

***C.A.T.S.***

***March 2011***  
***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.***

***Congratulations to Andrew Robinson Elementary  
and Arlington Middle for instituting a Peer  
Mediation program at their schools!***

***Peer Mediators at each school are now being trained  
and will help their peers resolve conflicts peacefully.***

***Peer mediation programs reduce fighting and  
bullying and show all students a better way to deal  
with conflicts they will face for the rest of their lives.***



***Interested? Call Deborah Hansen at 904-568-0786  
for more information.***

## **Honesty:**

*Truthfulness, sincerity, or frankness; freedom from deceit or fraud.*

*Synonyms for honesty: Sincerity, uprightness, equity.  
Antonyms for honesty: Deceit, fraud, artifice.*

*Children exhibit honesty when they:*

- \*\* don't lie.*
- \*\* tell the truth, even when it is difficult.*
- \*\* do what they say they will do.*
- \*\* build a good reputation.*
- \*\* stand by their family and friends.*



*“If it is not right, do not do it; if it is not true,  
do not say it.”*

*Marcus Aurelius*

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

***Elementary:***

- \*\*Berenstain Bears and the Truth, S. Berenstain***
- \*\*Swimmy, L. Lionni***
- \*\*Big Fat Enormous Lie, M. Sharmat***
- \*\*The Empty Pot, Demi***

***Secondary:***

- \*\* Hope Was Here, Joan Bauer***
- \*\*The Stone Diaries, Carol Shields***
- \*\* Nothing But the Truth, Avi***
- \*\* Bull Catcher, Alden Carter***



***Teacher Tips***



*From Mini-Lessons for Maximum Character, the DCPS adopted Character Education curriculum for elementary schools:*

*Honesty: "I Can Do This," p. 32, Principle Woods Celebrates Honesty, (found in your school media center):*

*Mini-lesson: Compare/Contrast:*

*When we compare, we look at the things that are the same between two items. When we contrast, we look at the things that are different.*

*Make a chart with a line drawn down the middle from top to bottom. Label one half COMPARE and the other CONTRAST.*

*Discuss a few examples with the students: Compare/contrast the cafeteria and their classroom, a computer and a television, etc.*

*Read the story to the students, showing the pictures. Fill out the chart as you compare/contrast the story's characters.*

*Discuss honesty in the context of the story. Ask students what they think honesty means. Let them provide examples.*

*Ask them if Tipper was honest? Why not?*

## **Secondary Level:**

*Honesty goals for teens:*

*Avoiding the temptation to mislead others.*

*Presenting accurate and factual information.  
Accepting responsibility for one's actions.  
Viewing media in a critical manner in order to  
discern the truth.*

*Lesson: 20/20 Vision: (This lesson is from Connect with Kids, the DCPS-adopted Character Education curriculum for grades 6-12.)*

*Students will be able to:*

*Discuss the importance of honesty.*

*Recognize the feelings associate with dishonesty.*

*Compose a journal entry detailing a dishonest action.*

*Create honest and dishonest resolutions for real-life situations.*

*Ask students to write a journal entry about a time in their lives when they were dishonest. They should include details of the situation, including why they were dishonest and their feelings about the dishonesty. Ask them to include how they might handle the situation differently if given the opportunity.*

*Pass out an index card to each student, on which they will summarize their journal entry into 2-3 sentences. They should NOT offer any resolution to the situation, and they should NOT put their names on their cards.*

*Collect the cards. Read the first card, asking students to provide two possible resolutions to the situation. One should be an honest resolution and one should be a dishonest resolution.*

*Continue until you run out of cards (or time).*

*An alternate method could be to read one card per day to stimulate on-going discussion and focus on the trait of honesty.*

*Parent Tips*

*No such thing as a man willing to be honest -- that would be like a blind man willing to see.*

*F. Scott Fitzgerald*

*Let's be honest about honesty. We parrot the time-honored maxim that "honesty is the best policy" or rely on the teachings of a faith group, but we aren't very specific beyond that. Honesty is often difficult. It's frequently uncomfortable. And sometimes it even costs us more money. So, are we honest or do we just want to be honest?*

*We are each faced with numerous instances every day in which we have a choice: Should I be honest or should I not rock the boat? Will other people condemn me, ridicule me, or become angry with me because I am honest? What are the stakes in each situation....or should it matter? If WE have these questions, can you imagine what it is like for young people?*

