



SANTO DOMINGO BILINGUAL SCHOOL

# GLOBAL VOICES

**SECOND EDITION**

JUNE / JULY - 2025



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We warmly invite you to become an active part of our growing community. Whether you are a reader, writer, thinker, or creator, your contributions have the power to enrich the discourse we aim to cultivate. Join us in shaping a space where curiosity meets critical thought—connect with us at [globalvoices@colegiosantodomingo.edu.co](mailto:globalvoices@colegiosantodomingo.edu.co) to share your ideas, submit your work, or simply start a conversation. We look forward to hearing from you.



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## Welcome to the Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe 2nd Online Magazine!

We are thrilled to present the second edition of the *Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe Online Magazine*! We hope you enjoyed our welcome issue in May, which launched our digital space for creativity, learning, and global awareness. Your support and enthusiasm have inspired us to continue building a platform that celebrates student voice, community stories, and international perspectives.

In this edition, our theme with a huge honor **Global Voices** is proud to dedicate it to the **International Day of the Worker**, celebrated on May 1st around the world. This important day honors the dignity, strength, and dedication of workers in every corner of the globe. At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we believe in recognizing the value of hard work, not only in the classroom, but also in every field and profession that contributes to a better world.

Through interviews, articles, student reflections, and creative pieces, this edition explores how work connects us across borders, cultures, and generations. We highlight the stories of local and international workers who inspire us with their commitment, perseverance, and impact. Our students have also contributed thoughtful pieces on what work means to them and how they envision their future roles in society.

As we continue to grow as a bilingual and globally-minded educational community, we invite you to read, reflect, and share this edition with pride. Let it be a reminder that every voice matters and every effort counts.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Let's keep celebrating the power of words, the value of work, and the voices that shape our world.

**Happy reading!**



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## International Day of the Worker: History, Meaning, and the Future in Colombia and Beyond

The **International Day of the Worker**, also known as **Labour Day** or **May Day**, is celebrated every year on **May 1st**. It is a day to recognize and honor the contributions of workers around the world and to reflect on the struggles and achievements of the labor movement throughout history.

### A Global History of Resistance and Rights

The origins of this important day trace back to the **labor protests in the United States in the late 19th century**, especially the **Haymarket Affair** in Chicago in 1886. Workers demanded an eight-hour workday and better conditions, and their bravery sparked a worldwide movement. In 1889, the International Socialist Congress declared May 1st as a day of worker solidarity, and it has been observed globally ever since.

Countries around the world mark the day with marches, speeches, and cultural events to highlight workers' rights and push for improved labor laws. It is a time to reflect on how far we've come — from child labor and 14-hour shifts to legal protections, fair wages, and social benefits.

### The Colombian Context

In **Colombia**, *Día del Trabajo* is a public holiday recognized with peaceful marches and demonstrations led by workers' unions and social organizations. It is a time to raise awareness about ongoing challenges such as unemployment, informal labor, and wage inequality. Colombian workers continue to advocate for decent working conditions, safety, and social justice, while also celebrating the progress that has been made.

**LABOR DAY**



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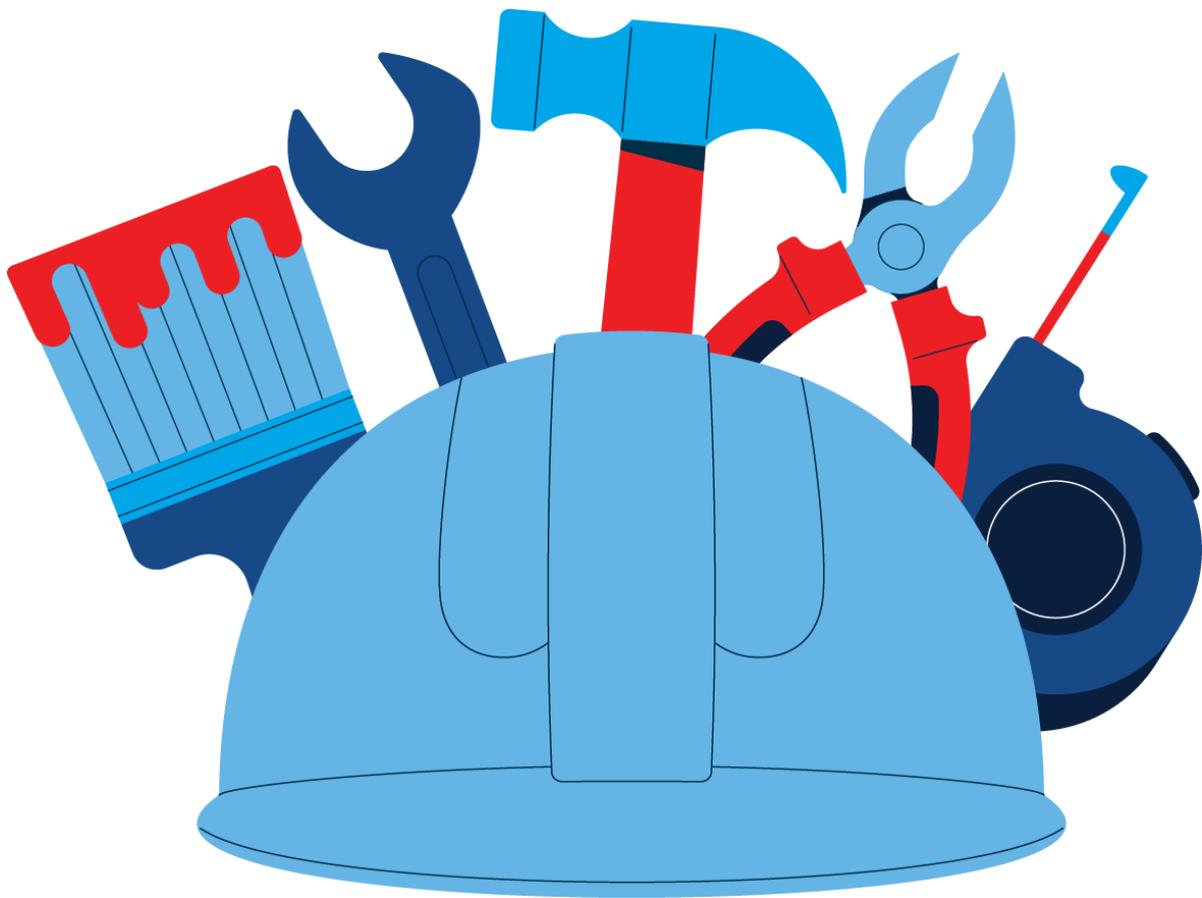
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## Looking to the Future

As the world of work evolves with technology, remote jobs, and the gig economy, the meaning of International Workers' Day is expanding. Future generations must carry the torch by promoting **inclusive, fair, and sustainable work for all**. In Colombia and worldwide, the call remains the same: dignity, respect, and opportunity for every worker.

**May 1st is not just a day of remembrance, but a day of hope.**



**Thank you for reading, and we look forward to sharing more stories, insights, and updates with you in the future.**

## Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe Honors Auxiliary Staff with Gratitude and Heartfelt Gifts

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we believe in recognizing and valuing every member of our school community. This May, in the spirit of unity and appreciation, our students paid tribute to the incredible **auxiliary staff** who support our school every day with dedication, care, and hard work.

From security guards and cleaning staff to cafeteria workers and maintenance teams, these individuals play a vital role in creating a safe, clean, and welcoming environment for all. To show our heartfelt gratitude, each grade took part in a special initiative to say “**Thank you**” in a meaningful and personal way.

Students from every class brought **non-perishable goods**, thoughtfully chosen to create **gift baskets** for each auxiliary team member. These baskets were carefully arranged, symbolizing our appreciation and the spirit of giving. But the most touching part of the gesture came in the form of **deep and heartfelt letters**, written by the students themselves.

Each class composed a **personal letter** to an assigned staff member, expressing admiration, respect, and sincere thanks for their everyday contributions. The letters were filled with kind words, memories, and messages that truly moved the recipients – a reminder that their work is seen, valued, and celebrated.

The moment of delivering the baskets and reading some of the letters was emotional and joyful, building stronger bonds between students and staff. It was a powerful lesson in **gratitude, empathy, and community spirit**.

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we are proud to teach not only academic excellence but also human values. This beautiful initiative is a reflection of who we are – a family that grows together through kindness and mutual respect.

**To our auxiliary staff: thank you for everything you do. You are an essential part of our heart.**





## Celebrating Mother's Day: A Time to Honor, Reflect, and Embrace All Forms of Love

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we believe in celebrating not just important dates, but the values and emotions behind them. **Mother's Day** is one of those moments that goes beyond tradition — it's a day filled with gratitude, reflection, and heartfelt appreciation for the people who care for us with unconditional love.

### A Celebration with Deep Roots

Mother's Day, as we know it today, has its roots in the early 1900s, when **Anna Jarvis**, an American woman, began a movement to recognize mothers' sacrifices. Her efforts led to the official celebration of Mother's Day in 1914, and soon, countries around the world adopted the tradition in their own meaningful ways.

Here in **Colombia**, *Día de la Madre* is celebrated every **second Sunday of May** and is one of the most beloved and respected holidays of the year. Families gather to honor mothers, grandmothers, and caregivers with flowers, music, meals, and kind words. It is also a time for communities to show appreciation for women's strength, dedication, and love — values that form the foundation of our society.

### Love Comes in Many Forms

We also recognize that **Mother's Day can be a sensitive time** for students who may have lost their mothers or are separated from them. At our school, we embrace a wider definition of love and family. This day is also for **grandmothers, aunts, guardians, teachers**, and anyone who has filled a caring role in a student's life.

We encourage our school community to show kindness, write letters of appreciation, and reflect on the love they have received — whether it comes from a parent, a friend, or a memory.

### A Future of Kindness and Inclusion

As we move forward, let's make sure **Mother's Day is a celebration that includes everyone** — one that teaches us to be grateful, compassionate, and inclusive. International agreements like the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** remind us that mothers around the world deserve protection, respect, and dignity in every part of life.

In Colombia and beyond, let us celebrate **not just motherhood**, but the love that shapes our lives — in all its forms.



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## Learning Through Journalism: School Club Students Shine with Interview Project

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, learning goes beyond the classroom — it becomes real, practical, and deeply meaningful. As leaders of our School Clubs, we, **teacher David Heley and Tec support Juan Felipe Triana**, have had the honor of working alongside an extraordinary group of students from Grades 8, 9, and 10 on a project that reflects their curiosity, creativity, and commitment: a school-wide **interview series**.

Our students have developed and applied essential 21st-century skills through the art of interviewing — a process that combined **communication, research, writing, collaboration, and media literacy**. From the first brainstorming session to the final edits, students showed initiative and responsibility, taking ownership of their learning.

Each team began by identifying key community members to interview — including teachers, staff, and fellow students. Then came the **research phase**, where they crafted thoughtful, respectful questions that explored topics such as education, identity, culture, and personal growth. Students also practiced **active listening**,

note-taking, and time management, which helped them gain a deeper understanding of their interviewees and themselves.

Using tablets, phones, and voice recorders, they conducted interviews in both Spanish and English, embracing bilingualism with confidence. Afterward, students worked on **transcribing, editing, and presenting** their content clearly and creatively, preparing it for publication in this edition of our school magazine.

We are proud to recognize the outstanding work of our club members:

**Grade 10:** Ana Sofía, Federico, Johann, Juan Felipe, Juan Pablo, Manuela, María Paula, Martina, Sara Sofía, and Sol Samanta

**Grade 9:** Camilo, Juan Camilo, Juan Sebastián, María Valentina, Marian Luciana, Samuel, Santiago, Sara, and Yiasus

**Grade 8:** Danna Gabriela, Gabriel Alejandro, Laura Valentina, María Camila, Mariana, and Mariana Pardo

These students have demonstrated that learning by doing builds **confidence, empathy, and real-world skills**. Their interviews are more than just text — they are a reflection of voices, stories, and community. We congratulate them for their professionalism, teamwork, and passion.

