

How Parents Can Support the IB Program

Teachers are busy developing the International Baccalaureate (IB) *Primary Years Programme* (PYP). The IB PYP is an international curriculum for schools that defines six themes that transcend the traditional disciplines (i.e., reading, mathematics, social studies, and science) and represent concepts that are relevant to all human beings: (1) who we are, (2) where we are in time and place, (3) how we express ourselves, (4) how the world works, (5) how we organize ourselves, and (6) sharing the planet. Teachers organize the existing curriculum and state-adopted standards into these six trans-disciplinary units of learning that last between four and six weeks each.

The IB PYP has 10 attributes that define who children become through their participation in the IB PYP. The Profile helps children answer the question: Who am I? The attributes are: Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Reflective, Caring, Principled, Open-minded, Risk-takers, and Balanced. These attributes are at the heart of the IB PYP. This year, we are teaching these to children one at a time each month. Once we implement the IB PYP fully, these will be integrated into daily learning experiences and units of inquiry taught throughout the year in grades PK-6.

Parents can help to support the development of these attributes at home by simply asking your children these types of questions and/or modeling behaviors related to each attribute:

Inquirer: Parents can ask their children, “What are you curious about?” “What do you wonder about?” “How can you find out?” Parents can also share their own curiosity with their children, including what they found interesting when they were children.

Knowledgeable: Parents can ask their children, “What did you learn today?” “How do you find out things you want to know about?” Parents can share what they know about the world, their job, and areas of interest. Parents can also encourage their children to gain knowledge through books, newspapers, the radio, and computers.

Thinker: Parents can ask their children, “What do you think?” “How did you come up with that answer?” Parents can also share their thoughts about important matters.

Communicators: Parents can ask their children, “What ideas do you have?” “How do you say that in another language?” Parents can also set aside time to have conversations with their children to promote quality communication.

Principled: Parents can ask their children, “What is the right thing to do?” “What responsibility do you have in the situation?” “What might you do differently next time?” Parents can also emphasize times in their lives when they have taken responsibility for their actions.

Open-minded: Parents can ask their children, “What is your point of view?” “Why do you think, feel, or believe that?” “Might there be a different point of view?” “Why might someone think, feel, or believe differently?” Parents can discuss differing points of view with their children in an open and honest manner.

Caring: Parents can ask their children, “What have can you do to help?” “How do you think that makes (another person) feel?” Parents can make explicit to their children when they are being caring to another person and its importance.

Risk-takers: Parents can ask their children, “What new things do you want to do, learn, or experience?” “What do you need to make them happen?” Parents can take risks with their children or in the presence of their children.

Balanced: Parents can ask their children, “Is that a healthy choice?” Parents can also ensure that their children eat healthy, get enough rest, exercise, and receive positive feedback and reinforcement every day.

Reflective: Parents can ask their children, “What did you learn from that experience?” “How might you do it differently next time?” “What are your strengths?” “What do you want to improve?” “How will you go about that?”

Parents are children’s first teachers, and we look forward to working together to promote the IB Learner Profile!

