



PSO Rafael Diaz J.D.

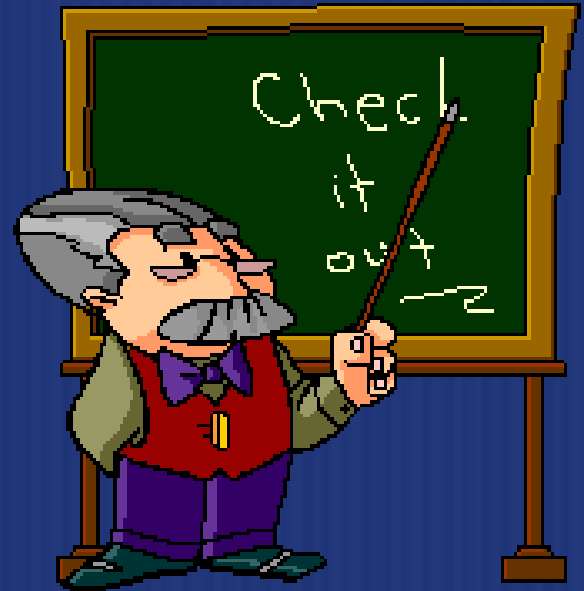
Presents

Character Counts

What lies behind us and what lies before us are
tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

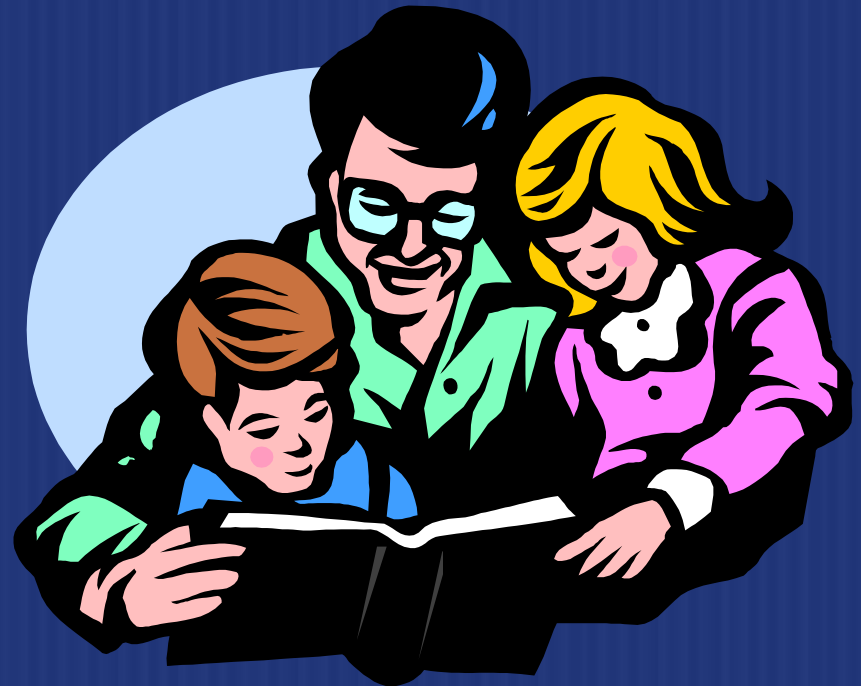
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Teaching Character



Why Be Concerned About Character?

Because we care about kids and the lives they will lead.



Things We Need to Know About Youth

“

An increasing proportion of young people are growing up without a firm understanding of commitment to the core ethical values needed to inform and energize the conscience.

As a result, they lack internal mechanisms to help them know right from wrong and to generate the will power to exercise self-control and consistently do what is right.

— *Michael Josephson*

”

The “I Deserve It” Generation



- A large segment of young people can be described as the “I Deserve It” (IDI) generation whose IDI-ology is preoccupied with personal needs, wants, don’t wants, rights and entitlements.
- The IDI worldview results in a greater willingness to ignore traditional ethical restraints in the pursuit of personal goals.

Our Students Are at Risk

Youth violence

- 29% believe it is sometimes OK to hit or threaten a person who makes them angry (37% of males, 20% of females).
- 54% said they had hit a person in the last 12 months because they were angry (60% of males, 49% of females).

— Josephson Institute of Ethics
2008 Report Card
Survey of 29,000 high school students



Our Students Are at Risk

Drug abuse

- 33% used an illicit drug at least once in the previous 12 months

Alcohol abuse

- 76% admitted they drank alcohol (beer, liquor or wine) in the past 12 months.
- 23% say they've been under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at school in the last year.

— Josephson Institute of Ethics
2008 Report Card (Survey of 29,000 high school students)

Our Students Are at Risk

- **Lying** – 82% lied to a parent about something significant within the past 12 months. (55% lied 2 or more times.)
- **Cheating** – 64% admitted to cheating during a test at school within past year.
- **Stealing** – 30% admitted they stole something from a store within the past 12 months.

— Josephson Institute of Ethics
2008 Report Card (Survey of 29,000 high school students)

Our Students Are at Risk

Teen Pregnancy

**In 2002, there were 425,293
births to 15- to 19-year-olds.
80% of the mothers were
unwed.**

— Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *National Vital
Statistics
Reports*, December 17, 2003





Good Character Should be Conscientiously Promoted



Good character is needed to help us overcome pressures and temptations to sacrifice goodness to achieve happiness and success.



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Implementing CHARACTER COUNTS!
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CHARACTERCOUNTS!

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People do not automatically develop good moral character; therefore, conscientious efforts must be made to instruct young people in the values and abilities necessary for moral decision making and conduct.

