between parents and teachers. Together, they can educate, share observations, and jointly mentor students toward becoming responsible, empowered digital citizens who enjoy the benefits of social media without falling into its pitfalls.

The Road Ahead

Social media is a powerful tool that can open doors to knowledge, opportunities, and meaningful connections. Yet, with this power comes great responsibility. For Indian students, ethical online behavior goes beyond rule-following—it means consciously creating a positive and safe digital world for themselves and others. By managing digital footprints thoughtfully, countering misinformation, and practicing kindness and respect, students can turn social media into a force for good. Ethical social media use safeguards one's future while helping to build a more trustworthy, respectful digital society for all.

The author is Janet Gasper Chowdhury, President of The St. Augustine Education Society operating four K-12 schools in Barrackpore and Shyamnagar, West Bengal. An alumnus of XLRI Jamshedpur and Harvard Graduate School of Education, she brings over 20 years of corporate sector experience to her educational leadership. A mother of two young adults, she has navigated guiding them through the early boom of social media in India.

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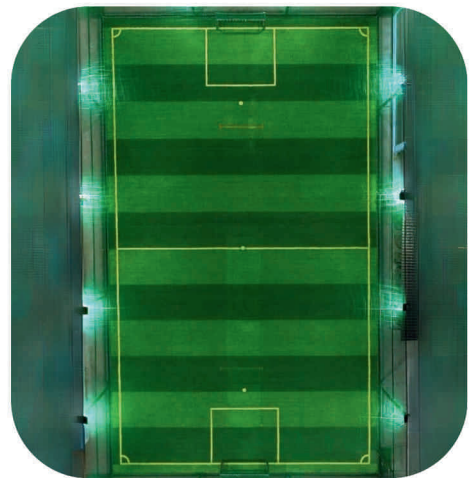
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-- Malcolm X

A school should be a place of preparation, opportunity, and hope—a foundation for a brighter future.

Choosing the best school for your child is one of the most important decisions you will ever make as a parent. A child's school plays a vital role in shaping not only their education but also their personality, social values, and overall development. Beyond academics, a school is a social institution where children build lasting relationships, acquire essential life skills, and develop behaviours that influence who they become. Yet, for many parents, the task of selecting the right school can feel overwhelming, especially with varied curricula and boards available today.

Key Factors to Consider

- **Comfort, Safety, and Security:** The school should provide a safe, nurturing environment where children feel at ease.
- **Human Emotions and Values:** Look for a school that fosters empathy, emotional intelligence, and kindness.
- **Healthy Connections:** Strong and supportive relationships among students, teachers, and parents are essential.
- **Leadership and Management:** Seek schools with approachable, humane, and forward-thinking leadership.

By keeping these in mind, you can choose a school that nurtures academic excellence while also supporting your child's holistic growth. Remember—every child is unique. A "one size fits all" approach does not work in education. Think carefully about your child's learning style, interests, and strengths when choosing an educational board. Study different curricula, their teaching methods, and the school's philosophy. Consider alumni success, extracurricular opportunities, and overall community involvement. Whenever possible, visit the school to get a sense of the environment, infrastructure, and facilities.

Overview of Educational Boards

ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education)

- **Focus:** Holistic education, with subject bifurcation at the secondary level.
- **Curriculum:** Comprehensive and balanced; strong emphasis on English language skills.

- **Assessment:** Written examinations and project work.
- **Suitable for:** Students who want a strong foundation in languages and all-round development.

CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education)

- **Focus:** Higher-order thinking skills, critical reasoning, and life skills.
- **Curriculum:** Structured, practical, with clear focus on core subjects.
- **Assessment:** Written exams and practical assessments.
- **Suitable for:** Students who wish to specialise in chosen subjects with less emphasis on English.

State Boards

- **Focus:** Strong connection to local culture and language.
- **Curriculum:** Varies by state, often more locally relevant.
- **Assessment:** Written exams and practical tests.
- **Suitable for:** Students wanting to remain rooted in regional contexts.

International Boards

IB (International Baccalaureate)

- **Focus:** Critical thinking, intercultural awareness, and service.
- **Curriculum:** Inquiry-driven, student-centred, global in outlook.
- **Assessment:** Projects, internal evaluations, and final external exams.
- **Suitable for:** Students aiming for overseas education and global perspectives.

IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education)

- **Focus:** Academic rigor and subject-specific depth.
- **Curriculum:** Highly flexible with choice-based subject pathways.
- **Assessment:** Written exams and coursework.
- **Suitable for:** Students seeking international exposure and specialised knowledge.

Beyond the Board

When evaluating schools, keep in mind the following:

- **Curriculum & Teaching Methods:** Match with your child's learning style and goals.

- **Academic Excellence:** Review the school's track record and student outcomes.
- **Extracurricular Activities:** Look for opportunities in arts, sports, and music for holistic growth.
- **Infrastructure & Facilities:** Ensure classrooms, labs, libraries, and sports areas meet standards.
- **Teacher-Student Ratio:** Smaller ratios allow more personalised attention.
- **Parent Involvement:** Transparent communication and parental engagement are key.
- **School Values:** Ensure alignment with your family's ethics and expectations.
- **Safety and Security:** Confirm systems for child protection and well-being.
- Offer **positive role models** in teachers and administrators.
- Help students manage **academic pressure** with balanced approaches.
- Promote **mental health awareness**, identifying and addressing early signs of stress, anxiety, or depression.
- Commit to **holistic education**, developing both intellectual ability and emotional resilience.

The Need of the Hour

In today's world of rapid change, unstable family environments, and constant distractions, it is essential that schools prioritize **the emotional and mental well-being** of students. A supportive school should:

- Provide **emotional support** through counsellors and safe spaces.

The Way Forward

The best school for your child is not simply the one with impressive buildings or top exam scores-it is the one that values individuality, fosters emotional strength, and provides a nourishing environment alongside academic excellence.

By choosing wisely, parents can ensure their children step into a future with the tools, values, and resilience needed to succeed in both life and learning.

Ms. Madhumita Seal

Administrator
Indus Valley World School



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2nd



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3rd



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ISC (Science) Toppers 2025

1st



Ankita Singh
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2nd



Ishana Manna
97.75%

3rd



Shreya Jaiswal
97.25%

ICSE : 2025

[ENGLISH + BEST 4 SUBJECTS]

No. of students :	353
90% - 100%	107
80% - <90%	126
70% - <80%	85
60% - <70%	31
Below : 60%	4

HIGHEST : 99.00%

ISC (Sc.) Toppers 2025

[ENGLISH + BEST 3 SUBJECTS]

No. of students :	48
90% - 100%	35
80% - <90%	12
70% - <80%	1
60% - <70%	0

HIGHEST : 98.00%

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Medha Sarkar
98.00%

3rd



Rishika Gupta
96.00%

ISC (Comm.) Toppers 2025

[ENGLISH + BEST 3 SUBJECTS]

No. of students :	112
90% - 100%	46
80% - <90%	44
70% - <80%	18
60% - <70%	4

HIGHEST : 98.00%

ISC (Arts) Toppers 2025

[ENGLISH + BEST 3 SUBJECTS]

No. of students :	32
90% - 100%	12
80% - <90%	18
70% - <80%	2
60% - <70%	0

HIGHEST : 98.25%

PERFORMANCE OF AGRASAINIANS AT A GLANCE

Year	Appeared	Above 60%	Highest Score
ICSE-2025	353	349	99.00%
ICSE-2024	343	341	98.60%
ICSE-2023	327	323	99.00%
ICSE-2022	345	344	99.00%
ICSE-2021	299	299	98.60%
ICSE-2020	350	350	99.20%
ICSE-2019	277	277	99.20%
ICSE-2018	265	265	98.20%
ICSE-2017	277	277	98.20%
ICSE-2016	282	282	98.20%
ICSE-2015	246	246	97.40%
ICSE-2014	227	227	97.00%
ICSE-2013	245	233	97.40%
ICSE-2012	212	211	96.80%
ICSE-2011	217	217	96.00%
ICSE-2010	181	181	97.00%
ICSE-2009	175	175	96.60%
ICSE-2008	190	190	96.40%
ICSE-2007	162	162	97.17%
ICSE-2006	114	114	97.00%
ICSE-2005	117	117	94.60%
ICSE-2004	88	88	93.40%
ICSE-2003	73	72	92.40%
ICSE-2002	60	59	93.60%
ICSE-2001	67	67	93.00%
ICSE-2000	54	50	87.50%

