



The Primary Years Program, focuses not only on teaching concepts and skills, but also on developing actions and attitudes to further enhance the learning experience. This program instills and develops in students positive attitudes towards people, the environment, and learning. At school, students are reminded of the Learner Profile and work with teachers and peers to develop the important traits that it highlights.

### CARING

Students who are CARING want people around them to be happy and are sensitive to their needs. They think about the world and work to take care of their community and the environment. They remember to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. Caring people make friends easily. As Anais Nin, the French-born American author of novels and short stories says, “Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.”

How can parents help to develop students who are Caring at home?

- Continuously model the caring behavior you would like to see in your child. Your child has big eyes and ears and notices everything you do. Using kind words, helping people without being asked, and being an active listener all show your child that you care about people. Even a simple gesture like holding a door for someone shows your child that you are aware of others around you and that you want to help them.
- Think about how your family can get involved with community organizations.
- Reduce, Reuse & Recycle. Make the effort to establish these habits in your home. By raising children who care about the environment, you are helping the future of the planet.
- Smile.
- After reading a book, spend some time considering how the characters in the book acted. Was someone in the book caring? Consistently or just sporadically?

Were all of the characters in the book caring or just some of them? Some books to consider:

- Lily’s Purple Plastic Purse , Kevin Henkes
- The Giving Tree , Shel Silverstein
- Yertle the Turtle , Dr. Seuss
- The Grouchy Ladybug , Eric Carle

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## COMMUNICATORS

Students who are Communicators are able to think and communicate in more than one language. They can express their ideas by speaking, drawing and writing. They can also communicate using mathematical language and symbols.

*How can parents help to develop students who are Communicators at home?*

- Encourage your child to stay in touch with relatives and friends who live in other countries by writing letters, using the phone or sending email.
- When working on mathematics homework, encourage your child to explain his/her answer to you orally or by drawing a picture.
- Ask your child thought-provoking questions and encourage discussions about them with you. For example:
  - What would you do if you were scared of someone at school?
  - Is there anything money cannot buy?
  - Should you get an allowance? Why or why not?
- Work with your child to improve his/her listening skills. Being a good listener is an important part of communicating with others.

## INQUIRERS

Students who are Inquirers are curious about the world. They can conduct research independently. They love learning and discovering new things and will carry this love of learning with them throughout life.

*How can parents help to develop students who are Inquirers at home?*

- Foster your child's interest in a subject by visiting the library to borrow books that explore the topic(s).
- Broaden/Deepen your understanding of the Internet. Work with your son or daughter when the Internet is being used and try to instill the understanding that some Internet sites are not reputable.
- Model being an inquirer. Admit when you don't know the answer to a problem or a question and seek out answers in front of your child.

## KNOWLEDGEABLE

Students who are knowledgeable have explored relevant and significant concepts and can remember what they have learned. They can draw on this knowledge and apply it to new situations.

*How can parents help to develop students who are Knowledgeable at home?*

- Encourage your child to read books at home that correspond with the topics being covered in school. In particular, books in their mother tongue will help your child make more meaningful, lasting connections to what is being taught in their classroom in English.
- Ask your child about what they are learning in school and engage them in conversations about school subjects:
  - "Why do you think it is important to know about that?"
  - "Can you think of anything happening in the world today that might be similar to that aspect of History?"
  - "You are learning about pulleys and gears at school? This reminds me of your simple machines unit in grade 2... have you noticed any similarities? How is what you are learning now different?"
- Foster any area that your child expresses an interest in with books and activities, but also be sure to encourage them to explore other areas, too.
- Encourage your child to become familiar with current events by reading the newspaper and watching the news when appropriate.

## OPEN-MINDED

Open-Minded students know that all people are different. These students listen to the points of view of others and consider many possibilities before making decisions. They celebrate the differences that make all people unique.

*How can parents help to develop this Open-Minded trait at home?*

- Encourage your child to try new things – new foods, new games and new activities.
- Expose your child to different festivals, celebrations and traditions and be sure to present them in a non-judgmental way.

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- Encourage your child to really listen to others when they speak.
- Introduce literature from many different cultures into your home library. Be sure that it reflects the culture in an appropriate way.
- When you observe your child being Open-Minded, reinforce this positive behavior and use the PYP learner profile terminology.