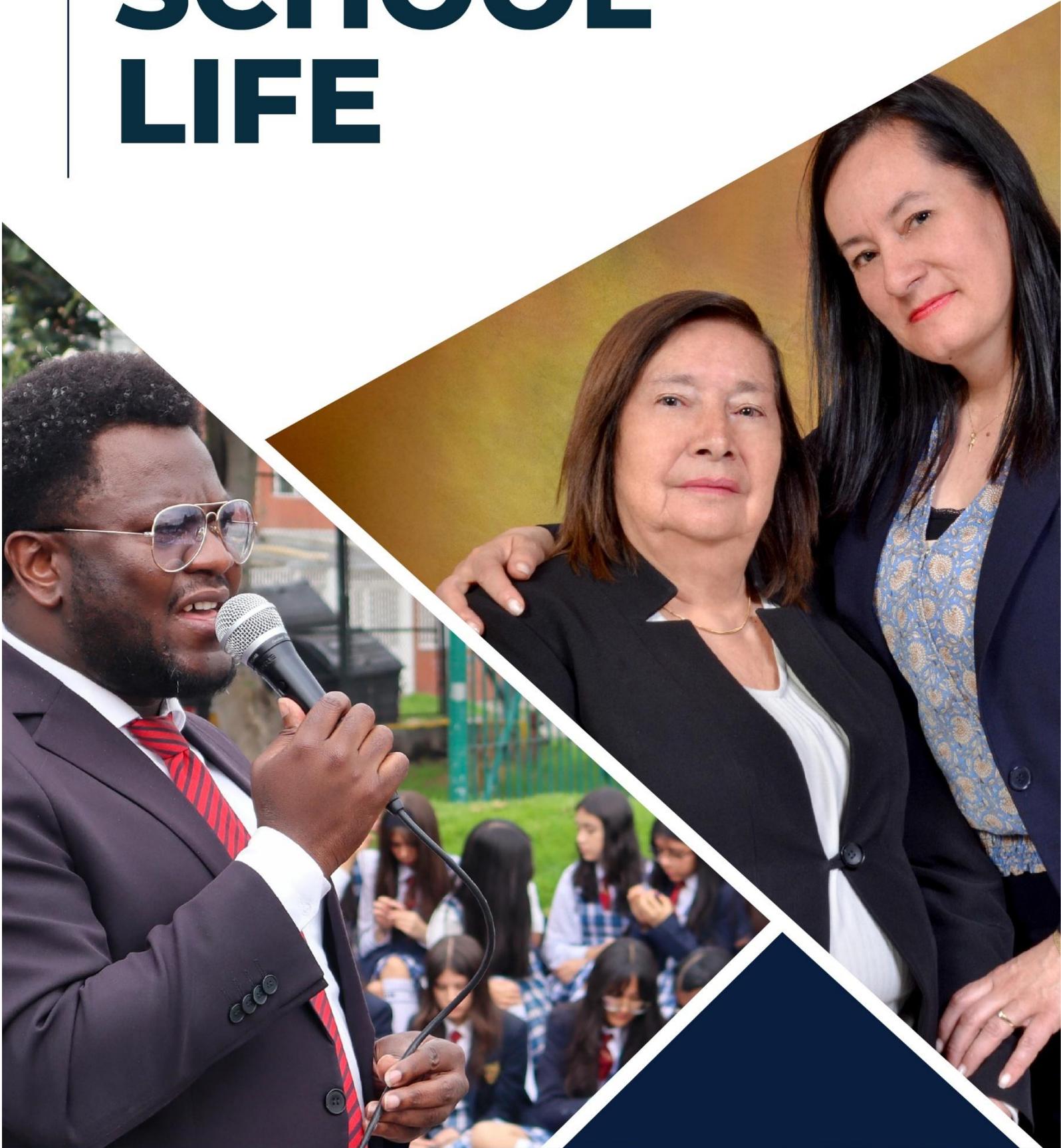
This is just the beginning. The future of journalism, storytelling, and leadership is bright — and it begins right here at Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe.





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# SCHOOL LIFE



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## Family Day 2025 at Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe: Returning to Our Roots in Celebration, Culture, and Community

Family Day 2025 at Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe was more than a cultural showcase—it was a powerful affirmation of identity, heritage, and unity. Under the evocative theme “**Returning to the Roots**”, the event united students, teachers, and families across all levels, creating a vibrant, emotional, and deeply meaningful experience that reaffirmed the foundational values of our educational community. This year’s celebration stood out for its academic purpose, intercultural awareness, and the vital role of family engagement in the development of every child.

### High School: Identity, Art, and Pedagogical Expression

The day commenced with a warm welcome from the high school section, beginning with a solemn and respectful **Saludo**, followed by the **National Anthem**, the **School Hymn**, and a heartfelt **prayer led by Father Lorenzo**. The **words from the Rector**, rich with gratitude and reflection, set the tone for the day's theme of reconnection with cultural origins and appreciation for family. The school’s **symphonic orchestra** opened the artistic presentations with a musical interpretation that highlighted the fusion of discipline and creativity cultivated in our students.

The high school performances were a beautiful blend of tradition, innovation, and pedagogical depth. Each dance and presentation was carefully selected not only to entertain but also to educate and preserve Colombia’s diverse regional identities. These included:

1. **Baile 7E: Cumbia**, directed by mentor **Jessica Rodríguez**, opened the folkloric segment with grace and joy.
2. **8E: Bambuco**, and **8F: Joropo**, continued to explore Colombia’s rich geographical cultures through movement.
3. **9C’s “Yo me llamo Cumbia”**, a choreographed homage to Colombian television and music, brought together memory and modernity.
4. An **interactive station led by Grades 6 and 7** under **Professor Mauricio Martínez** fostered historical consciousness through creative engagement.
5. A throwback to the **80s dance scene**, performed by sixth grade and guided by **Professor Camilo Valcárcel**, energized the audience.
6. **10C’s “Prende la vela”**, under **Jannick Lugo**, was a vibrant celebration of Afro-Colombian identity and rhythms.
7. A **dance club presentation**, also guided by **Professor Valcárcel**, emphasized the school’s commitment to extracurricular arts as a formative space.
8. The emotional **presentation by parents**, prepared with Professor Valcárcel, emphasized the collaborative spirit of our school.
9. The **Irish dance by 8A**, and the **silent film-inspired dance by 8D** (under **Leonardo Ramírez**) added global and creative dimensions.



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10. A memorable and joyful **performance by the CSDB teachers**, full of humor and solidarity, symbolized the shared efforts of all educators.
11. The celebration culminated with the **PROM 2025 presentation (11A–11D)**—a heartfelt farewell and symbolic transition to the next chapter for our graduating seniors.
12. The **Final March**, with all participants united, marked a ceremonial end that emphasized togetherness and gratitude.



### Primary School: Celebration of Joy, Roots, and Educational Beginnings

The primary section of Family Day embraced the same theme—“Returning to the Roots”—by highlighting the formative years of student development and the crucial role of culture, play, and early expression. With the same ceremonial structure as the high school segment, the primary celebration opened with a **Saludo, National Anthem, School Hymn**, and a heartfelt **Oración**, followed by an inspiring message from the school leadership in the **Palabras de Rectoría**. The **FJBT Symphony Orchestra** elevated the spirit of the event, offering an impressive opening to a rich program of artistic expression.

#### Highlights from the primary section included:

1. The **winner of the Singing Fest from 3C**, showcasing musical talent and personal confidence.
2. **1A’s Baile: “Pollera Colorada”**, introduced the audience to a folkloric classic with youthful energy.

3. **2A's Garabato**, under mentor **Daniel García**, delivered cultural depth through symbolic storytelling.
4. A heartfelt and engaging **performance by parents**, also guided by **Professor Valcárcel**, celebrated familial bonds and intergenerational learning.
5. A showcase by the **school's music and dance solistas**, reminded us of the diversity of talents cultivated at CSDB.
6. The **School Ballet Club** performed with elegance and grace, displaying months of dedication to artistic discipline.
7. The **Primary Cheerleading Team**, led by **Professor Jessica Rodríguez**, inspired the audience with their energy and teamwork.



A very special part of the morning was the **Preschool Showcase**, a true reflection of joyful learning and cultural introduction at the earliest ages:

- **Pre-Kinder (PK): “La Papaya”**, guided by Mentor **Claudia Rincón**, celebrated playful rhythms and colorful costumes.
- **Kindergarten (KG): “Country”**, directed by **Miss Angélica Patiño**, showed international flair with cultural sensitivity.
- **Transition A: “Mapalé”**, led by **Miss Lizeth**, celebrated Afro-Colombian roots through rhythm and movement.
- **Transition B: “Merengue”**, directed by **Miss Luz Darly**, brought a Caribbean twist to the morning's joy.
- **Transition C: “Joropo”**, under **Miss Camila Esquivel**, closed the preschool segment with a powerful homage to the Llanero region.



**The celebration concluded with:**

- **2C's "San Juanero"**, guided by mentor **Sandra Campos**, an academically integrated and symbolic piece.
- A joyful and proud **presentation by the primary school teachers**, reminding us of the daily effort behind each performance.
- The **fifth-grade promotion performance**, marking the transition from primary to middle school with creativity and pride.
- The **Final March**, which united all participants in a moment of closure, celebration, and shared purpose.



## A Celebration Rooted in Family and Shared Purpose

At its heart, Family Day 2025 was a living testimony to the power of community and the vital importance of **familial support in the educational journey**. The active presence of families—through applause, participation, collaboration, and encouragement—reinforced the essential role that parents and guardians play in the development of responsible, expressive, and culturally aware young citizens.

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we understand education as a shared path. Events like Family Day remind us that our school is not only a place for academic growth, but also a space for emotional, social, and cultural development. The intertwining of family, school, and tradition enriches the learning environment, allowing students to grow in a context of affection, discipline, and mutual respect.

As we “return to the roots,” we also look forward with optimism. The roots give strength, but it is the branches that reach for the future. Thank you to all families, students, teachers, and staff who made Family Day 2025 a memorable, meaningful, and deeply human celebration of what it means to be part of the Santo Domingo Bilingüe community.



## The Benefits of Exams in All Subjects at Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe we have started stage 1 of our 2<sup>nd</sup> term exams, we believe that exams are more than just tests — they are **powerful learning tools** that help students grow academically and personally. While exams can be challenging, they play a crucial role in helping students strengthen their **memory, critical thinking, and focus**. But what does science say about exams, and how do they benefit students in both the short and long term?

### What Happens in the Brain?

When students prepare for exams, the brain becomes more active. Studies from the University of California and Harvard have shown that **retrieving information during a test strengthens neural connections**. This process, called **active recall**, improves memory and understanding far more effectively than passive studying (like rereading or highlighting).

In short: the more students practice recalling information, the better they learn it.

#### Short-Term Benefits

In the short term, exams help students:

- **Identify their strengths and weaknesses**
- **Practice time management**
- **Build discipline and study habits**
- **Boost confidence when they see progress**

These benefits are not only helpful in school but also prepare students for real-world challenges where organization and focus are essential.

#### Long-Term Benefits

Over time, exams train the brain to retain and apply knowledge. International research from Cambridge University and Colombia's Ministry of Education shows that consistent testing leads to:

- **Improved academic performance**
- **Higher graduation rates**
- **Better preparation for national and international exams (like Saber 11 and TOEFL)**

In Colombia, well-designed assessments help measure learning outcomes and close educational gaps, making sure every student gets the support they need. Internationally, exams prepare students to face competitive academic environments with confidence.