PERFORMANCE OF AGRASAINIANS AT A GLANCE

Year	Appeared	Above 60%	Highest Score
ISC-2025	192	192	98.25%
ISC-2024	199	199	97.50%
ISC-2023	222	222	98.00%
ISC-2022	262	262	98.75%
ISC-2021	206	206	99.75%
ISC-2020	195	195	98.25%
ISC-2019	205	205	98.25%
ISC-2018	205	205	98.00%
ISC-2017	221	221	97.00%
ISC-2016	188	188	97.25%
ISC-2015	188	187	97.00%
ISC-2014	206	206	97.25%
ISC-2013	191	191	97.50%
ISC-2012	176	176	96.75%
ISC-2011	166	166	96.75%
ISC-2010	202	202	95.75%
ISC-2009	199	199	97.00%
ISC-2008	122	122	95.50%
ISC-2007	99	98	92.80%
ISC-2006	100	98	94.75%
ISC-2005	84	84	92.75%
ISC-2004	81	81	95.50%
ISC-2003	93	93	96.00%
ISC-2002	78	77	92.50%

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133	K. E CARMEL SCHOOL, AMTALA	AMTALA	2470-7957/9615/9051973905	www.kecarmelamtala.com	C.I.S.C.E
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135	LA MARTINIERE FOR BOYS	KOLKATA	033-40406612/13	www.lamartiniere.co	C.I.S.C.E
136	LA MARTINIERE FOR GIRLS	KOLKATA	033-22903841/40406662	www.lamartiniere.co	C.I.S.C.E
137	LAKSHMIPAT SINGHANIA ACADEMY	KOLKATA	033-24793600/ 24792176(ADMIN)	www.lsakolkata.com	CBSE
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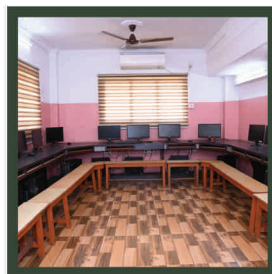
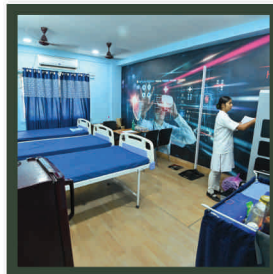
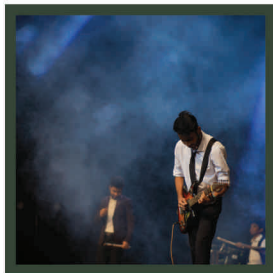
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Are We Finally Recognizing the Child for Who He Is

And Not Pressuring Him into What He Could Be? The American philosopher John Dewey once said, "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." He believed that education is not simply a stage meant to prepare for the future but rather a continuous, lifelong process of growth and development through experience.

Today, thankfully, education is evolving. It has become more child-centered, inclusive, and personalized. Class sizes are shrinking in an attempt to give every student more individual attention. Students now have greater freedom to choose their subjects and tailor courses according to their own interests, passions, and career paths.

The classroom itself has changed—more interactive and relaxed, with teachers and students moving freely in a learning space that is dynamic rather than rigid. Both parents and governments are investing more in education, recognizing its direct relationship to employability. Extracurricular activities are seen as equally essential for holistic development, and students with special needs are offered subject choices that focus on building life skills.

The emphasis today is shifting to application-based learning, with less reliance on rote memorization, handwriting drills, and spelling. Even calculators are accepted tools for mathematics. Technology, meanwhile, has made knowledge universally accessible—information is now just a click away, often more current and comprehensive than static textbooks or outdated classroom resources. Television, documentaries, and digital platforms often surpass traditional lessons in relevance and quality. Students now correct their teachers on technical matters, point out errors in textbooks, and navigate digital tools with ease—often reminding teachers that their role, too, is transforming in this new age of AI.

But in the midst of such a revolution, one question lingers: how justified is our continued obsession with marks? What we truly need is to cultivate critical thinking in the young. As Margaret Mead once said, "Teach children how to think, not what to think."

For Parents

Maria Montessori, physician and visionary educator,

introduced the concept of the "Absorbent Mind." She observed that young children naturally and unconsciously absorb impressions from their environment, shaping not only their memory but also their entire being. This process is far deeper than recall—it integrates experience into the child's essence and character.

