

When we were growing up ...'

To all the wonderful kids who were born in Subcontinent and survived the 50's, 60's and 70's especially those who grew up with me in what was popularly then known as Madras:

First, we survived being born to mothers, some, whose husbands smoked and/or drank while they carried us. They took aspirin, ate whatever food was put on the table, and didn't get tested for diabetes.

And we were OK

They were mothers who did not check their blood pressure every few minutes. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets, and when we rode our bikes we had no helmets, not to mention, the risks we took hitchhiking or going out on our own.

As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or airbags.

We drank water from the garden hose and NOT from a bottle.

And we were OK

We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and NO ONE actually died from this.

We would share a dosa, dip a chapatti into someone else's plate of curry without batting an eyelid.

We ate jam sandwiches or pickle on bread and butter, raw mangoes with salt and drank orange squash with sugar and water in it.

We ate at roadside stalls, drank water from tender coconuts, ate everything – Bhel Puri to bhajis and samosas, but we weren't overweight because we were always outside playing!

And we were OK

We would leave home in the morning and play all day during the holidays, we were never ever bored, and we were allowed freedom all day as long as we were back when the streetlights came on, or when our parents told us to do so. No one was able to reach us all day by mobile phone or phone.

And we were O.K.

We swam with an inflated tube which we got from somebody who was replacing their car tyres. We ran barefoot without thinking about it, if we got cut we used iodine on it which made us jump. We only washed our hands occasionally sometimes without using a soap.

And we were OK.

We did not have parents who said things like "what would you like for breakfast, lunch or dinner". We ate what was put in front of us and best of all, there was never any leftovers.

We fell out of trees numerous times, got cut, broke bones and teeth. We ate fruit lying on the ground that we shook down from the tree above. And we never washed fruit. We had a bath using a bucket and mug and used Lifebuoy soap. We did not know what shampoo and conditioners meant.

And we were OK

Yet this generation of ours has produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers and inventors ever! The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas and talent. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL! Success or failure did not go into our heads.

Please pass this on to others who have had the luck and good fortune to grow up as kids in Subcontinent in the 50's 60's and 70's.

Those were the days, my friend !!

As told by Mr. and Mrs.Sripati