*As Fitzgerald points out in the quote above, we either are or we're not. We can't simply want to be honest without the follow through to be honest. A blind man cannot will himself to see.....he either sees or he doesn't. Where does this leave our kids, if we don't provide them with a map of life that includes roadblocks they will certainly face?*

*The first lesson is that our friends and coworkers often won't understand our need to operate from a foundation of honesty, and that's OK. We have to resign ourselves that we often won't be the most popular person around when we're honest. But we also must put our families in the context of the larger society. What we do affects other people.*

*We'll start with some easy questions from our kids and then get more difficult:*

*"What do I say when my friend asks me if something looks good when it doesn't?" Opinions differ widely about everything, so let the person know you support their choices no matter what. It might not be your personal favorite but that really isn't important, is it? You care for them, no matter what they're wearing.*

*"I can get in for a child's ticket even if I am really too old. Why should I pay full price?" If everyone in that category did it, the financial impact would be huge and we would all pay more for our tickets, kids and adults alike. What one of us does impacts all of us.*

*"My best friend wants to copy my homework. What's the big deal?" You'll be glad to help them work on the homework. Copying yours isn't practical in the scheme of learning the concepts that they'll need for future tests, etc. Maybe they need help organizing their work so it gets done on time. If you took the time to do the work, why should you allow them to hijack it?*

*"I found a wallet in the grocery store. Why shouldn't I keep it?" Think about what it feels like to lose something of value. What would you want someone to do if they found it? The money in the wallet may be the only money*

*the person who lost the wallet has for food or to pay the electric bill so they will have heat for their family.*

*“Our neighbor yelled at me about making so much noise playing basketball in our yard. Who does he think he is?” We simply must teach our children to deal with everyday conflict in a peaceful, respectful way. This means calming down and then walking next door and asking the neighbor to sit and figure out a way together to resolve the issue of noise and still allow your child his basketball time. Your children must see you do this in order for them to do it in the future. It isn’t honest to ignore one another’s needs. Facing our problems, including problem people, keeps issues from festering and then exploding.*

*Is it honest to let our children believe that the world will bow to their immediate gratification and short-term desires? Of course not. But the alternative dictates that parents actively teach children how to be honest and then how to deal with the consequences of their honesty.*

*We must not simply WILL them to be honest. We must teach them how to BE honest.*



## **Bully Proofing Your School**



*Teachers are often concerned that they will not act appropriately when they witness or are made aware of bullying behavior.*

*According to the Committee for Children, which provides the DCPS-adopted violence/bully prevention curriculum **Second Step**, adults should use the **Four-A** response:*

*Affirm the student's feelings: Teachers can respond with "You did the right thing by coming to me" or "Thanks for telling me." We can also reassure students by addressing feelings they are displaying, such as "I can see you are upset about this" or "This must be frightening to you." Use eye contact. Assume a friendly, supportive tone of voice. Smile. Show interest and concern.*

*Ask Questions. Gather information.*

*"Who was involved?"*

*"When did it happen?"*

*"Where did it happen?"*

*"Has it happened before?"*

*"What have you tried to do to stop it in the past?"*

*Assess the student's safety. We need to think about the safety needs of the student who came to you for help. Is the bullying still happening? If the student is a bystander, is he or she concerned that they bullying might extend to him or her? If the student who was bullied came to you for support, he/she might fear revenge. Could the bullying extend into the classroom, bus, lunchroom, etc?*

*Talk with the student about what he/she thinks is necessary for their safety. Perhaps the targeted student should be picked up from school or should walk home with a friend. Asking the student when and where the bullying has happened before is useful for assessing the severity of the situation.*

*Act. We need to take action soon—ideally within 24 hours. The first part of this step involved passing off the initial report to the designated person at your school for these reports. They will then follow up.*

*It is critical that we ACT quickly. We MUST ensure that our students are safe in the moment, until this follow-up can occur.*

*The DCPS provides forms on their website for reporting bullying situations. These forms can be used by both DCPS employees and the general public. Click this link:*

*<http://www.duvalschools.org/static/aboutdcps/departments/acadprog/health/bullying.asp>*

*It is NEVER responsible behavior to ignore bullying or tell a student that you are too busy to listen to their requests for help. For any reason. Our first concern must ALWAYS be for the safety of the children entrusted to us every day!*



*Welcome to Your Resources  
for Character Education in Duval County Public Schools.*

*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 2010-11 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:***

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

*Please call **Deborah Hansen, Coordinator**, at **904-568-0786** to discuss or schedule any of the above, or email her at [debrhan48@comcast.net](mailto:debrhan48@comcast.net)*



*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:*

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