Her insights highlight why memory, focus, and growth in childhood depend so deeply on rich, intentional experiences in a prepared environment. Parents play a vital role here, and some ways to nurture this at home include:

- Encourage curiosity and exploration by supporting your child's natural interests.
- Ask questions together rather than providing all the answers. Facilitate debates and discussions.
- Explore multiple viewpoints, acknowledge reasoning, and accept that children may sometimes arrive at sharper logic or better facts than adults.
- Model critical thinking by showing how you weigh options and make decisions.
- Verbalize your thought process when tackling challenges so children see reasoning in action.
- Engage in problem-solving games to sharpen analytical skills.
- Treat mistakes as learning opportunities, fostering resilience and a growth mindset.
- Encourage self-reflection and self-evaluation to build independence.

In School

Teachers, too, wrestle with lesson planning, student engagement, and the elusive idea of "progress." But perhaps true progress lies not in piling on more homework or stricter deadlines, but in aligning teaching methods with what science tells us about how the brain learns best.

Cognitive Psychology—the study of how minds process, store, and retrieve information—offers well-researched pathways to improve teaching and learning.

Some proven techniques include:

1. **Spaced Repetition - The Antidote to Cramming**
Breaking study sessions into shorter intervals over time helps students retain information far better than last-minute cramming.

2. **Retrieval Practice - The Brain's Workout**
Actively recalling information through quizzes, flashcards, or peer teaching strengthens memory far more effectively than passive review.

Benjamin Franklin captured it well: "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

3. **Focus and Attention - Less Netflix, More Neural Network**

Attention is finite. Multitasking weakens memory. Simple practices such as mindfulness, tech-free study zones, and focus exercises boost learning capacity.

4. **Elaboration and Making Connections**
Students solidify understanding when they explain concepts aloud, connect new knowledge to prior experiences, or apply it across different contexts. Teaching someone else is the ultimate test of understanding.

5. **Personal Relevance Orientation**

As education theorist Elliot W. Eisner emphasized, students learn best when what

they study resonates personally. Programs must therefore cater to students' interests, ensuring learning remains meaningful and engaging.

Towards a Pedagogy of Freedom

Rabindranath Tagore envisioned an education free from fear and mechanical conformity: "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,

Where knowledge is free...

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake."

These lines echo the need for a pedagogy where freedom of thought is not just permitted but encouraged. As we shape India's future, education must foster not only knowledge but also creativity, independence, and courage of thought.

Swati Sarawagi

Founder Director - Swarnim International School
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Lower Nursery	3+	01.04.22 - 31.03.23
Upper Nursery	4+	01.04.21 - 31.03.22
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Class	Timing
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Classes III - V	8:00 am to 1:50 pm
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170	MOTHER INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL	KONNAGAR	033-26740713/6290638322	www.miskon.org	CBSE
171	MOUNT LITERA ZEE SCHOOL, MAHESHTALA	KOLKATA	9903683222	www.mountliteramaheshtala.edu.in	CBSE
172	MOUNT LITERA ZEE SCHOOL, HOWRAH	HOWRAH	98743 92222	www.mountlitershowrah.edu.in	CBSE
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185	NATIONAL ENGLISH SCHOOL	RAJARHAT	9143033900	www.neschool.org	C.I.S.C.E
186	NARULA PUBLIC SCHOOL	HOOGHLY	97486 64133	www.npsmogra.org	CBSE
187	NATIONAL GEMS HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL	BEHALA	033-23974311(SR SECTION)/ 033-23981917 (JR SECTION)/ 033-23982853 (SR)	www.nghss.org	C.I.S.C.E
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200	PATHA BHAVAN ,DANKUNI	DANKUNI	033-26593813	www.pathabhavandankuni.org	W.B.C.H.S.E
201	PODAR INTERNATIONAL, HOWRAH	HOWRAH	9511945968	www.podareducation.org/school/howrah	CBSE
202	P.P MEMORIAL ACADEMY	HOWRAH	9903894297/8584999169	www.pppmemorialacademy.com	C.I.S.C.E
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AI in Education - Friend or Foe?

How artificial intelligence is changing the way students learn, prepare for exams, and access information - and what skills are still uniquely human

Introduction

The modern classroom bears little resemblance to the educational spaces of previous generations. Interactive displays have replaced chalkboards, and students now carry instant access to global knowledge in their pockets. At the center of this transformation lies artificial intelligence—a technology sparking heated debates about its role in education. Is AI an empowering friend or a threatening foe? The answer depends entirely on how thoughtfully we integrate and utilize these powerful tools.