## **PRINCIPLED**

Students who are principled have a sense of fairness and are honest with themselves and with others. They understand that sometimes there are rules and they follow them. They have an understanding of moral reasoning.

*How can parents help to develop students who are Principled at home?*

- Involve your child in establishing the rules of a game or activity and then ensure that they stick to the ones that have been decided upon.
- Encourage your child to play games that involve teams. Discuss what the qualities of a team player are with your child. What sort of person would they want to have on their team?
- When your child wins a game, insist that he or she is a well-mannered winner. They might thank their opponent or shake hands with them if it is appropriate.
- When playing a game, do not change the rules or simply let your child win. Being a gracious loser is just as important as being a good winner.

## **REFLECTIVE**

Students who are Reflective know what their strengths are and where they have room for improvement. They try to think about these things and make changes where they can. They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and reflect upon their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

*How can parents help to develop students who are Reflective at home?*

- Spend some time with your child to review his/her report card. They should have the opportunity to look at this document and consider it as well. Discuss it with them and truly consider their thoughts on their strengths and areas for improvement.
- Consider the goals that your child could set for the next term. Make a list not only of the goals, but of measures that can be taken to achieve these goals. You might want to list actions that your child will take independently as well as those that parents will perform to support the student. For example, if one of the goals your child sets for him/herself is to improve writing, the child's action might be to keep a journal and write in it for at least 10 minutes each night. As a parent, you might decide that the two of you will participate in shared writing, for 30 minutes each week and produce a book of narratives together.

## **RISK TAKERS**

Students who are Risk Takers have confidence to try new things. They try to solve problems in many different ways. They have the courage to tell people what they think is right.

*How can parents help to develop students who are Risk Takers at home?*

- If your child is feeling uneasy about trying something, encourage them to attempt it and then reflect on both whether they liked the activity and how it felt to try something new.
- Your child might want to set some short-term goals. Consider activities that make him/her nervous. What are realistic goals for the week? Your child might set a goal to:
  - Offer an opinion in class
  - Spend a recess period with someone they might not usually play with
  - Order something different from the lunch menu
  - Try an activity they have not attempted before
- Make a point of explaining to your child the difference between being a risk-taker by trying something new versus doing something dangerous.

## **THINKERS**

Students who are thinkers work to solve problems. They can imagine many solutions to a question or challenge. Thinkers make good decisions and can predict the outcomes of their actions. They think creatively and critically.

*How can parents help to develop students who are Thinkers at home?*

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- Encourage your child to try to think of solutions to problems independently.
- Pose different real-life problems and questions to your child:
  - “I’m not sure how to arrange the glasses so they can all fit in the cupboard.”
  - “I wonder how much the groceries in the cart will cost... how can we make an estimate?”
  - “We need enough cookies for the 20 people in your class. What adjustments should we make to our recipe?”
- Ask your children questions when they are working on a problem:
  - “Do you have any ideas about how we might begin?”
  - “How can we do this differently?”
  - “I have never thought of that. Tell me more about it.”
  - “What other ways can we show that?”
  - “Why do you think so?”
  - “How did you figure that out?”

## **BALANCED**

Students who are balanced are healthy and aware that eating properly and exercising is important for their lives. They understand that it is important to have a balance between the physical and mental aspects of their bodies. They spend time engaging in many different activities.

*How can parents help to develop students who are balanced at home?*

- Encourage your child to participate in a wide variety of structured activities.
- Be aware of the activities that your child is participating in during less structured time, as well. Too much time in front of the computer or television is obviously undesirable, but all kids need to be engaged in variety of activities. Generally active kids should take time for quiet reading or reflection; students who spend a lot of time drawing or reading should be encouraged to also exercise and play.
- Discuss the food groups with your child. Spend a few minutes during a mealtime deciding if what your family is eating is balanced.
- Model this attribute. Spend time as a parent or family doing many different activities.

Note: The Learner Profile is based on the Primary Years Program of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). Beacon School has adopted the IBO program and is officially a certified IB World School.

This Beacon & Families document was based on both the Learner Profile of the PYP-IBO and on the work done by Massey Ranch Elementary School located in Pearland, Texas.