## Building Lifelong Skills

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, exams are used not to create pressure, but to **guide learning, encourage growth, and develop resilience**. Whether it's a math quiz, a science lab report, or a bilingual oral test, each assessment helps students think deeply and prepare for the future.

In life — just like in school — we are always tested. The skills developed through exams help our students become **better thinkers, problem-solvers, and leaders**, both in Colombia and across the globe.



## The Importance of Mid-Year Holidays for Students and Schools

Mid-year holidays represent a crucial pause in the academic calendar, offering students, teachers, and school communities a necessary moment for rest, reflection, and renewal. Far from being merely a break in instruction, this period plays a vital role in supporting both academic performance and emotional well-being.

For students, mid-year holidays provide time to recharge mentally and physically after months of sustained cognitive effort. Research in educational psychology shows that breaks help prevent burnout, reduce stress, and improve memory retention. When students return after a meaningful pause, they are more engaged, focused, and motivated—qualities essential for academic success in the second half of the school year.

These holidays also allow space for informal learning. Whether through reading for pleasure, family travel, or cultural activities, students continue to grow outside the classroom. Such experiences enhance creativity, cultural awareness, and personal development—foundations of a holistic education.

For schools, mid-year holidays offer an opportunity to evaluate and recalibrate. Teachers can reflect on pedagogical strategies, curriculum pacing, and student progress. Administrators can prepare for upcoming academic goals, training, or institutional events, ensuring that the rest of the year unfolds with clarity and purpose.

Moreover, these breaks reaffirm the importance of balance in education. Learning thrives when paired with moments of pause. At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we recognize the mid-year holiday as a time to honor the hard work of our students and staff—and to return renewed, ready to embrace new challenges with energy and purpose.

We wish all our families a joyful, safe, and restorative holiday!

Felices Vacaciones,  
**DOMINGUISTAS**

**13 DE JUNIO**  
**7 DE JULIO**



Ha llegado el momento de **descansar, recargar energías y disfrutar en familia**. Gracias por un semestre lleno de aprendizajes, sonrisas y esfuerzo compartido.

**¡Disfruten mucho, nos reencontraremos con alegría para seguir aprendiendo juntos!**

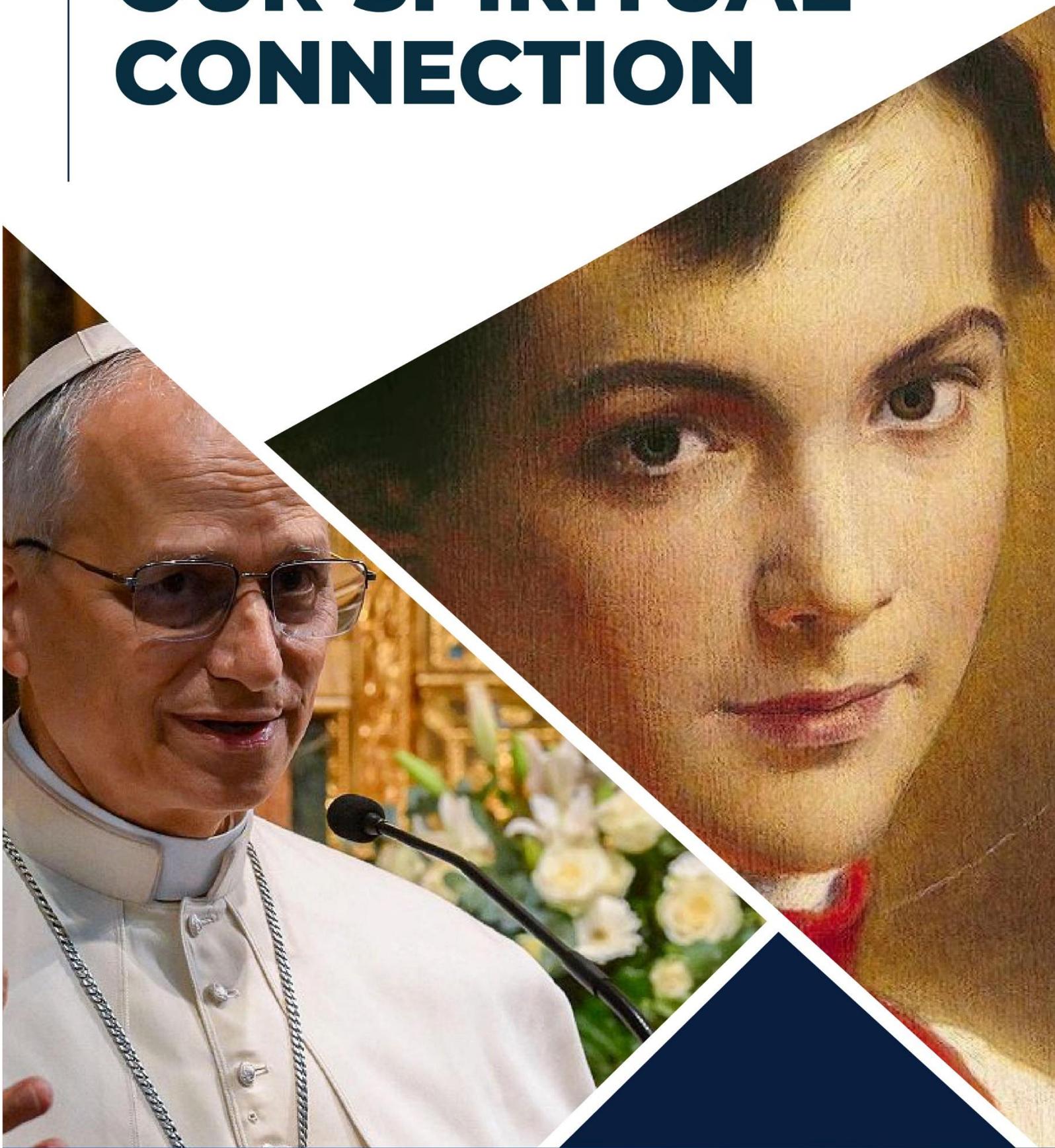


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# OUR SPIRITUAL CONNECTION



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## **“Shepherd of the World” In honor of the new Pope**

A breath of incense, soft bells ring,  
The world leans in as doves take wing.  
From marble halls and whispered prayer,  
A voice arises — gentle, rare.

Not crowned by gold, nor cloaked in pride,  
But chosen where the Spirit hides.  
A servant walks the path of peace,  
Where walls must fall and wars must cease.

He bears no sword, he brings no throne,  
Yet every soul he calls his own.  
From favelas and forgotten streets,  
To silent cloisters and bustling fleets.

His hand is raised, not high but low,  
To bless the broken, help them grow.  
His eyes reflect a sacred flame,  
Yet see each face, not just a name.

O Holy Father, now called to lead,  
In a world that hungers, cries, and bleeds,  
Bring not only doctrine, but also grace,  
Let mercy shine from place to place.

Speak for the child with no home to rest,  
For nations lost in greed's unrest.  
Let climate, war, and justice rise  
Upon your voice — strong, clear, and wise.

A shepherd steps upon the world's great stage,  
With humble heart and wisdom far beyond his age.  
Chosen not by crown or sword or fame,  
But through a call, a whisper in God's name.

Yet still, let faith be your guiding star,  
Rooted in Bethlehem, yet seen from afar.  
Let Scripture breathe in every act,  
With truth that comforts, never cracks.

To those who stumble, those who fall —  
Extend the love of Christ so wide,  
That none feel cast away outside.



FORMANDO EN VALORES



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Let dialogue replace the sword,  
Let silence bloom between each word.  
Let ancient truths with new hope blend,  
So wounds may heal, and strangers mend.

Guide us not to power or fame,  
But to the heart of God's own name.  
A kingdom not of stone or might,  
But built in service, forged in light.

For you are not a king, but more —  
A fisherman sent from Peter's shore.  
To cast the net where love is thin,  
To draw the whole wide world within.

And when you speak from Vatican's dome,  
May every nation feel at home.  
For in your voice, may we all see—  
Not just the Church, but humanity.

So go forth now, both priest and friend,  
Begin this journey without end.  
With every step, may Heaven guide—  
The Pope who walks by every side.





## St. Joseph the Worker: The Dignity of Labor in Faith and Society

The figure of **St. Joseph the Worker** holds deep theological, social, and moral significance within the Catholic tradition and beyond. Celebrated on **May 1st**, his feast day serves not only as a moment of spiritual reflection but also as an opportunity to explore the **intrinsic value of work** and its role in human development, dignity, and social justice.

### Historical and Biblical Context

St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus Christ and spouse of the Virgin Mary, is portrayed in the Gospels as a man of **righteousness, humility, and silent strength**. A carpenter by trade, Joseph symbolizes the nobility of manual labor and the sanctity of daily responsibility. Though he remains largely silent in Scripture, his presence and actions speak volumes about **faithful service, guardianship, and moral integrity**.

His role in salvation history emphasizes the value of those who contribute quietly to the lives of others—particularly through work that sustains families and communities. In this light, Joseph is not only a spiritual figure but also a profound **model of ethical labor and parental responsibility**.

### Origins of the Feast

The feast of **St. Joseph the Worker** was instituted in **1955 by Pope Pius XII** as a Christian counterpart to **International Workers' Day**, which is also observed on May 1st. This decision was both theological and pastoral: to highlight the Church's support for workers and to reaffirm the **dignity of human labor** as part of God's plan.

By aligning St. Joseph's example with the global celebration of labor, the Church affirms that all forms of honest work—whether manual, intellectual, or service-based—contribute to the common good and should be respected, protected, and valued.

### Contemporary Relevance

In today's globalized world, where economic inequality, unemployment, and labor rights remain pressing issues, the figure of St. Joseph the Worker is **more relevant than ever**. In Colombia, as in many parts of the world, labor is both a foundation of national identity and a challenge shaped by social and economic disparity.

St. Joseph stands as a **universal patron of workers**, reminding us that labor is not simply a means of survival but a path toward **personal dignity, social contribution, and spiritual fulfillment**.



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## A Model for Education and Formation

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, the commemoration of St. Joseph the Worker encourages students and educators to reflect on the values of **responsibility, perseverance, humility, and service**. His example is not limited to religious life but extends to our academic mission: forming individuals who understand the value of effort and the importance of using their talents for the good of others.

Through the lens of St. Joseph, we are reminded that **every profession, every task—no matter how modest—has worth** when it is carried out with love, integrity, and a sense of purpose. His legacy calls us to honor all workers and to commit ourselves to building a just and compassionate society, both in Colombia and around the world.



## What Is a Religion?

### *Understanding Belief, Culture, and Human Connection*

Religion is one of the most powerful and personal aspects of human life. It shapes the way people **think, act, and see the world**, and it has done so for thousands of years. But what exactly is religion?

At its core, **religion is a system of beliefs and practices** that connects people to what they consider sacred, divine, or spiritual. It often involves a belief in a higher

power or powers — such as **God, gods, or a universal force** — and provides guidance for how to live a meaningful and moral life.

## Common Elements of Religion

Though every religion is unique, most share common elements:

- **Sacred Texts or Teachings** – such as the Bible, Quran, Torah, Bhagavad Gita, or oral traditions.
- **Rituals and Ceremonies** – like prayer, meditation, fasting, or holidays.
- **Places of Worship** – such as churches, mosques, temples, synagogues, or natural spaces.
- **Moral Principles** – ideas about what is right and wrong, love, forgiveness, justice, and respect.
- **Community** – religion often brings people together to celebrate, reflect, and support one another.

