

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada on Child Protection

"The protection of children gives the human form of life its best chance to prepare the way of liberty from material bondage. "

S.B. 1.8.5 Purport

"So take care of these children. If you can make one child Krishna conscious, it is a great service. Krishna will be very pleased. So, so many children will come." **Lecture, New Vrindaban, June 22, 1969**

"Please take care of your children and make them perfectly Krishna Conscious. That is very great service. If by your endeavor one or two souls who come under your protection become liberated in this life, that is a great transcendental service to the Lord." **Letter, September 30, 1969**

"Please also take care of the children. They are our future hopes, and the adolescent age is the most dangerous age. It is the turning point of one's life. In this age, if you take care of the children, surely they will come out first class Krishna Conscious devotees." **Letter to Hayagriva – London 7 November, 1969**

"Encourage them to chant as much japa as possible, but there is no question of force or punishment. If there is need you may shake your finger at them but never physical punishment is allowed. Try as far as possible to discipline them with love and affection, so that they develop a taste for austerity of life and think it great fun to serve Krishna in many ways. " **Letter to Aniruddha, January 10, 1972**

"If we are able to make a whole generation of our children into fine Krishna Conscious preachers, that will be the glory of our movement and the glory of your country as well. But if we neglect somehow or other and if we lose even one Vaisnava, that is very great loss." **Letter from L.A. , June 20, 1972 to Stoka-Krsna who was at the Dallas gurukula**

"For you, child-worship is more important than deity-worship. If you cannot spend time with him, then stop the duties of pujari. At least you must take good care of your son until he is four years old, and if after that time you are unable any more to take care of him then I shall take care. These children are given to us by Krishna, they are Vaisnavas and we must be very careful to protect them. These are not ordinary children, they are Vaikuntha children, and we are very fortunate we can give them chance to advance further in Krishna Consciousness. That is very great responsibility, do not neglect it or be confused. Your duty is very clear." **Letter to Arundhati dd, July 30, 1972**

"Regarding your question should force be used on children, no, there shall be no forcing the children to do anything. Child should not be forced. This is all nonsense. Who has devised these things? If we want them to become great devotees, then we must educate the children with love, not in a negative way." **Letter to Brahmanya Tirtha, December 10, 1972**

"Yes, if we simply train them properly they will come out just to the highest standard of Vaisnava devotee. And what is that training? Simply they should be engaged in such a way that they are somehow or other remembering Krishna at every moment, that's all. It is not something mechanical process, if we force in such a way they will come out like this, no. We are persons, and Krishna is a Person, and our relationship with Krishna He leaves open as a voluntary agreement always, and that voluntary attitude-- Yes, Krishna, I shall gladly co-operate whatever you say--that ready willingness to obey is only possible if there is love. Forcing will not make me agree. But if there is love, oh, I shall gladly do it. That is bhakti, that is Krishna Consciousness.

So similarly, if we train children by developing and encouraging their propensity to love Krishna, then we shall be successful in educating them to the topmost standard. Then they shall always very happily agree to do whatever you ask them. So I have heard that there has been some beating with sticks on the children. Of course I do not know, but that should not be. You may show the stick, threaten, but better art is to somehow or other, even by tricking them, avoid this matter of force and induce them to obey out of loving spirit. That is success of disciplinary method. Hoping this meets you in good health. Your ever well-wisher, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami."

Letter to Rupa Vilasa Hyderabad 18 November, 1972

"Now the thing is, children should not be beaten at all, that I have told. They should simply be shown the stick strongly. So if one cannot manage in that way then he is not fit as teacher. If a child is trained properly in Krishna Consciousness, he will never go away. That means he must have two things, love and education. So if there is beating of child, that will be difficult for him to accept in loving spirit, and when he is old enough he may want to go away—that is the danger. So why these things are going on _ marching and chanting japa, insufficient milk, too strict enforcement of time schedules, hitting the small children? Why these things are being imposed? Why they are inventing these such new things like marching and japa like military? What can I do from such a distant place? They should run and play when they are small children, not forced to chant japa, that is not the way. So I have given you the guiding principles..." **Letter to Bhanutanya dasi, November 18, 1972**

"Abhimanyu's widow, Uttara, should have followed the path of her husband, but because she was pregnant, and Maharaja Pariksit, a great devotee of the Lord, was lying in embryo, she was responsible for his protection. The mother of a child has a great responsibility in giving all protection to the child."

