

Dear Parents,

This week, as we start the *Bouncy the People Trainer* program, we want to focus on your child's sense of really belonging in our class and our school. Kids who feel they belong at school aim higher, try harder and succeed more than those who don't.

It may seem unlikely that an app could help your child feel like she or he belongs at school. But this one has shown it can. *Bouncy the People Trainer*, an animated three-legged dog mentor, does everything a good teacher and friend would do to make sure your child feels accepted, respected, appreciated, included and supported, regardless of any challenges he or she is facing.

Something that helps make this happen is that your child creates an "avatar", an animated character who stands in for them at the center of the program. This avatar interacts with Bouncy. Bouncy likes them, asks them questions, takes their answers seriously, praises them, and encourages them to keep going when (not if!) they make mistakes, no matter how they look. A pilot evaluation showed that after using the Bouncy program, students who had not been very engaged in group activities participated more eagerly in class discussions, a good sign that they felt like they belonged.

Bouncy is a good model for me, and I hope for you, in helping your child understand that he or she is an important member of our school community. If you have access to an iPad, take a look at *Bouncy The People Trainer's You Can Learn* program for yourself (It's free at the Apple App Store).

Sincerely,

P.S. To find out how to get the Bouncy app for free at home, go to the Bouncy website at bouncykids.net/parents.