AI as Your Educational Partner

Personalized Learning Revolution

- **Adaptive Content Delivery:** AI tutoring systems analyze individual learning patterns, identify knowledge gaps, and adjust instruction in real time.
- **Learning Style Recognition:** Visual learners receive diagrams and models, while auditory learners benefit from podcasts and spoken explanations.
- **Paced Learning:** Students master concepts at their own speed—no one is left behind or held back.
- **Examples in Action:** Khan Academy's AI tutor and Duolingo's language-learning algorithms show how personalized education can scale effectively.

Breaking Down Educational Barriers

- **Accessibility Support:** Text-to-speech assists dyslexic students, while speech recognition helps those with motor difficulties.
- **Language Translation:** Real-time translation tools enable international students to participate fully in coursework and discussions.
- **Geographic Equality:** Students in remote areas can access the same quality resources as those in major cities.
- **Economic Leveling:** Free AI-powered platforms reduce financial barriers to high-quality education.

Intelligent Assessment and Instant Feedback

- **Real-Time Corrections:** Students receive instant feedback on assignments, allowing quick adjustments while the material is still fresh.
- **Advanced Essay Evaluation:** Natural language processing evaluates structure, use of evidence, and clarity of writing.
- **Pattern Recognition:** AI highlights class-wide difficulties, helping teachers target problem areas.
- **Progress Tracking:** Analytics measure long-term learning progression, showing both strengths and weaknesses.

Enhanced Research Capabilities

- **Smart Information Filtering:** AI research assistants quickly identify authoritative sources, saving hours of manual searching.
- **Synthesis Assistance:** Information from multiple sources is organized and summarized efficiently.
- **Question Refinement:** AI helps students frame better research questions and discover unexpected connections.
- **Source Verification:** Algorithms flag unreliable or biased sources for critical review.

Irreplaceable Human Skills

Critical Thinking and Ethical Judgment

- **Source Evaluation:** Students must question credibility and consider multiple viewpoints.
- **Moral Reasoning:** Ethical decisions require human reflection beyond algorithmic logic.
- **Contextual Understanding:** Cultural nuances demand human insight.
- **AI Content Analysis:** Students must critically evaluate AI-generated material.

Creative and Original Thinking

- **Innovation Spark:** Transformative ideas emerge from human imagination.
- **Artistic Expression:** AI can generate content but lacks authentic creative vision.
- **Problem Reframing:** Humans bring fresh perspectives to challenges.
- **Interdisciplinary Links:** Only humans create unexpected knowledge connections across fields.

Emotional Intelligence and Communication

- **Empathy Development:** True emotional understanding cannot be automated.
- **Leadership Skills:** Inspiring and motivating teams requires genuine human connection.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Managing interpersonal dynamics involves emotional skill.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Humans adapt communication styles across social and cultural boundaries.

Complex Real-World Problem-Solving

- **Ambiguity Navigation:** Real problems rarely have clear definitions.
- **Stakeholder Balance:** Multiple competing interests require nuanced judgment.
- **Unintended Consequences:** Humans anticipate long-term impacts better than machines.
- **Adaptive Strategy:** Flexible thinking enables course correction as situations evolve.

The Ethics of AI in Education

Academic Integrity Guidelines

- **Transparent Usage:** Always disclose when and how AI assists in academic work.
- **Effort vs. Efficiency:** AI should enhance thought processes, not replace them.
- **Learning Focus:** AI use must contribute to understanding, not bypass it.
- **Attribution Standards:** Credit AI assistance as you would human collaboration.

Developing AI Literacy

- **Understanding Limitations:** Recognize that AI outputs may be inaccurate or biased.
- **System Awareness:** Learn how AI tools function and what data they rely on.
- **Verification Skills:** Always cross-check information against trusted sources.
- **Bias Recognition:** Understand that training data can produce systematic biases.

Privacy and Data Protection

- **Information Sharing:** Be mindful of the personal data shared with AI systems.
- **Privacy Settings:** Configure protections carefully on educational platforms.
- **Data Usage:** Be aware of how your learning data may be used to improve AI models.
- **Long-Term Impact:** Consider future consequences of your digital learning footprint.

Avoiding Over-Dependence

- **Skill Maintenance:** Continue strengthening core cognitive skills outside AI use.
- **Independent Thinking:** Practice problem-solving without AI support regularly.
- **Gradual Integration:** Incorporate AI tools step by step, not all at once.
- **Human Verification:** Always apply human judgment to AI-generated results.

