

C.A.T.S.

October 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.*

C.A.T.S at work!

Teachers from Enterprise Learning Academy sent in the following.....

This past week, we began our book of the month with a character trait study. Students identified with one character's attributes and colored one of Covey's coloring pages. To extend, we discussed synergizing with our students and worked as a team this week to make a puzzle out of Covey's artwork. Today, we discussed how WE synergize and read a chapter of the book of the month.

This brings us to our competition where students worked together (synergized) to put together the opposite team's puzzle. Our students have worked on non verbal communication during a game called mum ball. We used this non verbal communication to put together each others puzzles. We celebrated the day with ice pops together as we shared stories and laughter as new friends from opposite teams.



Congratulations to students and teachers at Enterprise Learning Academy for a great character development project!

Submit YOUR projects to D. Hansen at hansend2@duvalschools.org.

National Character Education/ Life Skills Standards

www.character.org

Many of you have asked for standards for Character Education for bulletin boards and documentation in lesson plans.



Self-Regulation

Standard 1: Set and Manage Goals

Standard 2: Perform self-appraisal

Standard 3: Consider risks

Standard 4: Demonstrate perseverance

Standard 5: Maintain a healthy self-concept

Standard 6: Restrain impulsivity

Thinking and Reasoning

Standard 1: Understand and apply the basic principles of presenting an argument

Standard 2: Understand and apply basic principles of logic and reasoning

Standard 3: Effectively use mental processes that are based on identifying similarities and differences

Standard 4: Displays effective interpersonal communication skills

Standard 5: Apply basic trouble-shooting and problem solving techniques

Standard 6: Apply decision-making techniques

Working with Others

Standard 1: Contribute to the overall effort of a group

Standard 2: Use conflict-resolution techniques

Standard 3: Work well with diverse individuals and in diverse situations

Standard 4: Display effective interpersonal communication skills

Standard 5: Demonstrate leadership skills

October:

Cooperation: Working or acting together for a common purpose or benefit; joint action.

****To be cooperative means that you are willing to work with one or more people to achieve a common goal, even if you must give up some or all of your ideas in order to reach that goal.**

Children demonstrate cooperation by:

- 1. working well with others.**
- 2. offering to help.**
- 3. following through on projects with others.**
- 4. taking the lead when it is necessary.**
- 5. showing appreciation for the contributions of others.**

Cooperation Quote:

“It takes two wings to fly.”

Eric Schaub

Activity Suggestion:

Elementary: Ask students to write a story illustrating the quote.

Secondary: Ask students to incorporate the five qualities of a cooperative person into a story illustrating the quote.

Building Kids of Character



Teacher Tips

Cooperative classrooms are an effective way to teach students how to be successful in a community setting.

The teacher's role changes from that of

- * dispensing information
- * performing for and entertaining passive students
- * rewarding and punishing
- * preparing for standardized tests
- * grading for student recall
- * emphasizing teacher-student and student-material interaction

to

- * teaching students how to learn
- * developing student cooperation and responsibility
- * promoting active learning
- * facilitating student self-evaluation
- * motivating higher level thinking
- * building group skills

This certainly is not easy, especially with all the demands placed on educators. However, the time spent to teach your students to work and learn cooperatively will ultimately make your job easier, and will impart valuable skills to young people for the rest of their lives.

“It is through cooperation, rather than conflict, that your greatest successes will be derived.”

Ralph Charell

Parent Tips

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

Ellen Goodman



Cooperation is one of the cornerstones of people living in community, and is certainly an absolute requirement in a democratic form of government. We live in groups of various sizes and complexity, many of them overlapping at any one time, all of which require consideration for others in those groups. It's not difficult to see how road rage can happen in situations like the one I experienced, all because someone doesn't think it's important to cooperate with others on the highway, or in the grocery store, or in the workplace. Their needs are somehow more important than everyone else's.

Parents need to be “on stage” whenever their children are nearby. Let's take a look at some lessons in cooperation:

- We can get our children to cooperate by offering choices in age-appropriate ways. This gives kids the feeling that they have some control over their lives, which makes them more willing to comply. Parents win, too, when they only offer choices that meet their approval. As young people mature, they will learn to make difficult choices more successfully, because they've had practice.
- Talk to your children about situations in which we all must cooperate in order to live in an orderly, safe world. When you are irritated at someone's slower pace, for example, identify that emotion for your children and model positive behavior. By showing them that you aren't perfect, your children can become part of the solution.
- Disagreements are a normal part of life in any community. Show your children how to resolve these conflicts in your neighborhoods in positive ways as they arise. Shouting at one another about a problem across or through fences, sabotaging neighbors or getting involved in physical confrontations is merely teaching children to be bullies.
- Use television and movies as fodder for discussion in your home. Point out “non-examples” of cooperation among individuals, communities, and even countries. Discuss how things could have been handled differently in a more cooperative manner.
- Bottom line, cooperation is about sharing: sharing time, resources, and space. Children can be taught this concept from a very early age, and parents must model it to reinforce the message. We can't say one thing to our children, and then violate that same lesson when it suits us in the moment.

Bully Proofing Your School



October is National Mediation Month!

Taking the time to organize a peer mediation program at your school is a gift you give your students and your school. It will also reduce bullying!

Peer mediators learn to help other students resolve their conflicts peacefully, a process that helps everyone involved. Students also become more engaged in their school, which encourages them to speak up when they see or otherwise become aware of bullying behavior.

Some things to think about as you plan your program:

- * How will you identify students to be trained as mediators?**
- * Who will train the group you choose?**
- * When will mediations be done? Where will they be done?**
- * How will the faculty and staff support the peer mediators and the sponsors?**

All schools have received materials from the Peace Education Foundation on conflict resolution and peer mediation. Make use of these books to help teach your students how to solve their conflicts peacefully as well as how to teach young people mediation skills.

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](mailto:hansend2@duvalschools.org), 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!

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

