

# Students with Attitude!

Alpine Elementary  
2005 Alpine Street  
Longmont, CO 80501  
USA  
Phone: 720-652-8140



## IBO Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the IBO works with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## IB Attitude Focus: INDEPENDENCE

Dear Alpine Community:

This is the one installment of an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB-PYP) Attitudes Newsletter, which will highlight the twelve IB Attitudes. The goal would be to provide our families and community with the necessary resources to help our school develop the IB-PYP ATTITUDES.

The IB-PYP Attitudes are a vital focus in the development of positive attitudes towards people, the environment, and learning. These are the day to day attitudes we use: appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect, and tolerance. **When reinforced at home (or when reinforcing the positive attitudes that students learn at home, church and other places), these attitudes become second nature for children.**

With respect—Paige Gordon, Principal, Alpine Elementary



**What is INDEPENDENCE?** According to the IBO (*Making the PYP Happen, 2007*), independence is thinking and acting independently, making judgments based on reasoned principles and being able to defend those judgments. When working with students at Alpine Elementary, we explain independence as: thinking and acting on my own.

### **INDEPENDENCE. A note from the principal...**

Isn't independence the ultimate goal of parenthood? From the minute our children are born, the dance between dependence and being independent begins. It sounds so daunting—how can we manage to raise self-sufficient, independent people? It's a gradual process, and all people involved with our children need to help them build the skills they need such as making sound decisions, self-management, taking action to meet goals, being responsible for one's actions, and finding out information. Never fear—start small. Ask, "Do you want to wear your red shirt today or your blue shirt today?" Help your child set small goals in the beginning of life...later they will want to be able to set weekly, monthly, or long term goals. Help them to be responsible throughout life—at times it may seem easier to finish their homework for them, type their report for them, drop a commitment they made, and so forth; responsibility is built in our children across all situations—not just certain ones. Finally, at times it is easier to tell our children the information they may be looking for. How would it benefit them to help them pursue the answers to their questions in ways that will serve them as adults? No matter the age, it's more work to raise independent kids, but in the long run, it is worth it.

## **How to encourage independence in your PRESCHOOLERS:**

This is a great time to capitalize on your child's budding independence. To do this, you can:

- Allow your child to pick out her own outfits and dress herself.
- Follow your child's lead as to when you should begin potty-training. Learning to do it all on his own is a big step!
- Be patient when your child changes into outfit-after-outfit. This is an expression of her independence.
- Use the same clean-up routines that your child's preschool uses so that your child learns to be responsible for his toys. For example, there might be a special song that they sing during clean up.
- Provide lots of learning opportunities throughout the day.
- Teach your child how to introduce himself to new friends.

## **How to encourage independence in SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN:**

At this stage, children are actually craving more responsibility and independence. You can use this to your advantage by:

- Having your child participate in household chores, such as vacuuming, dusting, and washing dishes.
- Teaching your child to make at least part of her own breakfast and lunch.
- Teaching your child to use a watch and incorporate time in some directions you give (Such as, "You can go next door, but I want you to be home by 4:30.").
- Providing a responsibility chart so your child can keep track of the household chores he has completed.
- Teaching your child to think independently about commercials and advertisements aimed at children.

## **How to encourage independence in 'TWEENERS':**

This is a time when your child may experiment with wanting more independence than you are comfortable with. To develop this in a healthy way, you can:

- Teach your child how to use an assignment pad to keep track of homework.
- Allow your child to make some minor mistakes and learn from them.
- Intentionally teach your child how to work through conflicts with her peers. Simply preparing your child with some practical conflict-resolution skills will help foster independence and confidence.
- Teach your child to use an alarm clock, if he does not have one already.
- Keep your computer in a central location so that you can easily supervise your child's use of the

## **Literature to encourage independence:**

Brown, Don. *Uncommon Traveler: Mary Kingsley in Africa*. Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

Garay, Luis. *The Long Road*. Plattsburgh, N.Y.: Tundra Books, 1997.

Hoffman, Mary. *Amazing Grace*. Scholastic, 1991.

Lester, Helen. *Tacky the Penguin*. Houghton Mifflin, 1988.

McKissack, Patricia. *Messy Bessey*. Children's Press, 1999.

Minarik, Else. *No Fighting, No Biting!* Harper Trophy, 1986.

Say, Allen. *El Chino*. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1990.

Teague, Mark. *Pigsty*. Scholastic, Inc. 1994.

MacLachlan, Patricia. *Sarah, Plain and Tall*. Scholastic Inc., 1985.