Preparing for an AI-Integrated Future Complementary Skill Development

- **Human-AI Collaboration:** Learn to work with AI as a supportive tool.
- **Meta-Learning:** Cultivate the ability to quickly adapt to new technologies.
- **Adaptability:** Treat change as an opportunity rather than a disruption.
- **Integration Thinking:** Learn to merge human strengths with AI capabilities.

Building Ethical Frameworks

- **Fairness Principles:** Ensure AI applications do not create unfair advantages.
- **Accountability Standards:** Take responsibility for outcomes when AI is involved.
- **Transparency Commitment:** Be open about AI use in every context.
- **Human Dignity:** Always protect and prioritize human values.

Lifelong Learning Mindset

- **Continuous Adaptation:** Expect AI capabilities to evolve and adapt accordingly.

- **Technology Integration:** Stay updated on new AI trends and tools.
- **Skill Evolution:** Assess which skills require human growth vs. AI augmentation.
- **Future Readiness:** Anticipate AI's impact on your field and prepare in advance.

Making the Right Choice: Choosing AI as an Ally

AI in education is neither inherently a friend nor a foe-it becomes what we make of it. Used wisely, AI serves as a powerful educational ally, enabling personalized learning, breaking down barriers, providing instant feedback, and navigating vast amounts of information. It frees educators to focus on what only humans can provide: inspiring curiosity, nurturing creativity, and shaping character. This alliance, however, requires both wisdom and ethical responsibility. Students must ensure AI enhances rather than replaces their skills, while maintaining academic integrity and literacy. Most importantly, they must cultivate those uniquely human strengths-critical thinking, creativity, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving-that no machine can replicate.

The future will belong to those who can collaborate effectively with AI while holding on to their humanity. By embracing AI as a thoughtful partner, we can create educational spaces that prepare students not only for careers but also for meaningful, ethical, and creative lives.

Priyanka Mukherjee

Academics Head

Narayana Group of Schools, West Bengal

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Activities:

Co-curricular activities like quiz, essay writing, debating, handwriting, music, dramatics, dance, elocution in English, Bengali and Hindi, Sit and draw competitions, Spell bee, exploring the aesthetic domain by practicing Ikebana (Japanese flower arrangement) and making the children self-reliant by teaching the art of salad dressing and also by promoting non-flame cooking. Thus ensures safety and healthy food habit, nutritional goals. Extra-curricular activities:- Karate (kata, kumita competitions), yoga, regular games. Children vigorously practice for Independence Day and Annual sports by following certain army protocols.

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The Ethics of Social Media for Students : Navigating Digital Footprints, Misinformation, and Online Etiquette

-- Janet Gasper Chowdhury

In today's fast-paced digital era, social media is an integral part of every student's life. Platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and LinkedIn are no longer just venues for entertainment or socializing; they have evolved into powerful tools for learning, networking, and career building. In India, where over 40 crore young people actively use these platforms, social media holds immense influence over shaping opinions, trends, and opportunities. However, with this influence comes responsibility. For students, navigating the online world ethically has become an essential life skill—one that demands awareness of digital footprints, the risks of misinformation, and the importance of online etiquette.

Age and Maturity Requirements for Social Media

Globally, most major platforms set 13 years as the minimum age to create accounts, in line with international child online safety laws like the U.S. Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). India does not currently have a universal legal age for social media use; however, platforms enforce age restrictions as per their terms of service. Despite their exposure and familiarity with technology, many youths lack the maturity to handle issues like cyberbullying, misinformation, and addictive usage effectively. Compounding this, most parents have limited understanding of the social media platforms their children frequent, making it harder to guide them. For instance, teenagers around 15-16 years rarely use Facebook nowadays—they prefer Snapchat or Instagram, platforms their parents may hardly know how to navigate.

Impact of Online Profiles on Student Visas and Careers

Many students are unaware that every post, like, or comment contributes to their digital footprint, leaving a permanent trace on the internet. Employers, universities, and scholarship committees regularly review social media profiles during selection processes. One illustrative case involved an Indian student from Maharashtra applying for a U.S. F-1 student visa. She dutifully disclosed her Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter handles on the visa application form but inadvertently omitted her

Reddit account. During the interview, the consular officer flagged this omission and placed her application on hold under section 221(g), despite the Reddit content being innocuous. This incident highlights that even private or anonymous accounts must be disclosed in visa processes, as per U.S. regulations.

