

How can families be involved?

The Board believes parents and guardians have primary responsibility for developing character in their children. The community and school play an important role as well.

Adults serve as a model for children. They reinforce character attributes in their day-to-day actions and interactions with family and community. When with children, adults also can point to specific examples of people around them behaving with character.

How do we measure the success of character development?

We use several measures to gauge the impact of character development, which works hand-in-hand with equity, diversity and inclusion. Together, they form the foundation for everything we do, including our efforts to ensure safe, caring and restorative schools. Indicators of success include student achievement, suspension rates, attendance, student engagement in school activities and other data.

Over the past few years, we have seen student achievement and graduation rates increase, and suspension rates decrease. These changes underscore the importance of our continuing effort to develop character, global citizenship, inclusion and respect for all humans.

For additional information on how our schools develop character, please speak with your principal or vice-principal, or visit www.kprschools.ca



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Character Makes a Difference!

A Guide to Character Development in Our Schools



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At the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPR), our primary purpose is academic achievement. We also are committed to personal, social, life skills and citizenship development.

Our mission is to educate our students to excel in learning, to succeed in life and to enrich our communities. We are committed to nurturing responsible, well-rounded students who reach their full potential. We focus on providing safe, caring school environments where everyone feels respected, accepted and included. Character development is an important part of our day-to-day efforts to achieve these goals.



What is character development?

Character development encourages everyone to work together to create a community of caring citizens. It is tied closely to equity, diversity and inclusion, in that it fosters respect for the dignity and humanity of all individuals and groups. It is a deliberate, day-to-day effort to nurture the universal qualities that are considered important within our local and global communities. These qualities form the basis of our relationships with one another, and of responsible citizenship.

At the KPR Board, our community helped us to identify the 10 most important character attributes on which all of our schools focus:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Empathy
- Fairness
- Initiative
- Perseverance
- Courage
- Optimism.

These attributes set the basis for standards of behaviour for everyone in our schools, including students, staff, volunteers and visitors.

Why focus on character development?

By continuously focusing on the positive character attributes, we can build classrooms where students are ready to learn and teachers are free to teach. Research indicates that character development helps schools to nurture:

- respect for self and one another
- responsible local and global citizenship
- improved relationships with one another
- positive school culture
- safe, caring and restorative school environments
- higher academic achievement
- greater self-discipline
- fewer behavioural problems
- workplace skills sought by employers.



How do we develop character?

Developing character is part of every aspect of school life. It is not a separate subject. It is a constant focus of everyday teaching and learning.

In all subject areas, in all grades, teachers seize “teachable moments” to focus students’ attention on positive character attributes. For example:

- In Kindergarten, a teacher may focus on the importance of sharing and taking turns.
- An elementary teacher may use a daily news item to explore issues of honesty, integrity or fairness.
- An English teacher may lead a discussion on the traits of a character in a book.
- A science teacher may focus on the importance of being responsible as a member of a lab group.
- A history class may examine the courage or perseverance shown by someone who achieved something significant.
- A physical education class may discuss teamwork and appropriate conduct in sport.
- A class in any grade may discuss how every student can take steps to be environmentally responsible.

CHARACTER MAKES A DIFFERENCE!