

The Virtues Project™ at Maya

Posted on [May 23, 2012](#) by [Janet Muniz](#)

Have you ever wondered what the Child/Youth Virtues Development class on Maya's schedule is all about?



“The virtues are the essence of who we are,” says **Natasha Nimmo**, who teaches the Child/Youth Virtues Development class. “They are the content of our character and the basis of genuine happiness.”

[The Virtues Project™](#) is a grassroots initiative founded in 1991 with the mission of inspiring the practice of virtues in everyday life. Natasha, the parent of two children ages 12 and 13, is offering the class at Maya on *Sunday and Wednesday mornings until June 20.*

“There are Five Strategies for bringing virtues to life,” she says. “They are: Speaking the Language, Recognizing Teachable Moments, Setting Clear Boundaries, Honoring the Spirit, and the Art of Companionship.”

Natasha tells us more about this unique opportunity to help people of all ages and cultures to discover the

transformative power of these universal gifts of character.

How did you first learn about The Virtues Project™?

It was at a parent education evening at my children's elementary school that I first learned of this Project. The school staff was getting trained, and I thought it would be good to learn what my kids' teachers were learning. *I had no idea how much it would change me at the time.* That night, I registered for four more classes to complete my education of the Five Strategies. Less than a year later, I signed up for a six-week facilitator training program, so that I could teach and share the Project with others.

What is the focus of the class at Maya?

I lead activities for children according to my training. I look for the best in each child, educating and encouraging them to realize the virtues within them and then coach them to see the best in others, too.

We do what kids love to do - here's a list of some of the activities and the virtues highlighted during the past nine months of this school year:

- We practice **respect** by following the three guidelines.
- We practice **joyfulness** by going to the park.
- We practice **peacefulness** by doing yoga, celebrating the stillness of a pose and a restful mind.
- We practice **loyalty** by reading the same favorite book and playing the same games.
- We practice **curiosity** and **enthusiasm** by trying new things and by meeting new people.
- We practice **flexibility** and **acceptance** by not always getting our way.
- We practice **thankfulness** daily in our closing circle by acknowledging each other.

Who participates in the Child Virtues class?

The class is ideal for children of parents who are attending their own class at Maya. However, I open my class to children of parents who choose to do something else during that time, such as meet a friend for coffee or a walk through the park. My largest class has been four students. I've had students as old as 14 and as young as two. I've also had a parent attend the class with his daughter. My most regular attendee is three years old.

What has your participation in the Project given you?

The Virtues Project™ is a 'vehicle' with which I learned how to see the glass more full. *It has helped me to become a better person. Furthermore, it has helped me be a better parent.* More than

anything I want my children to see the best in themselves, in others and in the world around them. Practicing this Project, its strategies and writings, I am achieving this goal and growing happier every day.

What's next for Maya's Child/Youth Virtues class?

I am working on a proposal to change my class schedule to Monday mornings and a two-hour class on Friday nights, which *I hope to implement on Monday, June 25 and Friday, June 29*. I would also like to offer a series of education classes on the Project itself.

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