

# C.A.T.S.

**March 2010**  
**Honesty**



**Character Activities for**  
**Teachers and Students**

**Duval County Public Schools**  
**Jacksonville, Florida**

***“Character Education isn’t one more thing  
on your plate. It IS the plate!”***

**\*\*The Florida state legislature mandates the character traits that are covered each year.  
The order is consistent from year to year for ease of planning.**

# ***ADVERTISING WORKS!***

***How did YOUR school celebrate  
Charity in February?***



***Send photos and text about the character education program at  
your school to Deborah Hansen at [debrhan48@comcast.net](mailto:debrhan48@comcast.net).***

## March: Honesty

*Honesty: Uprightness and fairness, truthfulness, sincerity, frankness, freedom from deceit or fraud.*

Synonyms for honesty: *Integrity, rectitude, trustworthiness, candor, sincerity*

Antonyms for honesty: *Dishonesty, cheating, fraud, deception, lying*

**Children exhibit honesty when they:**

- \*\* tell the truth, even when it is difficult.**
- \*\* do not omit information that may be important to the task or issue at hand.**
- \*\* do not mislead people for personal benefit.**
- \*\* face up to their mistakes, even when they might have to face consequences for their actions.**



**Quote: “Truth is the most valuable thing we have, so I try to conserve it.” ~Mark Twain**

**Some books that focus on the trait of honesty are:**

***Books for Children:***

Brown, Marc. Arthur and the True Francine

Bennet, William J. Children's Book of Virtues

Scieszka, Jon. True Story of the Three Little Pigs

Avi, Night Journeys

***Books for Teens:***

Bauer, Joan. Hope Was Here

Shields, Carol. The Stone Diaries

Brink, C. Bad Times of Irma Baumlien

Collier, J. My Brother Sam Is Dead

***Further Reading on Teaching Honesty:***

Halberstam, Joshua. Everyday Ethics, Penguin Books, ISBN 0-670-84247-8, 1993

US Dept. of Education, Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen, pp. 3-5.  
Order free at [www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/edpubs.html](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/edpubs.html).

Dotson, Anne C. and Dotson, Karen D., Teaching Character: Parent Idea Book for Middle School Grades, pp. 18-19, 66-67, The Character Development Group, 1997. ISBN 0-9653163-5-1.

Brooks, B. David, Lessons in Character, pp. 3-11, Young People's Press, 1996. ISBN 1-57279-025-3.



# Building Kids of Character



## Teacher Tips/Honesty

Our dependence on technology in today's society, and many classrooms, has led to an epidemic of plagiarism.

Many students do not understand how to use the Internet (or any other sources) to research a topic without merely copying that research directly into their final product. It would be well-worth the time to instruct your students on this topic:

**\*\*Researching a topic on the Internet is simply gathering facts, opinions, sources, etc. from which to build a foundation for the student's final product (research paper, video, history/science fair project, etc.).**

**\*\*Those facts then need to be studied and considered by the student. Do the facts support the student's ideas about the topic? If so, how? If not, why not? What was learned through thinking about the facts?**

**\*\*The student should develop a rough outline of how to present what he/she has learned through the research.**

**\*\*Write a rough draft of the paper (or other presentation format), using one's own words. It is critical to teach students that they CANNOT merely copy the content from research notes! This is **plagiarism**, and it is against the law.**

**\*\*Make sure to provide a bibliography of the sources of the research. This is a way of giving credit to the people whose work and studies are providing the basis for one's paper, project, etc. (You may need to caution students to make note of all bibliographic information as they do all research. If they wait until they are ready to do the bibliography, they might not be able to find the source again!) It is also necessary so that your facts can be checked by the reader(s).**

# Parent Tips



Does a small lie matter if no one is hurt? Is it acceptable to lie in order to keep from hurting someone's feelings Can I tell my children to say they are younger to get a lower price?

These are the kinds of issues we face just getting from one end of the day to the other, aren't they? But it doesn't seem that we really think about the right things to do when we face these struggles. More often we operate on autopilot without much thought, following our routine paths of comfort.