## Why Do People Follow Religion?

People turn to religion for many reasons: to find **hope in difficult times**, to **understand life and death**, to feel part of a larger story, or to **connect with others and with the divine**. Religion can give life purpose and help people make sense of the world around them.

## Religion Around the World

There are many religions practiced around the world today, including **Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism**, and **Indigenous spiritual traditions**, among others. Each has its own history, symbols, celebrations, and ways of understanding life.

In Colombia, for example, **Christianity is the most widely practiced religion**, especially Catholicism, but there is also a growing presence of other faiths and beliefs — reflecting the country's diversity and openness.

## Religion and Respect

In today's global world, understanding religion is also about **respect and tolerance**. Not everyone believes the same thing, and some people follow no religion at all. But learning about different religions helps us to become more **open-minded, peaceful, and united as human beings**.

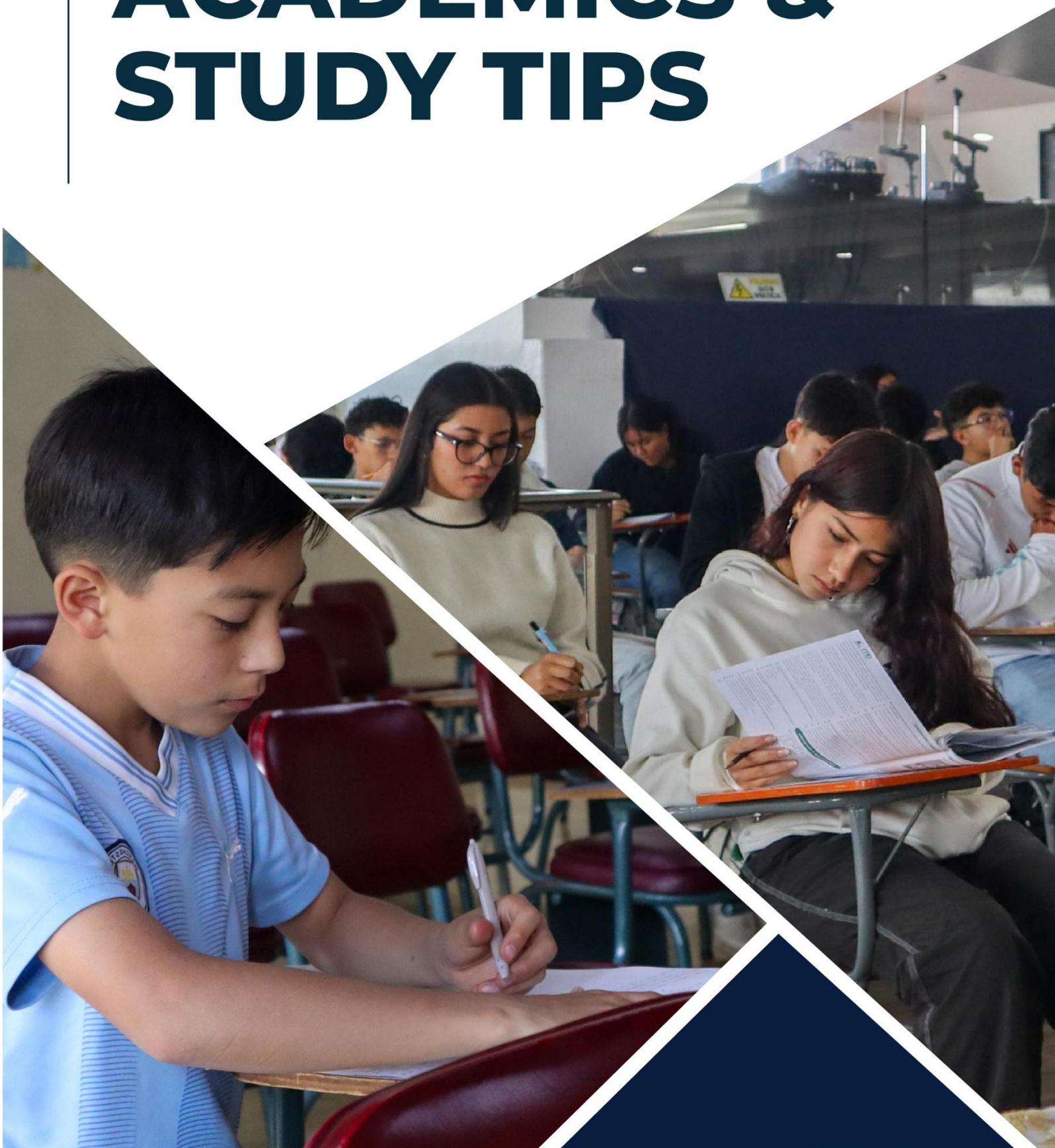
At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we encourage students to explore religious and cultural traditions with **curiosity, kindness, and respect**, because understanding others begins with learning more about the world — and ourselves.





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# ACADEMICS & STUDY TIPS



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# How to Manage Stress and Anxiety Before, During, and After an Exam

## Introduction

Exams are a common source of stress and anxiety for students. While a moderate level of stress can improve performance by keeping us alert and focused, chronic or overwhelming anxiety can hinder academic success and affect overall well-being. Understanding how to manage stress and anxiety effectively before, during, and after an exam is key to performing at one's best and maintaining emotional balance.

This article explores evidence-based strategies, real-life examples, and practical solutions to help students navigate exam-related stress across all stages of the testing process.

## 1. Before the Exam: Preparing Mind and Body

### Causes of Pre-Exam Anxiety

- Fear of failure
- Poor time management
- Lack of preparation
- Negative self-talk
- Peer or parental pressure

### Strategies and Solutions

#### a) Organized Study Planning

According to research from the *American Psychological Association (APA)*, structured study schedules significantly reduce anxiety. Creating a revision timetable 2–3 weeks before the exam allows for better information retention and avoids last-minute cramming.

#### Example:

Maria, a university student, used the Pomodoro Technique—25-minute focused study sessions followed by 5-minute breaks. This improved her concentration and reduced burnout.

#### b) Practice and Familiarity

Past papers and mock exams help reduce uncertainty and increase confidence.

### **Solution:**

Use past exam questions under timed conditions at least twice a week. Review common question formats to reduce surprise elements.

#### *c) Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques*

Mindfulness meditation has been shown to reduce cortisol levels (stress hormone). Apps like **Headspace** or **Insight Timer** offer guided practices.

### **Practice tip:**

Spend 10 minutes daily on deep breathing or body scan meditation.

#### *d) Physical Preparation*

Sleep, nutrition, and hydration directly impact cognitive function. Avoid high-sugar snacks and opt for brain foods like nuts, blueberries, and water.



## 2. During the Exam: Staying Focused and Calm

### Common Triggers

- Time pressure
- Difficult questions
- Comparing oneself to others
- Panic attacks

### Strategies and Solutions

#### a) Grounding Techniques

If anxiety peaks, grounding techniques help calm the mind.

#### Example:

Use the 5-4-3-2-1 method:

- Name 5 things you see,
- 4 you can touch,
- 3 you hear,
- 2 you smell,
- 1 you taste.

#### b) Time Management Strategies

Divide your exam time proportionally. For instance, a 2-hour exam with four questions = 30 minutes per question.

#### Solution:

Keep an eye on the clock, but avoid obsessive checking. Mark challenging questions and return to them later.

#### c) Positive Self-Talk

Use affirmations to replace panic with focus.

#### Examples:

- “I have prepared, and I will try my best.”
- “One question at a time.”

#### d) Controlled Breathing

Before opening the exam paper or if feeling overwhelmed, take 3–4 slow deep breaths. This activates the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting calm.



### 3. After the Exam: Reflecting and Releasing

#### Post-Exam Stress Causes

- Obsessing over mistakes
- Comparing answers with peers
- Anticipating results with fear

#### Strategies and Solutions

##### a) Constructive Reflection

Instead of ruminating on what went wrong, list what went well and areas for growth.

##### Example Reflection Prompts:

- What helped me stay calm?
- What will I do differently next time?

##### b) Emotional Regulation

Understand that exams do not define self-worth. Normalize feelings of relief, sadness, or frustration.

**Solution:**

Engage in a self-care activity post-exam: walk, talk with a friend, or journal.

**c) Avoid Immediate Comparison**

Discussing answers right after the exam can lead to unnecessary stress.

**Tip:**

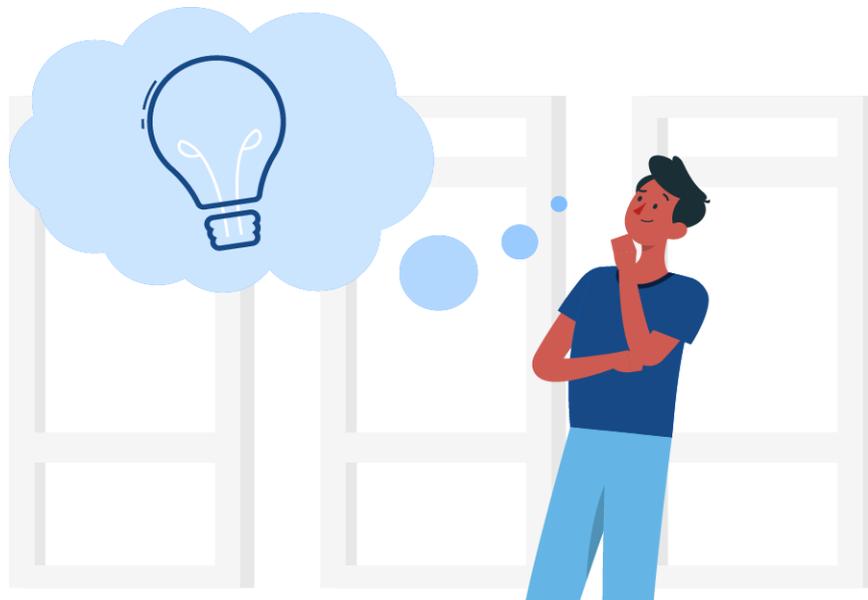
Wait at least 24 hours before discussing answers unless it's a learning strategy in a group review session.

**d) Celebrate Completion**

Acknowledge your effort regardless of outcome. This reinforces resilience and motivates future learning.

**Our recommendation**

Managing exam stress is not about eliminating all anxiety but learning how to respond to it constructively. With preparation, mindset strategies, and self-care practices, students can approach exams with confidence and composure. Schools and educators also play a vital role by fostering supportive environments and offering resources for stress management.

**Key Takeaways**

- Preparation reduces uncertainty and builds confidence.
- Mindfulness, breathing, and time management help manage in-the-moment anxiety.
- Reflection and self-care after exams promote emotional resilience and long-term success.



## Eating and Sleeping Habits Before Exams: Fueling Your Brain for Success

As exams approach, students often find themselves under increasing pressure to perform well. While studying and practicing techniques like **Active Recall** are crucial for academic success, there's another essential factor that is often overlooked: your **eating and sleeping habits**. What you eat and how well you sleep can have a significant impact on your **focus, memory, and overall performance** on exam day.

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we encourage students to not only focus on study habits but also to pay attention to their physical and mental well-being by adopting healthier eating and sleeping routines leading up to their exams.

### The Importance of Sleep Before Exams

It's no secret that sleep is vital for overall health, but its role in **memory consolidation** and cognitive function is particularly crucial before an exam. Research consistently shows that students who get a full night's rest before an exam perform better than those who stay up late cramming.

