

WFWP Japan is Planting Seeds of Character Education in Belize

Poppy Richie
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Isaac Durst, Poppy Richie, Dr. Jeremy Cayetano - Director of Anglican schools in Belize presenting at the workshop

For over twenty years, Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) in Japan has quietly nurtured something extraordinary in Belize - the only English-speaking country in Central America. What began as a service project has blossomed into a movement: empowering teachers to bring virtues and values into classrooms across the country.



"Character education changes not just lessons, but lives," one participant shared. That's why, for the past five years, WFWP Japan has focused its efforts on training primary and high school educators.

In August 2024, Mr. Alan Saunders and I were invited to Belize City to work alongside Mrs. Jacqueline Welch, Director of Methodist Primary Schools, and Mrs. Barbara Elrington, Principal of The Samuel

Haynes Institute of Excellence. Together we led a three-day teacher training workshop, approved by the Teacher Learning Institute and worth 15 hours of professional credit. Teachers left with tools, confidence, and fresh inspiration for the new school year.

Fast forward to August 2025: Mr. Isaac Durst and I returned to Belize - this time joined by WFWP Japan representatives Mrs. Carmen Gomez, Mrs. Ando, and Mrs. Junko Yanai - to reach a new group of educators from Anglican Primary Schools. Again, the Teacher Learning Institute offered 15 hours of credit for participants who completed a creative assignment: crafting their own lesson plan and story centered on virtues like respect, responsibility, and gratitude.



Teachers busy at the workshop, creating character education lesson plans

The workshops were not just about theory. Teachers gained access to interactive curricula - valuesandvirtues.org and *Discovering the Real Me* - packed with stories, lesson plans, and activities organized by grade level and virtue. We even created a WhatsApp group for teachers and principals to swap stories, encourage one another, and keep the momentum alive throughout the school year.

One teacher commented that the website was "a treasure trove" because it's free, easy to use, and filled with hundreds of inspiring stories. The teachers' enthusiasm reaffirmed our belief that investing in values-based education plants seeds that will grow for generations.



It was a privilege to join such a capable team of planners and supporters, and to share our experience through presentations, activities, coaching, and heartfelt conversations.

We invite WFWP members and friends to explore valuesandvirtues.org for themselves and help us spread the word to teachers, parents, grandparents, and homeschool groups. The project manager, Mr. Isaac Durst, can be reached at idurst@gmail.com.

As a longtime WFWP member, I have conducted character education training in Zambia, St. Lucia, Micronesia, the U.S.A., and Belize. Every time I see teachers light up with new ideas, I'm reminded of why we do this work: to equip those who shape the hearts of the next generation.

Together, we're not just training teachers - we're growing a forest of virtues for the future.

Helping students know the good

Explore the world of character education with just a few clicks.

[Our Virtues](#)

WHAT WE DO

Values & Virtues is a resource of impactful stories, questions, and thoughtful activities for educators, coaches, and parents.



12

VIRTUES



200+

STORIES



100+

ACTIVITIES





What We Offer

Explore our twelve highlighted virtues for grade levels from Pre-Kindergarten (ages 4-5) to Sixth grade (ages 10-11). Each virtue includes at least four captivating read-aloud stories, most available as engaging video content.

Every story is paired with guiding questions, featuring:

- A definition of the virtue
- A summary of the book
- Learning objectives
- Guiding questions to enhance comprehension and application of the virtue

Our Values & Virtues

Find easy-to-use, supportive resources that nurture your child's emotional, behavioral, and social well-being, helping them thrive in every aspect of their growth.

Our Virtues

Gratitude

Appreciating every blessing, big or small.

33 Stories →

Hope

Believing in a brighter tomorrow.

18 Stories →

Integrity

Doing what is right, even when no one is watching.

16 Stories →

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→

WHY CHARACTER EDUCATION?

How Families, Educators, and Communities Raise Good Children

We want children to develop their intellect to identify moral issues in complex situations.

Further, we want them to understand how to manage their emotions. We need to provide opportunities for children to engage in meaningful acts of service that benefit others.

Research shows that, on the foundation of moral excellence, children achieve academic success and perform significantly better than their peers at each grade level.

Every part of the learning environment offers opportunities to model and practice virtuous behavior. Simple daily acts, like a warm morning greeting or a kind smile, set the tone for fostering character.

Children can learn to build positive relationships by collaborating on science projects or engaging in group activities. Educators and caregivers can model the care and respect they hope to inspire in children.

Because parents, guardians, and caregivers make the greatest impact on children's lives, schools and learning programs must work closely with them to support the development of character. In addition, schools should collaborate with community organizations where children can experience and contribute to genuine acts of service.

The school and broader learning community should serve as a model for society.

What greater need does our nation have than intelligent, ethical, and caring individuals who are dedicated to the common good?

Character education lays the foundation for strong families, public civility, constructive dialogue, and the ideals of justice and compassion. These values can be nurtured every day within classrooms and communities.

How to use this site

- 01 **Navigate to the “Our Values And Virtues” page**
- 02 **Select one of the Virtues**
- 03 **Select a Grade Level**
- 04 **Choose any Story you want, then Click on “Read Story”**
- 05 **Listen to or Read the Story**
- 06 **Click on “Guiding Questions” if you would like to access our Discussion Questions**
- 07 **Click on “Begin Activities” to find the Activities that correspond to each Story or Virtue**

Latest Stories

Explore All Virtues



What to Do When Get Lost

Compassion Pre-K & Kindergarten

Story



Our Table

Gratitude 1st & 2nd Grade

Guiding Questions

Story



The Shortest Day

Gratitude 1st & 2nd Grade

Guiding Questions

Story

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