

C.A.T.S.

August 2009



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.*

Welcome to Your Resource **For Character Education**

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.**

Please call [Deborah Hansen, Coordinator](tel:904-568-0786), at 904-568-0786 to discuss or schedule any of the above, or email her at 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!

August:

Responsibility: *The basis of a good year.*

****Responsibility refers to an obligation of some kind.**

****To be responsible means that people can rely on you to do the right things.**

Children demonstrate responsibility by:

- 1. being on time.**
- 2. having their work done to the best of their abilities.**
- 3. being someone that others can depend on.**
- 4. doing the right thing regardless of what others are doing.**
- 5. telling the truth.**
- 6. facing their duties even when it's not fun.**

Responsibility Quote:

“You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of.”

***Jim Rohn,
American speaker and author***

**Activity Idea: Who is Jim Rohn?
Why is this topic important to him?**

Building Kids of Character



Teacher Tips

Those of you who follow this newsletter are familiar with the **STAR** method of decision making.

What better way to start out the new school year? Teach your students to take responsibility for their decision-making:

STOP long enough to think about their decisions, both large and small....every day.

THINK about the choices they have available in those decisions, AND to consider the consequences that might occur. Then they must be responsible enough to *make a choice*.

ACT on their choice.

REVIEW what happened. Did their action help them reach their goals? How did their actions affect those around them? Would they make the same choice again? Did they take responsibility for the results of their decision?

Work with them to practice this method on a daily basis as they tackle their lessons and as they learn to work together in the community of your classroom.

What a gift you will be giving them....a gift for life.

From: Lessons in Character, by Dr. B. David Brooks, Young People's Press,
www.youngpeoplespress.com.

Parent Tips

“The central struggle of parenthood is to let our hopes for our children outweigh our fears.”

Ellen Goodman



- Consider developing a family “rule book,” which outlines what’s expected by all family members. This could cover areas such as meal times, homework, family activities/time/days, bedtime, TV/video games, etc. People who understand the world of rules and procedures become positive members of society as a whole, with a sense of responsibility to that world.
- Parents must take responsibility for knowing what their children are doing, and then exercise parental control when necessary. Don’t be afraid to ask questions, but more importantly, listen to the answers! Then be prepared to act if necessary.
- Many parents are successful at work, but then they leave those skills in the office at the end of their day. Those same tactics can be used at home to lead your family. Pay attention to your children, just as you pay attention to your co-workers. Be available to your family instead of seeing time at home as your “downtime.”
- Related to that, use your scant resources effectively, especially your time. If you are spending huge chunks of your time watching television or on the computer, consider diverting that time to building relationships with your children. If you are spending large amounts of money on hobbies for yourself, think about using some of those funds for family activities, with the children taking some responsibility for deciding how the money is spent.
- Children need to be given real responsibility at age-appropriate intervals from an early age. They need to have an obligation for their possessions, home and schoolwork, their personal grooming and clothes, and earning money as they develop. But more importantly, they need to learn to care for others and come to an understanding that they are making some tangible contribution to the welfare of others.

Bully Proofing Your School



Second Step: Train-the-Trainer

**Elementary Training for School Teams:
One teacher per grade level.**

Guidance counselors and Media Specialists are also invited.

**Dates: Sept. 21, 24, 29
Oct. 13, 20, 27**

**Middle School dates:
Sept. 11 and Oct. 8**

**Schultz Center
8 AM – 3 PM**

**Email Angela Turk at turka@duvalschools.org
for more information.**

***“Averting war is the work of politicians;
establishing peace is the work of education.”***

Maria Montessori

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**How is YOUR school building kids of character?
Send your class/school photos for publication in this
newsletter!**