#### Why Sleep Matters:

- **Memory and Learning:** During sleep, the brain processes and consolidates information learned during the day. Without adequate sleep, students might struggle to recall important details during the exam.
- **Focus and Attention:** Lack of sleep impairs concentration, making it difficult to stay focused on exam questions and efficiently recall information.
- **Mood and Stress:** Sleep also helps regulate mood and reduce stress levels. Being well-rested enables students to approach exams with a more **positive mindset** and greater resilience.

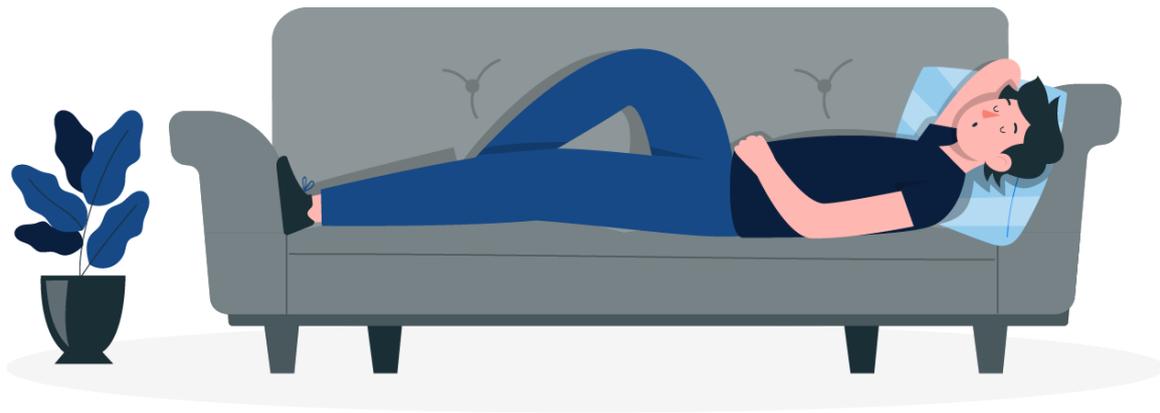
#### Tips for Good Sleep:

- **Get 7-9 Hours of Sleep:** Aim for a consistent bedtime and wake-up time, even during the exam period.
- **Avoid Caffeine Before Bed:** Caffeine and other stimulants can interfere with sleep patterns, making it harder to fall asleep.
- **Create a Relaxing Bedtime Routine:** Reading, meditating, or listening to calming music before bed can help signal to your brain that it's time to rest.



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## Eating Habits That Boost Exam Performance

What you eat has a direct effect on how well your brain functions. The right foods can **boost memory, improve concentration**, and keep your energy levels stable, while the wrong foods can lead to fatigue, anxiety, and poor cognitive performance.

### *Why Diet Matters:*

- **Brain Function:** Certain nutrients are essential for brain health. For example, **omega-3 fatty acids**, found in fish like salmon, are linked to improved cognitive performance.
- **Energy Levels:** Foods high in refined sugars and processed carbs can cause spikes and crashes in energy, leaving students feeling sluggish during exams.
- **Focus and Clarity:** A balanced diet helps stabilize blood sugar levels, supporting **steady mental focus** throughout the exam.

### *Foods to Eat Before Exams:*

- **Complex Carbs:** Whole grains, like oatmeal or brown rice, provide slow-releasing energy for sustained focus.
- **Protein-Rich Foods:** Eggs, yogurt, and lean meats are excellent sources of protein, which are essential for brain function and alertness.
- **Fruits and Vegetables:** Foods high in antioxidants, like berries, spinach, and carrots, help protect the brain from oxidative stress and improve memory.
- **Healthy Fats:** Avocados, nuts, and fatty fish such as salmon provide essential omega-3 fatty acids that support brain health and cognitive function.

### *Foods to Avoid:*

- **Sugary Snacks:** While they may provide a quick energy boost, sugary foods lead to an inevitable crash in blood sugar, leaving students feeling fatigued and unfocused.
- **Heavy Meals:** Eating large meals or high-fat foods before studying or an exam can lead to sluggishness and discomfort.
- **Caffeine Overload:** Too much caffeine can lead to anxiety and disrupt sleep, especially if consumed later in the day.

## ***The Day Before and the Morning of the Exam***

### ***The Day Before the Exam:***

- **Eat a balanced, nutritious dinner**, focusing on protein, vegetables, and healthy carbs. Avoid heavy or greasy foods that might disrupt your sleep.
- **Avoid last-minute cramming**. Review key concepts, but give yourself time to relax and wind down for the evening.

### ***The Morning of the Exam:***

- **Have a light, balanced breakfast**. Try whole grain toast with eggs, or a smoothie with fruit and yogurt. Avoid skipping breakfast, as this can lead to low energy during the exam.
- **Stay hydrated** by drinking water, but avoid excessive caffeine, which can lead to jitters or dehydration.

### ***Final Thoughts***

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, we believe that success on exams isn't just about how many hours you spend studying — it's about preparing your body and mind for optimal performance. By ensuring you get enough **quality sleep** and **nourish your body with the right foods**, you set yourself up for success.

**Remember**, a well-rested body and a well-fed brain will carry you through the exam period with greater ease and confidence. Balance your study time with proper self-care, and you'll be better prepared to perform at your best.



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# WELLNESS & MENTAL HEALTH



# 10 Most Important Things Children Really Want: Understanding Children's Needs in Colombia and Beyond

Children, irrespective of where they live or their cultural backgrounds, share fundamental needs that play a critical role in shaping their development. These needs span physical, emotional, and social domains, and they influence children's happiness, well-being, and success in life. Understanding these needs is not only crucial for parents, teachers, and caregivers but also for policymakers, social workers, and other individuals who are involved in children's lives. This article examines the top ten things that children need most, with a special focus on the situation in **Colombia**, while drawing on international studies and examples to underline these universal needs.

## 1. Love and Emotional Support

**Need:** Children crave love and emotional support from their caregivers, whether parents, relatives, or teachers. This need is universal and non-negotiable. Emotional support helps children build self-esteem, resilience, and trust.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Be Present and Available:** Emotional availability is key. Spend quality time with children—talk, listen, and show that you care. For example, a parent in **Colombia** might spend an hour every evening talking about their child's day and actively listening to their thoughts and feelings.
- **Offer Positive Affirmations:** Teachers and caregivers should use **affirmative language**. In Colombia, a teacher can encourage a child by saying, "I'm proud of your effort today. You did great!" rather than focusing solely on outcomes.



## 2. Safety and Stability

**Need:** Safety and stability are basic, yet essential needs for children. They need a secure environment where they can explore, learn, and grow without fear.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Create a Safe Environment at Home and School:** Parents should make sure that their children's home environment is free from harm. In **Colombia**, parents in urban or rural areas can reduce risks by securing their homes and ensuring safe routes to school.
- **Supportive Communities:** In **Colombian communities** that have been affected by violence or displacement, schools can implement programs that provide emotional and social support, ensuring that children feel secure in their classrooms and surroundings.



## 3. Basic Needs: Food, Water, and Shelter

**Need:** The fulfillment of basic needs, including access to nutritious food, clean water, and adequate shelter, is essential for a child's physical development.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Ensure Nutritious Meals:** Families should make sure their children receive a balanced diet. In **Colombia**, government initiatives like **Alimentación**

**Escolar** (School Feeding Program) aim to provide children with regular meals. Parents can also prepare simple, nutritious meals like rice, beans, and vegetables.

- **Access to Clean Water:** Schools and community programs can provide access to clean water by installing water filters and educating children about hygiene and health practices.



#### 4. Education and Intellectual Stimulation

**Need:** Education is one of the most important investments in a child’s future. Children need access to quality education and intellectual stimulation to develop their cognitive skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities.

##### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Supportive Learning Environments:** Teachers and schools must create an engaging curriculum that stimulates critical thinking. In **Colombia**, a teacher might use interactive methods like group projects or **EdTech tools** that are increasingly available in schools to engage students in deeper learning.
- **Encourage Curiosity at Home:** Parents can foster intellectual curiosity by reading with their children, asking open-ended questions, and encouraging them to explore topics that interest them.



## 5. Positive Relationships and Social Connections

**Need:** Healthy social relationships with peers, family members, and adults are crucial for children’s development. These connections help children develop empathy, communication skills, and emotional intelligence.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Model Healthy Relationships:** Adults should model positive social interactions and conflict-resolution strategies. In **Colombia**, communities can set up workshops to help families learn how to improve communication and solve problems together.
- **Foster Peer Connections:** Schools can create group activities that encourage teamwork, like **school clubs**, sports teams, or creative workshops. These activities help students build friendships and learn social skills.



## 6. Play and Recreation

**Need:** Play is essential for a child’s physical, cognitive, and emotional development. Through play, children learn problem-solving skills, build social connections, and engage in creative expression.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Outdoor Play:** Children need time to engage in physical activity. Schools in **Colombia** can offer playgrounds and physical education classes to promote active play.
- **Encourage Creative Play:** Parents can provide toys that stimulate imagination—art supplies, building blocks, or dolls. Even simple **role-playing games** at home can help children develop creativity and problem-solving skills.



## 7. Protection from Harm

**Need:** Children need to be protected from physical, emotional, and sexual harm. Safeguarding children from violence, abuse, and exploitation is a crucial part of their development.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Educate Children About Safety:** Both parents and schools in **Colombia** should educate children on topics such as **personal boundaries**, **online safety**, and how to seek help if they feel unsafe.
- **Enforce Child Protection Policies:** Schools and communities can work with organizations to implement programs that protect children from abuse and exploitation. **Save the Children** and **Red de Defensa Infantil** in Colombia are excellent resources for supporting child protection.



### 8. Encouragement and Positive Reinforcement

**Need:** Children thrive in environments where they are encouraged and recognized for their efforts. Positive reinforcement boosts self-esteem and motivates children to engage in learning and goal-setting.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Praise Efforts, Not Just Results:** Parents and teachers should celebrate children’s efforts and progress. For example, in **Colombia**, a teacher might say, “I can see how much effort you put into your project. That’s amazing!” instead of just praising the grade.

- **Create Goal-Setting Opportunities:** Encouraging children to set and track their own goals, such as finishing a book or learning a new skill, can provide motivation and a sense of achievement.



## 9. Independence and Autonomy

**Need:** As children grow, they need the opportunity to make decisions, solve problems, and take responsibility for their actions. This fosters self-confidence, self-regulation, and independence.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Offer Age-Appropriate Responsibilities:** At home, parents can give children small chores or decision-making opportunities, like planning their study time or helping with cooking. In **Colombian schools**, students could be given leadership roles within the classroom, such as being in charge of organizing group projects.
- **Encourage Decision-Making:** Parents and teachers can empower children by letting them make choices, such as selecting which extracurricular activity to participate in or choosing their preferred learning materials.



## 10. A Sense of Belonging and Purpose

**Need:** Every child wants to feel like they belong to a family, community, and society. A sense of purpose—whether it’s through education, family, or cultural activities—helps children form a strong identity.

### How to Fulfill This Need:

- **Create Family Traditions:** In **Colombia**, where family is central to culture, spending quality time together—whether it’s enjoying a traditional meal or participating in a religious event—helps children feel connected to their heritage.
- **Incorporate Cultural Activities:** Schools can integrate local culture and history into their curriculum, fostering a sense of pride and identity. For example, children in **Colombian classrooms** can celebrate cultural events like **Carnaval de Barranquilla** or **Día de la Independencia**, helping them connect to their national identity.



Children’s needs are universal, transcending cultural and national boundaries. Whether in Colombia, the United States, or anywhere else in the world, children require love, safety, education, and support to grow into well-rounded, healthy individuals. By focusing on these fundamental needs, societies can ensure that children receive the best possible start in life, fostering positive outcomes for individuals, families, and communities as a whole.