SB 1.8.10 Purport

"I may inform you that all our children born of the Krishna conscious parents, they are welcome and I want hundreds of children like that. Because in future we expect to change the face of the whole world, because child is the father of man." **Letter to Krsna devi, August 21, 1968**

"So far your son leaving you, his parents, at 5 years, that is not necessary. Especially our Krishna Conscious children; they are already living in a ashram. The children of our devotees may live with their parents perpetually because you are all living in the temple and already engaged in devotional service. Other instructions are for those not engaged in Krishna Consciousness. Any family engaged in Krishna's service is living not in this material world. Such a home is considered as Vaikuntha. That is the verdict of Bhaktivinode Thakur." **Letter to Indira, 15th August, 1971**

"In the glorious days, or before the advent of the age of Kali, the brāhmaṇas, the cows, the women, the children and the old men were properly given protection. The children of the state, the cow, the diseased person, the woman and the old man specifically require the protection of the state or a kṣatriya king. If such living beings do not get protection by the kṣatriya, or the royal order, or by the state, it is certainly shameful for the kṣatriya or the state." **SB 1.8.5 purport**

Education for children:

“It is necessary for the leaders of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement to start educational institutions in different parts of the world to train children, starting at the age of five years.” **SB 4.12.23 Purport**

“The important members of ISKCON should give careful attention to our Dallas school, where children are being taught Sanskrit and English to become perfect brāhmaṇas. If they are actually trained as perfect brāhmaṇas, they can save society from rogues and ruffians; indeed, people can live happily under the protection of qualified brāhmaṇas.” **Cc. Adi 17.103 Purport**

“I consider the gurukula school to be one of the most important aspects of this movement. It should be given all serious consideration by the members.” **Letter to Stoka-Krsna 6/20/72**

“I greatly appreciate your activities for conducting our school to the highest standard of Krishna Consciousness. I consider your work the most important in the society, because you are shaping the future generation of our Krishna Conscious preachers. This is not a small thing.” **Letter to Rupa-vilasa 6/20/72**

“I am especially stressing the importance of our gurukula for training up the next generation of Krishna Conscious preachers. This is the most important task ahead... It is very important work, and you are especially responsible to make it successful. All other GBC men should give you all assistance for building up the standard.” **Letter to Satsvarupa Maharaja 7/1/72**

“All grhastas who are interested in doing business should do so in full swing... Let all the grhastas who wish to, execute business... The profits from the businesses should go first to support gurukula, and the balance may be given for the local temple’s maintenance... If grhastas want to do book distribution, they should be given a commission... of which part must go to gurukula. Others, who are engaged in important society projects, must get something for maintaining their children in gurukula.” **Letter to Jayatirtha 1/22/76**

"Gurukula is our most important project. If the children are given a Krishna Conscious education from early childhood then there is great hope for the future of the world." **Letter to Dayananda, Nandarani - Calcutta 27 January, 1973**

"Now I am concerned that the Gurukula experiment should come out nicely. These children are the future hope of our Society, so it is a very important matter how we are training them in Krishna consciousness from the very childhood." **Letter to Satsvarupa Maharaja, New York April 11, 1973**

“To raise one soul to Krishna consciousness is counted by Krishna as a very great service, so you do this duty very carefully and Krishna will certainly bestow His blessings upon you.” **Letter of November 2, 1969**

“I have noted the contents with great care. I am very, very glad to hear of your desire to return to Gurukula school and apply yourself to developing that place. I am so glad to hear this good news. Only a

few weeks back I had got a letter from Satsvarupa wherein he has informed me that Stoka Krishna has left Dallas and that he must go there to take charge himself. But he is sannyasi and he should travel and preach, and he has not much taste for watching after so many things. So I had suggested him to get a full-time manager, some grhastha, nice husband and wife together, to manage the things, and that he shall expect that such person will stay tightly and develop it and make that his life work. It is the most important preaching work, to train our children in Krishna Consciousness education of life. And I think that you are just the right man to do it. Krishna has given you the right idea, just see! I was also at Dallas school last summer and I was very much impressed with these children, how nicely they are becoming preachers and kirtana men and girls. If we can develop properly, one day they will turn the world by their preaching. Let the small children from all good families in your country come to our Gurukula school and take education from us. They may be certain their children will get the real knowledge which will create the best citizens of brahminical type, clean, honest, law-abiding, healthy, industrious, all good qualities they will have. Now I think Krishna has inspired you in this way, and every facility is there, you are the pioneer in Dallas and you know how to do everything nicely, that I know, so now you go there immediately after consulting with Satsvarupa and Karandhara and Madhudvisa and the others, take their advice and do the needful. If you become Head Master of the Gurukula that is more important than going to South America. This is the most important post in pushing on this movement, practically, because you shall create our preachers of the future, many, many of them. That will be your great credit and contribution. May Krishna give you His all blessings more and more for this task.” **Letter to Mohanananda Dec. 11, 1972**