

# C.A.T.S.

September 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.***

## September:

*Respect: For Authority, life, liberty, and personal property.*

**\*\*Respect means “the condition of being esteemed (held in high regard) or honored.”**

**\*\*To be respectful means that you treat people, as well as property, with care; you act with concern toward others’ well-being.**

**Children demonstrate respect by:**

- 1. being thoughtful in their actions toward others and toward property.**
- 2. listening to others when they speak.  
Waiting their turn to talk; not interrupting.**
- 3. being careful with their own and others’ property.**
- 4. recognizing the authority of parents, teachers, and others in positions of authority. Following the rules at school, at home, and in the community.**
- 5. recognizing the rights and value of others.**

### ***Respect Quote:***

***“We must build a new world, a far better world - one in which the eternal dignity of man is respected.”***

***Harry S. Truman, former US President***

***Activity Suggestion: What did Truman mean by “eternal dignity” in the above quote? How do we treat each other with “eternal dignity”?***

# Building Kids of Character



## Teacher Tips

**The art of civil discussion is in jeopardy today. Teach the skills of conversation and debate in your classroom.**

**Offer a topic for discussion or ask your students to generate a topic in which they are interested. Divide the class into sections, giving each a chance to research a particular stance on the topic.**

**Give each section a chance to present their stance. Direct those listening to make notes on questions they want to ask at the end of the presentation. Allow students to raise their questions at that time, showing respect to the others in the classroom. No name calling, screaming, or put-downs allowed!**

**Give the presenting group time to respond or do further research if necessary to answer the questions.**

**Allow others to give their opinions on the topic at the end of all presentations, again showing respect to their classmates.**

**It is critical to teach young people to respectfully disagree. We are seeing “non-examples” in the news every day. Children must be taught that respectful discourse is a hallmark of democracy.**

## Parent Tips

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

*Ellen Goodman*



- Babies are too young to show respect but when we meet their needs, they learn trust. Respect for authority rests on trust.
- Toddlers are sponges that can learn manners and the beginnings of a code of civility, something sadly lacking in the world today. Teaching them to use basic courtesies like “Please” and “thank you” are a start.
- Preschoolers can be introduced to the concepts of rules and consequences for breaking rules.
- During the elementary school ages children can help make the rules, which then gives them a stake in following those rules. This reinforces respect for authority.
- Middle and high school students are all about independence and parents can allow them to show this trait in clothes and hairstyles, for example, as long as there are guidelines. They will appreciate the fact that parents show enough respect to allow some latitude in these areas, and thus the cycle of respect for one another is further reinforced.

Many parents erroneously feel that they give up their authority by showing respect to their children. However, a child’s future will be defined by the ability and willingness of his or her parents to understand the difference between respect and obedience. One is based on fear while the other is based on the willingness to listen to one another and then move forward as a family, with the parents firmly in charge. But in the larger sense, we all would do well to consider our neighbors as essential pieces of the puzzle of the global community we call home.

# Bully Proofing Your School



## **Our School Is a Place Where.....**

- We don't all have to be the same.
- We don't all have to think the same.
  - We don't all have to act the same.
  - We don't all have to talk the same.
  - We don't all have to dress the same.
- We don't all have to believe the same things.
  - We have the right to be ourselves.
  - We like it that people are different.
- We know that our differences make us interesting and unique.
- We honor different ways of being, acting, and believing—even when we don't agree with them.
  - We do our best to solve problems peacefully.
  - We speak up if we see others being treated unfairly.
- We treat each other the way we would like to be treated.

***WE TREAT EACH OTHER WITH  
RESPECT!***

Adapted from The Bully Free Classroom, by Allan L. Beane, PH.D.

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