**Addressing these needs requires a collective effort**—from parents to teachers, communities, and governments. Together, we can help children flourish and shape a brighter future for everyone.





# The Importance of Wearing a School Uniform: Building Self-Pride, Patriotism, and Life Skills

## Introduction

In an age where personal identity and freedom of expression are highly valued, the practice of wearing a school uniform may seem restrictive. However, the school uniform remains a vital part of education—not only as a requirement, but as a tool for forming identity, fostering equality, and preparing students for real-world responsibilities.

Wearing a uniform teaches more than conformity; it instills self-pride, encourages patriotism, and builds lifelong skills in discipline, respect, and professionalism. At the same time, it is entirely possible to express one's individuality within the framework of a school uniform. In this article, we explore both the **benefits** of school uniforms and **how students can express their uniqueness while wearing them**.

## 1. Developing Self-Pride and Responsibility

A school uniform encourages students to take pride in their personal appearance and develop self-discipline. Caring for a uniform—ironing it, keeping it clean, and wearing it correctly—cultivates attention to detail, personal hygiene, and respect for rules. These are foundational life skills that benefit students in both academic and professional contexts.

Moreover, the uniform creates a clear distinction between school and leisure, which supports time management and personal boundaries. When students wear their uniforms with care, they silently communicate that they take pride in being part of their educational institution.

## 2. Promoting Unity and Patriotism

Uniforms help foster a strong sense of community and national identity. By dressing in the same way, students learn to look beyond superficial differences and instead focus on collaboration and shared goals.

In many countries, school uniforms are designed in national or institutional colors and may include badges or emblems that represent local culture or history. Wearing a uniform during school events, assemblies, or national celebrations reinforces a sense of belonging and patriotic responsibility.

This shared identity contributes to unity, pride, and a deeper connection with one's country and community.



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### 3. Strengthening Focus and Reducing Social Pressure

One of the most practical benefits of wearing a school uniform is that it reduces distractions and peer pressure related to fashion. When all students wear the same outfit, the classroom becomes a more equitable and focused environment.

Students are no longer judged by what they wear but by how they behave, contribute, and perform. This allows learners from all social and economic backgrounds to interact more comfortably, helping to reduce anxiety and promote inclusion.

### 4. Preparing for Professional Life

Uniforms also serve as an introduction to the expectations of the professional world. Many careers—such as law enforcement, healthcare, military, aviation, and hospitality—require a uniform or specific dress code. Learning to wear a uniform respectfully and responsibly in school helps students develop professionalism and understand the importance of representing an organization.

This experience fosters maturity, self-control, and the ability to adapt to roles and environments that demand discipline and decorum.

### 5. Expressing Individuality Within the Uniform

While school uniforms may appear standardized, they do not eliminate personal identity. In fact, **true individuality is often expressed not through appearance, but through personality, creativity, and personal values.**

That said, there are still appropriate and respectful ways students can express their uniqueness while wearing a uniform:

- **Personal accessories:** A modest watch, bracelet, or a culturally meaningful pendant can quietly reflect personal taste or heritage.
- **Hair styles (within school policy):** Maintaining a neat hairstyle that feels personal allows students to express a bit of their personality.
- **Backpacks and notebooks:** The design or decorations on personal school items can reflect hobbies, values, or creativity.
- **Behavior and attitude:** The most powerful form of self-expression comes through respectful communication, kindness, leadership, and resilience. These are traits that uniforms do not limit—but rather highlight.



In essence, a uniform provides the canvas, and the student brings the character.

Wearing a school uniform is not just about following rules—it is about embracing a shared identity while growing into one's individual role in society. It supports the development of self-respect, discipline, and pride in being part of something larger than oneself.

At the same time, it does not suppress individuality. Through character, attitude, and thoughtful personal touches, students can express who they are while honoring the structure and values of their educational environment.

In a world that often promotes external image, the school uniform teaches young people to build their identity from the inside out. It is a symbol not of limitation, but of **preparation, equality, and potential**—laying the foundation for lives lived with dignity, purpose, and pride.





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# COMMUNITY & CULTURE



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## **Rooted in the Soil, Reaching the World: Honoring Colombian Identity in the Journey to Global Citizenship**

In the twenty-first century, globalization challenges individuals to operate across cultural and national borders while maintaining a clear sense of self and community. For nations like Colombia, this dual imperative is especially significant: a country rich in cultural, ethnic, and ecological diversity, Colombia represents both a crucible of local identities and a fertile ground for cultivating global consciousness. This article explores how honoring one's roots in Colombian heritage is not only compatible with becoming a global citizen but essential to it. Drawing from sociocultural theory, educational policy, and community-based practices, the article argues for a model of global citizenship rooted in local identity, grounded in the Colombian context. It offers a reflective and critical analysis of how Colombia's history, education system, and sociopolitical landscape shape a distinct path toward global engagement that is both ethical and authentic.

### **The Tension and Promise of Global Citizenship**

Globalization offers unprecedented opportunities for intercultural dialogue, technological innovation, and international cooperation. However, it also presents risks: cultural homogenization, the erosion of indigenous knowledge systems, and the marginalization of less dominant narratives. For nations like Colombia, which carry the weight of colonial history and the promise of cultural resurgence, the concept of global citizenship must be interrogated and reimaged. It is not a neutral category but one shaped by power, geography, and historical memory.

This article contends that the global citizen must be anchored in a deep understanding of their own cultural identity. For Colombians, this means drawing on Afro-Colombian oral traditions, Indigenous ecological wisdom, and mestizo syncretism as sources of strength and vision. Rather than viewing global citizenship as a departure from national or local identity, it must be conceived as an expansion of it.

### **The Colombian Mosaic: Diversity as Foundation, Not Obstacle**

Colombia's multicultural constitution (1991) recognizes the nation as pluriethnic and multicultural. This legal framework enshrines the value of cultural diversity, granting political and educational autonomy to Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and rural communities. It positions identity not as fixed but as evolving and dialogic—a view that aligns with contemporary theories of cosmopolitanism and transnational belonging.

In practice, however, the realization of these ideals is uneven. Structural inequalities, violence, and exclusion persist, particularly in marginalized regions. Yet, it is precisely within these geographies of struggle that some of the most innovative and resilient forms of rooted global citizenship have emerged. From Wayuu youth leading climate justice campaigns in La Guajira to Afro-Colombian women using ancestral

culinary knowledge as a form of resistance and diplomacy, Colombia offers a living laboratory for examining how local identities inform and enrich global participation.



## Education as the Bridge: Toward Intercultural and Global Competence

The Colombian education system, through the Estándares Básicos de Competencias Ciudadanas and bilingual education initiatives, has attempted to prepare students for life in a globalized world. However, there remains a critical need to integrate global competencies with culturally relevant pedagogy. Too often, global education is framed in Eurocentric terms, equating "world-class" with "Westernized."

To truly honor Colombian roots, education must center the lived realities of students. This includes teaching local histories of resistance, incorporating regional literatures and art forms, and valuing Indigenous and Afro-descendant languages. Global citizenship, then, is not taught as an abstract set of skills but cultivated through critical engagement with one's community, history, and environment.

Educational institutions such as Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe and rural public schools in Chocó or the Amazon region demonstrate that it is possible to fuse high academic standards with cultural affirmation. These schools are not only teaching English or digital literacy; they are empowering students to speak from a place of rootedness when they engage the world.

## Becoming a Global Citizen: A Colombian Praxis

To become a global citizen from a Colombian perspective is not merely to adopt a set of international norms or values but to enter into a dialogical process where local wisdom and global frameworks co-construct each other. This praxis is visible in community-led peacebuilding efforts that blend traditional conflict resolution mechanisms with international human rights discourse. It is embodied in Colombian youth who advocate for climate action while drawing on their community's deep ecological knowledge.

The path to global citizenship is thus not about assimilation into a dominant global culture but about transforming global spaces with locally grounded voices. For Colombians, especially those from historically marginalized communities, global citizenship becomes an act of cultural sovereignty.

### **Challenges and Possibilities: Navigating the Future**

While the vision is compelling, several barriers remain. Educational inequality, linguistic imperialism, and limited access to international mobility disproportionately affect rural and indigenous populations. Moreover, Colombia's ongoing struggles with violence, displacement, and political instability complicate the project of forming globally minded citizens.

Yet, these very conditions also create urgency and creativity. Colombia's peace accords, though fragile, have opened spaces for civic education and intercultural dialogue. Youth movements, feminist collectives, and environmental defenders are articulating forms of citizenship that are simultaneously local and planetary. The future of global citizenship in Colombia depends not on abandoning the past, but on reinterpreting it in service of a more just and interconnected world.

### **Conclusion: Rootedness as a Prerequisite for Global Engagement**

In the Colombian context, honoring one's roots is not a retreat from the world but a gateway to meaningful global participation. Cultural identity, far from being an obstacle, is the very soil in which global consciousness can take root. By fostering educational models, policies, and community practices that center Colombian identities, the nation can offer the world a new model of global citizenship—one that is ethically grounded, historically conscious, and unapologetically rooted.

In doing so, Colombia affirms a powerful truth: to reach the world, one must begin at home.



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- Here is your professional and academic article titled "**Voices from the Sierra: Arhuaco Wisdom and Global Citizenship in Colombia.**" It integrates terms from the Arhuaco (Iku) language with Spanish and English translations to honor Indigenous perspectives within global citizenship discourse. Let me know if you'd like to adapt this for a bilingual classroom, publication, or presentation.

## Voices from the Sierra: Arhuaco Wisdom and Global Citizenship in Colombia

Indigenous knowledge systems hold profound value in shaping ethical, sustainable, and community-centered approaches to global citizenship. In Colombia, the Arhuaco people of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta offer a compelling paradigm rooted in ancestral cosmology, ecological guardianship, and intergenerational wisdom. This article explores how Arhuaco cultural frameworks enrich national identity and offer globally relevant insights into coexistence, care for the Earth, and collective responsibility. Through bilingual and trilingual integration of Arhuaco words, Spanish translations, and English equivalents, the article emphasizes the importance of linguistic preservation as a pillar of cultural continuity and global dialogue.

### The Arhuaco People: Guardians of the Sierra

The Arhuaco, one of the four Indigenous groups of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, refer to their homeland as the "Heart of the World." Their language, Iku (or Iku), encodes a cosmology that perceives the Earth not as a resource but as a living entity. In Iku, the word Séynwi means "sacred law" or "divine order" (ley sagrada in Spanish), a foundational concept guiding the Arhuaco's spiritual and social life.

From a young age, Arhuaco children are taught to live in accordance with Séynwi, which includes respect for nature, elders, and communal harmony. In contrast to Western individualism, Arhuaco education emphasizes spiritual development,

silence, and observation—an indigenous pedagogy that aligns with global citizenship's core values of empathy, sustainability, and respect for diversity.



## Iku, Spanish, and English in Dialogue

Language is more than communication; it is a vessel for worldview. In Arhuaco cosmology, Umunukū refers to a "place of origin" (lugar de origen), reminding each person of their rootedness and responsibility to their territory.

By preserving and teaching Iku alongside Spanish and English, Arhuaco communities are not only safeguarding their heritage but participating in multilingual global conversations. This trilingual fluency enables younger generations to affirm their identity while engaging with broader national and international discourses.

Examples:

- Séynwi – ley sagrada – sacred law
- Umunukū – lugar de origen – place of origin
- Kakü Serankua – creador de todo – creator of all

Each term invites a deeper reflection on values often absent in dominant global paradigms. These linguistic bridges promote mutual understanding and invite non-Indigenous Colombians and international audiences to consider alternative epistemologies.

