

Ways to Involve Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

“Parents are the first and most important models and teachers of their children.”

—Dr. James Comer

Parent/guardian/caregiver involvement and partnership is crucial to the success and balance of the Character Development program.

Workshops

Parents/guardians/caregivers can be supported by the school through the provision of workshops that assist in the challenges of developing character in children. For example, schools can offer bullying-prevention workshops and/or parenting workshops on how to reinforce positive behaviour or specific character attributes.

Communication

Communication is crucial to a positive relationship among school, family, and community. Character attributes need to be shared so that they are valued and reinforced at home. It is also essential to celebrate the positive effects that character development has had on the school, as well as the accomplishments of the students.

The monthly newsletter is an excellent opportunity to share what the focus of the month has been and what the school has been doing to help students develop this attribute.

- Parents/guardians/caregivers can be asked to contribute stories about how their children demonstrate the particular character attribute outside of school.
 - The school can announce and celebrate the accomplishments of students who have been recognized for displaying the character attribute.
 - A parent/guardian/caregiver section of the newsletter can provide ideas about ways in which families can encourage their children to display a particular character attribute.
- In each of the character attribute sections, there is a corresponding draft letter to parents/guardians/caregivers. These letters may be modified and used each month as a resource to support character development.

Twenty Tips for Teaching Character Development in the Home

Model good character in your home by using the following “Character Development Attributes” with your family and friends.

1. Be clear about your values.
2. Show respect for your spouse, partner, children, other family members, and friends.
3. Model and teach respectful manners.
4. Have meals together—without the television. Encourage discussion around the dinner table.
5. Listen to your children.
6. Spend time with your children in shared activities.
7. Model and encourage appropriate behaviour in a variety of circumstances.
8. As a family, take part in community service projects or civic activities.
9. Read to your children and discuss the character themes.
10. Teach your children to be financially and environmentally responsible.
11. Establish family traditions, and enjoy family celebrations together.
12. Take advantage of the “teachable moment.”
13. Assign household or family responsibilities.
14. Set expectations and boundaries, and hold your children accountable for their actions.
15. Ensure that family members keep each other informed of their activities and whereabouts.
16. Teach your children to be responsible and discerning in their choice of media, entertainment, and online interactions.
17. Discuss issues regarding profanity and violence, as appropriate.
18. Teach your children to resolve conflict in a peaceful, respectful way.
19. Encourage empathy by asking questions such as, “How would you feel if...?”
20. Become involved in your child’s school life—from Kindergarten to Grade 12.