Parents, however, have a sacred duty to teach their children what is right, not what is convenient or comfortable. It may be easier to do those things, but they aren't the honest things to do.

Here are some specifics to try this month with your family:

- You go first: Keep your promises; don't tell lies, and don't ask your kids to lie for you.
- Encourage your children to consider their promises carefully, both before and after they make them.
- Teach your children that borrowing and lending are important commitments that must be honored.
- Define cheating everyday as life happens around your family. Explain why it is wrong and teach your children to put themselves in the shoes of others before acting.
- Make telling the truth the only acceptable choice in your family. Convenience, comfort, and money should not enter the equation.

None of these things will happen unless adults first act as role models and then provide constant reinforcement as our families tackle the tough things that happen each day.

We currently exist in a crisis of trust in our country. The truth has become a commodity to be bought and sold, based on the short-term needs of whoever is speaking their convenient brand of "truth." It is no wonder so many of us have a hard time believing anyone about anything, from the person changing our oil to our politicians.

The only way to reverse this trend is one person at a time, beginning with ourselves and our children. If we ALL do that, we won't have a problem any longer, will we?

# Bully Proofing Your School



*Let's be honest with kids and help them deal with people who bully. When adults tell children things like:*

*\*\*Deal with it! I had to do it when I was younger. You can, too!*

*\*\*This will make you stronger.*

*\*\*Life is hard. You need to learn that now..*

*....we are not being honest with them. What we really are saying is that we are unwilling to help them. Sometimes, if we are honest with OURSELVES, it means that we agree with, and then become complicit in, the bullying behavior.*

*All elementary and middle schools have been provided the **Second Step Anti-Violence** curriculum and your school has a trained teacher, counselor, or administrator on the use of that material.*

*Do you know who that person is in your school? When you witness or become aware of bullying behavior, do you act or do you ignore or overlook it?*

*Current Florida law states that if you do nothing after becoming aware of bullying behavior, liability issues are possible for the school, the district, and/or you personally.*

***Has YOUR school been educated on Second Step?  
If not, why not?***

## **Welcome to Your** **Character Education Resources**

**Florida Statutes require that all schools in the state provide a character development program in all grades, K-12.**

**However, the most important reason for teaching children positive character is encompassed in our job as educators: To prepare our students to be positive, productive members of society.**

**The character traits for 2009-10 are as follows:**

- **August: Responsibility**
- **September: Respect for authority, life, liberty, and personal property.**
- **October: Cooperation**
- **November: Patriotism**
- **December: Kindness**
- **January: Racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance.**
- **February: Charity**
- **March: Honesty**
- **April: Self-control**
- **May: Citizenship: Living a life of character.**

**The DCPS district has supplied the schools with a diverse selection of materials to meet this mandate. The monthly newsletter can help you meet the requirement for character education through its tips for teachers and parents.**

**The elementary character education curriculum, *Mini-Lessons for Maximum Character*, is found on RiverDeep. (Please look under “Courses” under the Instructional Organizer tab.)**

**The secondary curriculum, *Connect with Kids*, is a complete set of lessons by trait, accompanied by video clips. Check in your media center.**

## Additional Resources



### Workshops:

- **Infusing character into your school climate and your classroom.**
- **Bully prevention through character development.**
- **Parents building kids of character (available to PTA and other parent groups).**
- **Early release mini-workshops on the above topics.**
- **Training for bus drivers using the Foundations model.**
- **Peer mediation programs/mediator training.**
- **Sessions for bus drivers that service your school! Put together a team to work cooperatively with the drivers.**

**Please call Deborah Hansen, Coordinator, at 904-568-0786 to discuss or schedule any of the above, or email her at [hansend2@duvalschools.org](mailto:hansend2@duvalschools.org).**



**Character libraries were purchased for every school in the district. These libraries consist of approximately 150 books of all genres and should be in your media center.**

**Use these books to support your “Book of the Month” program!**

**Contact Information:**  
**Deborah Hansen**  
**Coordinator, Character Education**  
**Duval County Public Schools**  
**Hansend2@duvalschools.org**

