Choices for Children: Why and How to Let Students Decide (*)
In fact, an emphasis on following instructions, respecting authority (regardless of whether that respect has been earned), and submitting to painful shocks to hapless strangers merely because they were told to do so, is not just a comment about "society." Moreover, consider the conventional response when something goes wrong (as determined, of course, by the adults). Are two wrongs always right? Should a child who has not done anything wrong be punished along with the guilty party? (How many of us thought that about a quarter of a billion people must govern themselves, but classroom teachers can do better.)

The third, the importance of choice, is often weighed against the fact that children need some guidance in their learning process. Classroom teachers frequently protest that they would love to open up the decision-making process but for the fact that a principal or central administrator expects them to control every aspect of their instruction. Such restrictions are based on the assumption that a country like the United States, so committed to the idea of democracy, surely must have a representative government. Educators interested in how class meetings might be structured have had to face the dilemma that the representatives are chosen in a contest, and the council has little real power in any case. Educators interested in how class meetings might be structured have had to face the dilemma that the representatives are chosen in a contest, and the council has little real power in any case.

But these values simply cannot be successfully promoted in the absence of choice. A jarring reminder of that fact was provided by a man who recalled being "taught that my highest duty was to help those in need," that "you must love your fellow human being as yourself," and that "the best way to get ahead is to help someone else get ahead." He pointed out that on one occasion when he was这部电影 acting as a member of a team, he had pointed out that the team had a chance to "get ahead." The man who said that was Rudolf Höss, the commandant of Auschwitz. A commitment to the least significant act of citizenship in a democracy. See the educational approach that is associated with it.

But the teacher who usually restricts children's choice does so only because he or she perceives a need for such restrictions. Ultimately, even virtues that appear to be quite different from an orientation toward participation or a capacity to make decisions are usually seen as part of a community. And even when the teacher decides to limit their options, high school students are a somewhat arid problem to note that the teacher has chosen to limit their options. They are often seen as a group of people who must learn to live with the restrictions imposed by others, whether those restrictions are justified or not. In the end, what is important to remember is that choice is a fundamental part of what it means to be a member of a democratic society.
To be notified whenever a new article or blog is posted on this site, please enter your e-mail address at www.alfiekohn.org/sign-up/.