

C.A.T.S.

February 2009
Respect and Tolerance



**Character *A*ctivities for
*T*eachers and *S*tudents**

Duval County Public Schools
Jacksonville, Florida

*“To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a
menace to society.”*

Theodore Roosevelt

*****The Florida state legislature mandates the character traits that are covered each year.***

Principals and Teachers!

The state legislature has adopted a revised list of character traits.

These will be instituted as of the 2009-10 school year, 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.**

We are providing this list to you now for your planning purposes for the 2009-10 school year.

February:

****Respect is the state of being regarded with honor or esteem; the willingness to show consideration or appreciation.**

****Tolerance is a fair and objective attitude toward opinions and practices that are different from one's own.**

Children demonstrate respect and tolerance by:

- 1. being polite to others, even those they don't know.**
- 2. listening to authority figures.**
- 3. following the rules, even when they don't like them or think they are "fair."**
- 4. refusing to follow the crowd when others are being bullied or teased.**
- 5. using peaceful ways to resolve conflicts.**
- 6. following the Golden Rule: Treat others as you would like to be treated.**

Quote of the Month:

"We must build a new world, a far better world—one in which the eternal dignity of man is respected."

Harry Truman

Building Kids of Character



Teacher Tips

Inserting character content into your required academic standards is not difficult. Many teachers do this as a matter of course, so all that is necessary to meet the state mandate for character education is to become more consistent and then documenting your efforts in your lesson plans.

For example:

This month's character traits are respect and tolerance. As a required writing assignment in language arts, choose your topic(s) to satisfy standards both for writing and for character development:

- * Do you believe that respect must be earned?**
- * Is honesty ALWAYS the best policy?**
- * Your friends are making fun of a new student who is from another country. What could you do to handle this situation respectfully and with tolerance for the new student?**
- * Should high school students be required to complete community service hours in order to graduate?**
- * Your best friend is always getting into fights with other students at school. What advice could you give your friend to help him/her get along better with others?**

Use your regular rubric to assess the written portion of the assignment. Then engage students in a character-based discussion about the topic itself.

This can be done in every academic content area with creativity and intent to accomplish more in ever decreasing time during a typical school day.

Parent Tips

Research shows that children learn respect by being treated respectfully themselves. As parents, we must be watchful for the following things in our own behavior:

- *Do we praise our children? Or do we only criticize?
- *Do we allow our children to have their own opinions? Or do we ridicule the things our children say?
- *Do we speak with respect to those around us, including our children? Or do we show respect only to those who we feel are useful to us in some way?
- *Do we practice peaceful ways of resolving conflicts? Or do we scream, yell, hit, and engage in other violent behavior when we are angry or frustrated?
- *Do we honor our own valued traditions and those of others? Or do we assume our children know these traditions? Do we make fun of others who dress and speak differently?
- *Do we talk to our children about justice and morality? Or do we leave that to others?
- *Do we educate ourselves about issues in our communities and try to help when possible? Or do we merely complain and expect “them” to take care of the problems?

Dr. Thomas Lickona, in his book Raising Good Children, states that parents can develop children’s respect for their own rights and dignity by **“encouraging them to speak their minds, allowing them the independence they need to become their own persons, and using our parental authority in a fair and reasonable way.”**

“In the final analysis it is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings.” Ann Landers

Bully Proofing Your School



Newsletters: Insert a message about your school's bully prevention efforts in every school newsletter. Remember: People need to see a message multiple times before they notice it, so don't use one edition and expect everyone to make note of it.

Also, ask for help from parent and community volunteers via your newsletter.

Ask the PTA or PTO to insert the messages in their newsletters, too.

Morning Announcement: Be smart with your time. Use your morning announcements to students to combine a motivational, character, and anti-bullying message.

Billboards and Marguee Signs: Put the above message on signs outside the building, too. Let parents and the community know that your school is a "Bully Free Zone."

Involve and Engage Students: Bring your students into the planning of your school's bully prevention efforts. They can plan programs to teach their peers and younger students about the dangers of bullying, write press releases to spread the word

to the community, invite parents to short presentations about the program.

Character Resources Available in the Duval County Public Schools

Elementary Curriculum: *“Mini-lessons for Maximum Character.”* Can be found in school media centers.

Secondary Curriculum: *“Connect with Kids,”* including *“Grab and Go”* mini-lessons. Can be found in media centers.

Character libraries were purchased for every school. Check with your media specialist for location. Great for use with “Book of the Month.”

Anti-Bullying Curriculum:

K-8: “Second Step.” Coming soon!

High School: Call 390-2131 to schedule.

Trainings for faculty and staff, as well as parent programs, are available upon request!

If you would like information on how to start a peer mediation program at your school or any of the resources listed above, call Deborah Hansen at 568-0786.

2008-09 Character Traits by Month:



August:	Responsibility/Attentiveness
September:	Citizenship/Cooperation
October:	Fairness
November:	Patriotism
December:	Kindness/Caring
January:	Courage/Initiative
February:	Respect/Tolerance
March:	Honesty/Trustworthiness
April:	Self-Control
May:	Patience

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