## The Role of Indigenous Schools

Arhuaco educational institutions, such as the Escuela Intercultural de Nabusímake, serve as crucial spaces of resistance and renewal. These schools integrate traditional knowledge with formal academic curricula, offering courses in Iku, Spanish,

mathematics, and environmental science. The curriculum is based not only on academic content but on ethical formation rooted in the principles of Séynwi.

Unlike many national education models that prioritize standardized testing and competition, Arhuaco pedagogy is relational. It teaches students to "listen to the mountain" (izhizha meynha)—a metaphor for attentive living and ecological awareness.

### **The Arhuaco Contribution to Global Citizenship**

The Arhuaco demonstrate that being rooted in place does not preclude planetary responsibility; rather, it enhances it. Their call to protect the Sierra is also a call to protect the Earth. In recent decades, Arhuaco leaders have participated in national dialogues, climate conferences, and peacebuilding initiatives, sharing insights on territorial rights, biodiversity, and ethical governance.

In doing so, they practice a form of global citizenship that is not extractive or assimilative, but dialogical. They bring forward a vision of sustainability, not through technological advancement alone, but through ancestral wisdom—what they call zhigonezhi: "the memory of the origin" (la memoria del origen).

### **Listening to Indigenous Colombia**

Honoring Indigenous voices such as the Arhuaco is not an act of romanticization, but of epistemic justice. Their knowledge systems offer urgent contributions to global challenges—from climate change to social fragmentation. Through the preservation of languages like Iku and the articulation of key concepts such as Séynwi and zhigonezhi, the Arhuaco remind us that global citizenship begins with listening—listening to the land, to ancestors, and to each other.

In Colombia, becoming a global citizen requires more than speaking English or using technology; it means recognizing the wisdom embedded in the country's first peoples. Only by walking with them—not ahead or behind—can the nation offer a model of citizenship that is both inclusive and transformative.



SANTO DOMINGO BILINGUAL SCHOOL

# CREATIVE CORNER





# Cultivating Global Citizens through Social Studies: A Spiral Approach from Pre-Kindergarten to 12th Grade at Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe

Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe promotes global citizenship through a vertically integrated Social Studies curriculum, extending from Pre-Kindergarten to Twelfth Grade. Guided by Colombia's Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) standards, constructivist pedagogy, and global citizenship education, the school delivers a bilingual, interdisciplinary approach that fosters civic awareness, ethical reasoning, and international engagement. Through signature projects such as the United Nations Project, UN Peace Project, Design Your Own Country, and Model United Nations, students are empowered to become informed, active, and empathetic members of both local and global communities.

## The Role of the Social Studies Department: Foundations in Citizenship Education

At Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe, the Social Studies department plays a pivotal role in shaping reflective, bilingual citizens aligned with both national educational mandates and international values. Rooted in the MEN's guidelines for Social Sciences and Citizenship Education, the department implements a spiral curriculum that progressively deepens students' understanding of identity, community, rights, responsibility, and global interdependence. The bilingual nature of the school enriches this process by integrating cross-cultural perspectives and fostering fluency in discussing complex socio-political issues in both Spanish and English. This dual-language competency is essential for developing students' ability to navigate and contribute meaningfully to an interconnected world.

## Pre-Kindergarten to First Grade: Laying the Groundwork for Social and Civic Awareness

In the foundational years, children begin to develop a sense of self and community. In Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten, activities are designed to help students recognize the importance of care, respect, and cooperation. Through storytelling, role-play, and guided dialogue, learners explore values such as empathy, responsibility, and fairness. These early experiences are aligned with the MEN standards, which emphasize identity, emotional development, and social interaction.

By First Grade, the curriculum expands to include the recognition of basic rights and responsibilities. Students learn about family roles, classroom norms, and the importance of contributing to shared spaces. Bilingual instruction enhances their capacity to articulate feelings and opinions in both languages, setting the stage for deeper civic and cultural exploration in subsequent grades.



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## Second Grade: The United Nations Project—Understanding Roles and Duties in Community

In Second Grade, students participate in the United Nations Project, a signature initiative that enriches Social Studies learning by helping students understand their fundamental role within their immediate environment—home, family, and neighborhood. Greater emphasis is placed on the concept of duties, as students are taught that being part of a community involves responsibilities. Key values such as respect for classmates, care for personal belongings, participation in collective activities, and adherence to class rules are emphasized. These principles are reinforced through bilingual classroom activities that foster the internalization of honesty, solidarity, and tolerance—core values for building a peaceful and cooperative society.



### Third Grade: Children’s Rights and Community Engagement through the United Nations Project

The United Nations Project continues in Third Grade with a shift in focus toward the reinforcement of children’s rights. Students learn that every child, regardless of differences, has the right to be treated with respect, to express their thoughts, to receive an education, to play, and to live in a safe and healthy environment. These lessons are supported by dynamic, bilingual activities where learners identify real-life scenarios in which these rights are respected or violated. This approach fosters critical thinking and ethical reflection, reinforcing the students’ roles as responsible and empathetic community members. In this way, the project functions as a pedagogical bridge between individual experience and collective values, rooted in both national civic education and global human rights frameworks.



### Fourth Grade: The UN Peace Project—Fostering Empathy and Dialogue

The UN Peace Project in Fourth Grade marks a meaningful stage in students’ moral and civic development. This initiative introduces peace not merely as the absence of conflict but as a proactive, ethical commitment to respect, empathy, tolerance, and dialogue. Students explore what it means to be peacebuilders in their classrooms, families, and communities. Through discussions, collaborative tasks, and creative expression, they reflect on strategies for conflict resolution and inclusive coexistence. The project’s affiliation with the broader United Nations framework provides students with a sense of global connection and responsibility, reinforcing the belief that their voices and actions matter. This experience cultivates solidarity, justice, and an appreciation for diversity—essential attributes for global citizenship.



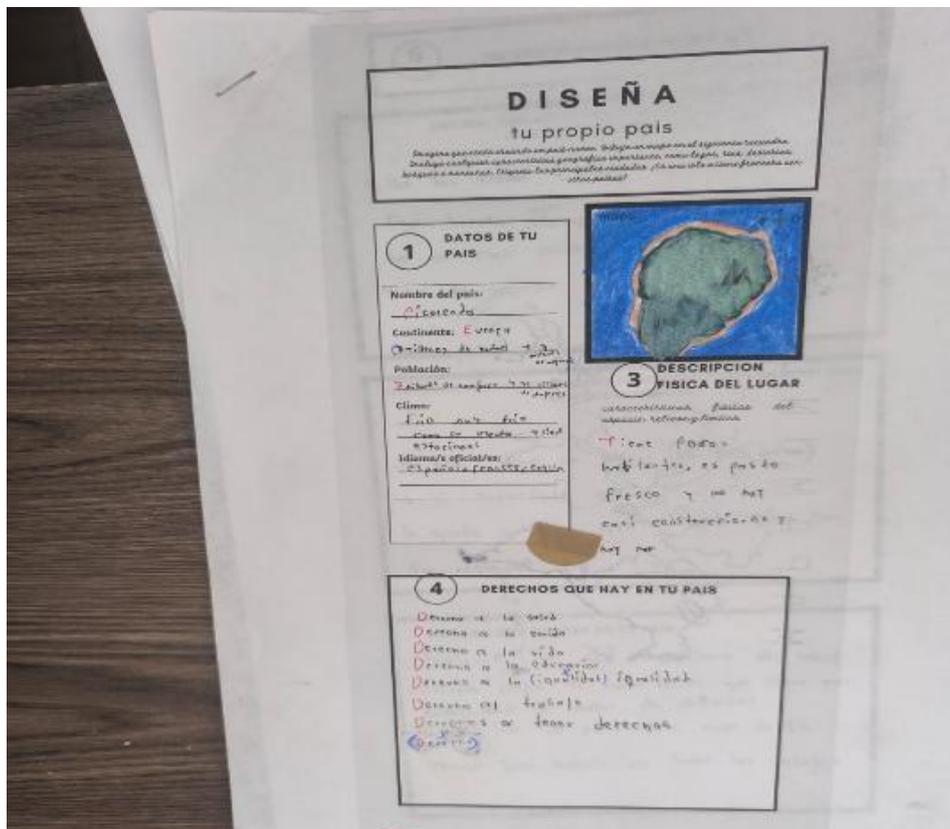
### Fifth Grade: Design Your Own Country—Civic Imagination and Constructivist Learning

In Fifth Grade, students engage in the innovative project Design Your Own Country, a constructivist simulation that integrates geography, political science, and citizenship education. Acting as founders of fictional nations, students apply spatial and legal concepts to design maps, develop laws, and establish governance systems. This hands-on, bilingual experience encourages critical thinking, creativity, and political reasoning. It aligns with John Dewey’s educational philosophy that “education is life itself,” offering students a dynamic platform to experience citizenship through creation. The project also reinforces ethical reasoning and collaborative skills, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical civic action.



## Sixth Grade: Deepening Civic Understanding through Geographical and Political Literacy

Building on the Fifth Grade experience, Sixth Grade students continue with the Design Your Own Country project, delving deeper into cartographic skills and civic systems. They create detailed maps that reflect their understanding of physical geography, including borders, water bodies, and urban planning. Simultaneously, they design legal and political structures that highlight citizen participation, rule of law, and human rights. Oral presentations in both English and Spanish enhance communication competencies and argumentation skills. This bilingual, interdisciplinary approach fosters democratic reasoning and instills values such as cooperation, responsibility, and civic-mindedness.



## Seventh Grade: Entering Global Arenas through Model United Nations

In Seventh Grade, students begin their journey with Model United Nations (MUN), an academic simulation that significantly elevates their global awareness. Through research and role-play, students represent assigned countries, exploring their geographic, political, and cultural realities. They learn to build diplomatic positions based on historical and contextual knowledge. The bilingual format of the MUN enhances their ability to articulate complex ideas and negotiate in multicultural settings. The experience strengthens critical thinking, intercultural sensitivity, and a sense of global responsibility, preparing them to engage constructively with international issues.



## Eighth Grade: Advancing Global Citizenship through Critical Engagement

Eighth Grade students continue with Model United Nations, focusing more deeply on the social and political contexts of their assigned countries. This year emphasizes ethical inquiry and global empathy, urging students to interpret global problems through diverse cultural lenses. Activities are conducted bilingually to sharpen communication skills and expand access to a wider range of global sources. This stage marks a transition from understanding to engagement, where students begin to see themselves not only as learners but as informed participants in the global community.



## Ninth Grade: Interdisciplinary Thinking and Conflict Analysis

In Ninth Grade, the Social Studies curriculum becomes increasingly interdisciplinary. Students explore the connections between historical development and scientific innovation through experiments related to the Industrial Revolution. This synthesis fosters an appreciation for how scientific advancements have shaped political, economic, and cultural change. Within the Model United Nations, students analyze the Russia–Ukraine conflict from a diplomatic and historical perspective. They examine causes, stakeholders, and potential resolutions using critical frameworks. This dual approach strengthens research, debate, and ethical evaluation skills while deepening students’ understanding of contemporary global affairs.



## Tenth Grade: Trade Wars and Global Complexity in MUN

In Tenth Grade, students engage with current global phenomena such as trade wars, particularly examining policies from the Trump administration, within the Model United Nations simulation. This activity requires students to assume the role of national delegates, defend policy positions, and evaluate the global implications of economic strategies. The experience cultivates an academic perspective grounded in political economy and international law, enhanced through bilingual research and discussion. Students develop a rigorous understanding of the interconnectedness of economic, political, and social systems, gaining the analytical tools necessary for responsible global citizenship.