Online Opinions and Their Long-Term Consequences

A single inappropriate post, offensive joke, or controversial opinion shared impulsively can severely damage a student's reputation years down the line. In India's highly competitive job and education markets, maintaining a clean and professional digital presence is crucial. Students must think carefully before posting on sensitive or political topics and avoid oversharing personal details. For example, a 20-year-old student from Kurla, Mumbai, faced arrest after posting anti-India comments on Instagram criticizing "Operation Sindoor," resulting in a case under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Information Technology Act. A useful guideline is: "Would I be comfortable if my teacher, parent, university, or future employer saw this post?" Curating a positive online identity allows students to reflect their values, achievements, and aspirations responsibly.

Combating Misinformation in the Age of AI and Viral Content

The spread of misinformation is a growing challenge on social media. False news can go viral within minutes, often leading to dangerous real-world consequences. India has witnessed tragic outcomes such as mob violence triggered by fake WhatsApp messages and widespread panic during the COVID-19 pandemic. The advent of AI-generated content has complicated matters further, making it harder to discern reality from fiction despite convincing visuals.

In West Bengal recently, an AI-generated video of tigers roaming school corridors caused panic among students and parents. Created by a geography teacher to raise awareness about deceptive digital

content, the realistic video went viral, causing many students to skip school for two days. Such incidents underscore the urgent need for digital literacy.

Students, often at the forefront of digital trends, must take care not to amplify misinformation. Before sharing sensational headlines or emotional stories, they should verify authenticity using reliable sources or fact-checking platforms like PIB Fact Check. Developing a critical mindset towards biases, clickbait, and unverified content is essential to self-protect and prevent harm to others.

The Importance of Online Etiquette: Netiquette

Online etiquette, or netiquette, governs behavior in the virtual world much like social norms do offline. Unfortunately, cyberbullying, trolling, and hate speech are rampant among Indian youth. A 2023 Norton report revealed that nearly 80% of Indian children between 8 and 18 have faced some form of cyberbullying, which harms emotional health and creates a toxic digital environment.

Tragically, cyberbullying has had fatal consequences. A popular 12th-grade social media influencer from Kerala died by suicide, with reports attributing distress to online harassment after a personal fallout. Another final-year MBBS student from Kozhikode reportedly ended her life following disparaging comments on a Facebook confession page. Such cases highlight that students must use social media to foster constructive dialogue, respect diverse opinions, and avoid hurtful language. They should also protect themselves by reporting abuse, blocking harmful users, and setting strong privacy controls.

Role of Parents, Guardians, and Teachers in Building Social Media Responsibility

Parents and teachers are vital in fostering appropriate social media awareness and etiquette among young users. Parents act as primary guardians by introducing social media at the appropriate age and guiding constructive usage at home. Open communication about online activities,

without punitive reactions, encourages trust and better understanding.

Parents can set screen-time limits, device curfews (such as no phones during meals or homework), and rules around device use to create healthy boundaries. Monitoring must balance with respecting privacy to maintain trust. Education about not oversharing sensitive information, watching for behavioral changes that may indicate online harassment, and seeking school counseling support are also important.

Schools increasingly raise teacher awareness to identify students struggling with social media trauma by recognizing signs like withdrawal or anxiety. Digital literacy workshops covering safe browsing, fact-checking, and misinformation detection equip students to navigate online spaces wisely. Reinforcement of values such as empathy and kindness, along with clear anti-bullying policies for offline and online behavior, help create a safe educational environment.

Most powerful of all is sustained collaboration between parents and teachers. Together, they can educate, share observations, and jointly mentor students toward becoming responsible, empowered digital citizens who enjoy the benefits of social media without falling into its pitfalls.

The Road Ahead

Social media is a powerful tool that can open doors to knowledge, opportunities, and meaningful connections. Yet, with this power comes great responsibility. For Indian students, ethical online behavior goes beyond rule-following—it means consciously creating a positive and safe digital world for themselves and others. By managing digital footprints thoughtfully, countering misinformation, and practicing kindness and respect, students can turn social media into a force for good. Ethical social media use safeguards one's future while helping to build a more trustworthy, respectful digital society for all.

