

## COMPETITION and ASSESSMENT

Humans compete in many ways — sport, status, possessions, etc. Children compete at anything that their community places value on — cars, school progress, etc.

There is no possibility of isolating children from exposure to competition. There will always be institutional comparisons: school assessments, secondary school grading and streaming, tertiary entrance selection methods, employment selection, etc. And there will always be interpersonal competition. There is no way to stop child A from saying to child B, “Ha ha ha, I’ve got three dollars/points/friends — and you’ve only got two.”

Competition situations can cause mental pain to individuals, especially children in their early encounters with it. Some people, having had such painful experiences, are hostile to competitive games, sports, exams, comparisons, etc.

The question is not whether children will be exposed to competition. The only question we can practically deal with “How can we best prepare them to cope with competition situations.”