## Eleventh Grade: Historical Consciousness and Ethical Action

Eleventh Grade learners are expected to think historically about the present, understanding how 20th-century events have shaped today’s world. This includes reflecting on patterns of injustice, resilience, and transformation. The curriculum emphasizes ethical action through analysis of political, economic, environmental, and social contexts, both nationally and globally. Students use their historical

insights to propose solutions to contemporary challenges. The bilingual classroom becomes a space for collaborative inquiry and critical dialogue, reinforcing democratic values and civic responsibility.

## Twelfth Grade: Synthesizing Learning for Global Citizenship

By Twelfth Grade, students are equipped to act as fully engaged global citizens. The Social Studies curriculum emphasizes responsibility, civic agency, and ethical judgment. Students formulate hypotheses, evaluate evidence, and construct well-supported arguments on issues of local and global significance. They collaborate in diverse teams, engage in reflective dialogue, and revise their perspectives based on new information. This capstone year aims to synthesize all prior learning experiences—from the United Nations Project to Model United Nations—into a coherent, actionable vision of social leadership. Students graduate not only as bilingual scholars but as citizens prepared to contribute meaningfully to a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe's Social Studies curriculum offers a powerful model of spiral, bilingual, and ethically grounded education. By aligning with Colombia's MEN standards and incorporating internationally recognized pedagogical frameworks, the school fosters an evolving practice of global citizenship. Through signature projects that grow in complexity and depth from Pre-Kindergarten to Twelfth Grade, students are guided to explore, reflect, and act. In doing so, they are not only prepared for academic success but empowered to shape the world around them with wisdom, empathy, and integrity.





SANTO DOMINGO BILINGUAL SCHOOL

# TRENDS & POP CULTURE



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# Upcoming Trends and Pop Culture Events in Bogotá for May 2025: A Guide for Youth, Teens, and Families.

## Upcoming Trends and Pop Culture Events in Bogotá for June and July: A Guide for Youth, Teens, and Families

### June Highlights

#### 1. Rock al Parque (June 21–23)

Latin America's largest free rock festival returns to Parque Simón Bolívar with over 50 bands—local, national, and international—performing diverse genres, from metal to punk and indie. Expect crowd-pleasers like La Pestilencia and international acts like Hypocrisy Ideal for teens and families seeking live energy and cultural immersion.



#### 2. Comic-Con Colombia (June 27–30)

Held at Corferias, this blockbuster convention will showcase panels, cosplay contests, indie creators, and pop culture exclusives. An immersive experience for comic fans, budding artists, and anyone intrigued by fandom culture ([tropicanafm.com](http://tropicanafm.com), [allevents.in](http://allevents.in)).



### 3. CREATE X & Andigráfica (June 11–13 | 17–20)

Two parallel fairs leading the charge in creative design, technology, and visual arts. Expect workshops, exhibitions, and dialogues about digital creation and innovation—perfect for youth and families curious about creative careers and digital media .

### 4. FIMA — Feria Internacional del Medio Ambiente (June 19–21)

This environmental fair at Corferias blends interactive installations, educational workshops, and eco-themed activities that are both fun and informative—ideal for eco-conscious families (allevents.in).

### 5. Pop Music Concerts

Catch live performances by emerging artists in Bogotá’s intimate venues. June 20–21 brings singer-songwriter Laura Pérez at Teatro Astor Plaza—perfect for teens seeking up-close, cultural musical experiences (shazam.com).



## July Highlights

### 6. “Viva la Salsa” Concert – Campín Stadium (July 4)

Legendary salsa icons such as Yiyo Sarante, David Pabón, and El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico will fill Campín Stadium with danceable rhythms—an uplifting night out for families, salsa lovers, and salsa-curious teens (tropicnafm.com).



## 7. “Conectando Corazones” Christian Music Concert – Campín (July 5)

A musical celebration featuring Alex Campos, Miel San Marcos, Redimi2, and more. Offering jams, worship, and family-friendly vibes, this multi-artist lineup is ideal for spiritual youth and their families ([tropicnafm.com](http://tropicnafm.com)).



## 8. Yeison Jiménez at Campín (July 26)

Colombian superstar Yeison Jiménez — performing on his birthday — will debut at Campín with two stages and intimate fan sections. A can't-miss concert for fans of popular Colombian music ([tropicnafm.com](http://tropicnafm.com)).

## 9. Monumentum – Plaza de Bolívar (July 5)

A dynamic cultural assemblage featuring multimedia art, dance, and performance in the city’s symbolic heart. Free and open to all, it’s a great midday cultural exploration for families .

## 10. Colombia al Parque (July – August)

A festive showcase of Colombian music, dance, and folklore, bringing together regional artists in a celebration of national identity and cultural pride. Family-friendly, energetic, and free to attend.



## 11. AgroExpo Bogotá (July 9–20)

Venture to Corferias to explore agriculture, rural traditions, livestock exhibitions, and interactive workshops—ideal for families and teens interested in rural innovation and Colombian countryside life ([allevents.in](http://allevents.in)).



## Event Calendar Snapshot

Date	Event	Best For
Jun 11–13	CREATE X & Comic–Con	Youth, Pop Culture Fans
Jun 17–20	Andigráfica	Artistic Teens
Jun 19–21	FIMA (Eco Fair)	Families, Eco-Kids
Jun 21–23	Rock al Parque	Teens, Families
Jul 4	Viva la Salsa	Families, All Ages
Jul 5	Conectando Corazones	Family, Teen Christians
Jul 5	Monumentum	Arts-Loving Families
Jul 9–20	AgroExpo Bogotá	Rural Interest Families
Jul–Aug	Colombia al Parque	All Ages
Jul 26	Yeison Jiménez Concert	Fans of Popular Music

## Tips for Families & Teens

- Plan ahead: Reserve tickets in advance for stadium concerts.
- Use public transport: Rock al Parque shuttles make commuting easier.
- Explore free festivals: Colombia al Parque and Monumentum require no tickets.
- Pack essentials: Bring water, sunscreen, and portable seats for outdoor events.
- Engage with culture: Workshops at Comic-Con and FIMA foster creativity, sustainability, and civic awareness.

Bogotá’s scene this June–July 2025 is bursting with diversity—from rock stages and salsa rhythms to eco-fairs and comic conventions. There’s something for every interest and age: teens rocking out, families dancing, aspiring artists learning. Don’t miss out on these vibrant moments in Bogotá’s rich cultural tapestry!



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# OPINION & DEBATE



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# Should AI Tools Like ChatGPT Be Allowed for Schoolwork?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT are transforming how students approach schoolwork. With just a few prompts, these tools can generate essays, explain complex topics, solve math problems, and even translate texts. But as AI becomes more integrated into education, a growing debate emerges: Should students be allowed to use tools like ChatGPT for their assignments?

## The Case FOR AI Tools in Schoolwork

### 1. A Powerful Learning Aid

AI can act like a 24/7 tutor, offering explanations on difficult subjects such as algebra, grammar, or chemistry. Students who struggle to get extra help outside class can use ChatGPT to reinforce their learning. For example, a student confused about Shakespeare can ask ChatGPT for a summary and explanation in simpler language, improving their understanding.

### 2. Enhancing Creativity and Expression

Rather than replacing original thinking, AI can serve as a brainstorming partner. If a student is stuck on how to begin an essay, ChatGPT can offer outline ideas, thesis suggestions, or vocabulary support. It's similar to using a dictionary or thesaurus—tools that expand creative expression rather than diminish it.

### 3. Preparing for the Future

AI will be a key part of many future careers. Allowing students to explore it responsibly gives them a head start in digital literacy. In the same way that calculators became acceptable tools in math after initial resistance, AI could become a normal part of academic life.

## The Case AGAINST AI Tools in Schoolwork

### 1. Risk of Academic Dishonesty

The most common concern is students submitting AI-generated work as their own. If an essay or report is written entirely by ChatGPT, the student isn't demonstrating personal understanding. This undermines the learning process and raises serious ethical concerns. Schools must ask: Is the student learning, or just copying?

### 2. Dependency and Skill Loss

When students rely too heavily on AI for writing or problem-solving, they risk losing core academic skills. For example, if ChatGPT solves all math word problems, students may never fully learn how to analyze and approach them independently. Over time, this can weaken critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

### 3. Unequal Access

Not all students have equal access to the internet or devices that can run AI tools. This creates an unfair advantage for those who do. Schools must consider whether

permitting AI use could widen the gap between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

### Finding a Balanced Approach

Rather than a simple yes or no, many educators advocate for **responsible use** of AI. This means teaching students *how* to use tools like ChatGPT for research, planning, and review—without allowing them to bypass the learning process. Just as plagiarism rules apply to copied material from books or the internet, similar guidelines can be adapted for AI-generated content.

Some schools are even incorporating AI literacy into the curriculum, helping students understand both its potential and its limitations.

The question of whether AI tools like ChatGPT should be allowed in schoolwork doesn't have an easy answer. Used wisely, these tools can enhance education. Used irresponsibly, they can weaken it. The key lies in **guidance, transparency, and a shared commitment** between teachers and students to use new technologies as allies in learning—not shortcuts around it.

**So, what do you think? Should ChatGPT be welcomed in the classroom or kept at bay?**





## Thank You for Reading Our Second Online School Magazine!

Dear Readers,

We are thrilled to welcome you to the **second edition** of our online school magazine! After the enthusiastic response to our first issue, we return with even more stories, projects, and reflections that celebrate the creativity, critical thinking, and bilingual identity that make Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe so special.

**First and foremost, thank you.** Your support and feedback on our inaugural edition inspired us to keep growing, dreaming, and sharing. This magazine is not just a platform—it's a collective voice for our school community, and your encouragement has given it strength and direction.

In this new edition, we continue our commitment to capturing the energy of our students and teachers through engaging content. From cultural events and academic initiatives to opinion pieces and creative works, this issue reflects the rich experiences and ideas shaping our school. Each article, photograph, and interview showcases the dynamic spirit of Santo Domingo Bilingüe—especially as we foster bilingual education, global awareness, and social responsibility from Pre-Kinder all the way through 12th grade.

As we prepare to enjoy the mid-year break, we want to take a moment to wish all of you a **safe, joyful, and restorative holiday season**. May this time be filled with rest, discovery, and time spent with loved ones. Whether you're reading this from home, traveling, or enjoying some quiet reflection, we hope our magazine accompanies you as a source of inspiration and pride.

Looking ahead, our editorial team is already working on ideas for the third edition—and we want *you* to be part of it. We invite all students, teachers, and families to continue contributing your voices, talents, and stories. This magazine grows stronger with each shared perspective, and we are excited to see what the next chapter will bring.

Thank you again for believing in this project, for reading, and for being part of the Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe family. We are proud to share this second edition with you—and even more proud to grow, learn, and create together.

**Happy holidays, and see you in our next issue!**

With appreciation and anticipation,  
**The Editorial Team**

With gratitude and anticipation,  
The Editorial Team of Global voices at Colegio Santo Domingo Bilingüe



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## Contact us

Thank you for engaging with our online magazine. We strive to foster an intellectually stimulating environment where diverse perspectives are welcomed and explored. Your thoughts, ideas, and critiques are not only appreciated but vital to the ongoing evolution of our platform. Please feel free to contact us at [globalvoices@colegiosantodomingo.edu.co](mailto:globalvoices@colegiosantodomingo.edu.co) with any comments, suggestions, or reflections you wish to share—we welcome your voice in this dialogue.



## EduPage

We encourage all students to actively participate by completing the assigned questions and surveys in EduPage. Your input plays a crucial role in shaping a more effective and responsive learning environment. By taking a few moments to share your thoughts and feedback, you contribute meaningfully to the ongoing improvement of our educational experience. Please log in to EduPage and complete the tasks at your earliest convenience—your voice matters.