The author is Janet Gasper Chowdhury, President of The St. Augustine Education Society operating four K-12 schools in Barrackpore and Shyamnagar, West Bengal. An alumnus of XLRI Jamshedpur and Harvard Graduate School of Education, she brings over 20 years of corporate sector experience to her educational leadership. A mother of two young adults, she has navigated guiding them through the early boom of social media in India.

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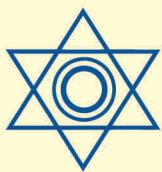
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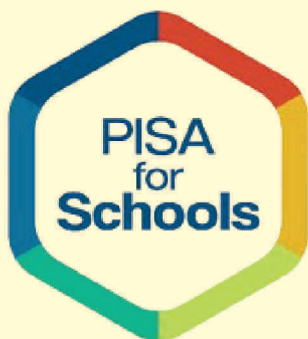
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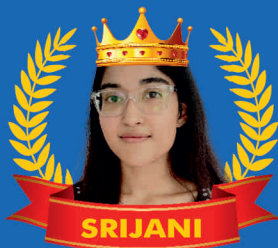
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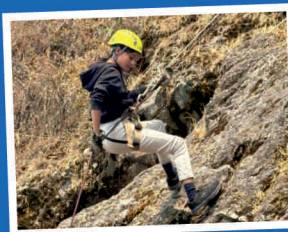


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How Can I be a Crorepati ?

In today's world, school kids start to dream big. Among the many questions that come to their minds is-can I be a crorepati someday? It's a fair question, because the way money works today is vastly different from how it was just two decades ago. As someone once said, change is the only constant-and nowhere is this more evident than in the world of personal finance.

Earlier, choices were limited to fixed deposits in banks, simple insurance plans disguised as investments, and a few unreliable non-banking finance companies. Fast forward to now, and the options are vast and complex. The reliance on bank deposits has dropped sharply, replaced by mutual funds, alternate investments, debt strategies, currency options, and private equity. Liberalisation, global awareness, and falling interest rates have together reshaped financial opportunities, making people look beyond traditional savings.

Just look at mutual funds. Five years ago, the industry was worth ₹25 trillion. Today, it has surged to ₹75 trillion-a threefold growth. And this wave has been driven not by large corporations, but by individuals: salaried workers, small business owners, and even first-time investors. The attraction? Transparency, affordability, easy access, and liquidity. SIPs (Systematic Investment Plans) alone bring in ₹32,000 crores every month, fuelled by people's dreams of financial security.

So, why not school students? Why shouldn't they ask: Can I, too, become a crorepati? After all, financial literacy must begin early. Retirement and wealth creation may feel like distant concerns, but in truth, the critical habits-saving, budgeting, and investing-must be formed in adolescence. Without this knowledge, students risk entering adult life unprepared for inflation, high costs, and limited government safety nets.

This is why financial literacy is as important as maths or science. Students need to understand the

basics: what are equities, how mutual funds pool money, how compounding multiplies wealth, and why time is their greatest advantage. Risk, too, must be explained clearly. Stock markets experience volatility-prices go up and down-but volatility is not the same as danger. Over the long run, markets reward consistency. And unlike chasing individual stocks, mutual funds spread risks and are managed by professionals at very low cost.

Just consider history. The BSE Sensex, which started at 100 in 1978, now stands at over 75,000-a 750-fold jump in less than five decades. Of course, the journey included ups and downs, but the long-term trend has been undeniable growth. Compare this with bank interest rates, which have fallen nearly 70% over the past 30 years. Clearly, relying only on "safe" deposits is not enough.

So how can teenagers begin preparing? The answer lies in education. Schools need to introduce practical lessons on saving, budgeting, and investments. Students can start tracking their pocket money, setting small saving goals, or even simulating a SIP through classroom exercises. The key concept is simple: consistency beats chance. A monthly investment of ₹15,000 over 15 years, if managed wisely, can realistically cross the crore mark. The earlier one starts, the higher the reward.

But financial literacy goes beyond money-making. It teaches planning, patience, discipline, and decision-making-all life skills that teenagers carry into adulthood. Without a roadmap, it's impossible to know where you're going. With knowledge and planning, financial independence becomes achievable.

So, can a school student dream of becoming a crorepati someday? Absolutely. But the real journey begins not with luck, but with literacy. Start learning how money works, invest time into financial understanding, and remember-the first step to wealth is simply the desire to be financially wise.

*Prasaunjit Mukherjee, MD
Plexus Management Services*



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