— *Aspen Declaration, 1992*

”

Character-Building Begins at Home



CHARACTER COUNTS! programs are designed to supplement and enhance, not substitute for, family efforts to instill positive ethical values and good character.

What Do You Want Most for Your Students?

Leprechaun Test

If you saved the life of a leprechaun and he granted you one wish for your students, what would you choose?

- Enormous wealth
- Fabulous good looks
- Superb athletic ability
- Great fame
- Genuine happiness



Leprechaun Test

Okay, the leprechaun says, pick the quality you think is most likely to produce genuine happiness:

- Enormous wealth
- Fabulous good looks
- Superb athletic ability
- Great fame
- Deep and enduring personal relationships



Leprechaun Test

Finally, he says, then you pick the quality most likely to produce deep and enduring personal relationships.

- Enormous wealth
- Fabulous good looks
- Superb athletic ability
- Great fame
- Good character – trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship



Leprechaun Test

Before you decide, think about this: Can you imagine having a deep and enduring personal relationship with someone who:

- **You cannot trust?**
- **Does not treat you with respect?**
- **You can't count on because he/she is irresponsible?**
- **Is consistently unfair?**
- **Is totally selfish; never thinks of others?**



Leprechaun Lesson

- Having meaningful and enduring personal relationships is the surest road to happiness and having good character is the surest road to good relationships.
- Therefore, good character is the surest road to happiness.



What is Ethics?

Two Aspects of Ethics

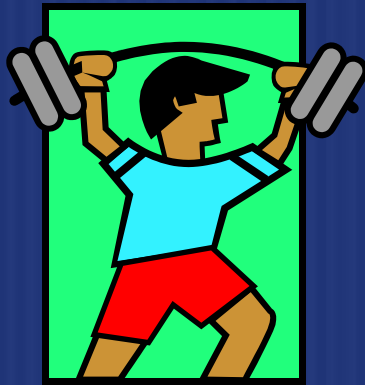
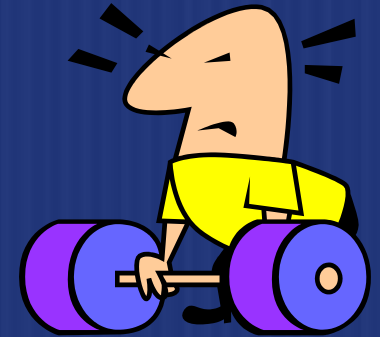
DISCERNMENT

**Ability to discern
right from wrong,
good from evil
and propriety
from impropriety**

DISCIPLINE

**Will power and
discipline to do
what is right,
regardless of
temptations and
pressures to do
otherwise**

Ethics is not about the way things are.



It's about the way they ought to be.

Looking at your students, what behaviors and attitudes would you like to see more of and less of?



Top 10 things teachers (and parents) want to see:

Responsibility

- 1. More doing chores/homework without reminding
- 2. More being accountable for actions and inactions
- 3. Less drinking and drugs
- 4. More responsible attitudes about sex

Respect

- 5. More regard for proper authority; no back talking
- 6. Less put downs, taunting, exclusionary cliques.
- 7. Less fighting, bullying, and physical violence
- 8. More toleration/appreciation of people and opinions
- 9. More civility, politeness and courtesy

Trustworthiness

- 10. More honesty; less lying and cheating



How Do We Instill Values in Students?

T.E.A.M.

**Teach
Enforce
Advocate
Model**

Teach

- Explain that success and happiness depend on who you are inside.
- Teach the difference between right and wrong using the Six Pillars of Character as your guide.



Enforce

- Praise good behavior.
- Discourage bad behavior.
- Impose fair and consistent consequences – even when difficult or costly to do so – and follow through.



Advocate

- Encourage your students to live up to the Six Pillars of Character – everywhere, all the time!
- Tell stories of people you know who have acted with character.



Model

- **Ensure that your own behavior sends the right messages and reinforces the right thing.**
- **Be accountable.**



The Six Pillars of Character

CHARACTER COUNTS! Is a Framework Based on the “Six Pillars of Character” . . .





Six Pillars of Character

TRUSTWORTHINESS – integrity, honesty, promise-keeping, loyalty.

RESPECT – courtesy, autonomy, diversity, Golden Rule

RESPONSIBILITY – duty, accountability, pursuit of excellence

FAIRNESS – openness, consistency, impartiality

CARING – kindness, compassion, empathy

CITIZENSHIP – lawfulness, common good, environment



Trustworthiness Discussion Topics



- Name a specific time this week when you kept a promise.
- Identify a time this week when you told the truth even though it was difficult.
- Describe a recent time when you were loyal to a friend even though you were mad at each other.
- Name a specific time in the last three days when you showed up at the right time.
- Describe a time when you wanted to talk about somebody behind their back but you made the right choice not to.
- Identify something you could do to help others trust you more.

Respect

Discussion Topics



- Describe a time this week when you really listened to what a family member said even though you disagreed.
- Give an example of being respectful to someone this week at work/school.
- Name a time when you respected a family member's privacy.
- Give an example of when you used good manners today.
- Describe a time when person was treated with disrespect and explain how they felt.
- What are you willing to do to help someone who is treated in a disrespectful manner?



Responsibility Discussion Topics



- Describe three chores that you completed around your home this past week.
- Name a time this week when you worked hard on a project.
- Identify a time when you did something you didn't want to because it was the right thing to do.
- Describe a specific consequence resulting from a good or bad choice you made this week.
- Give an example of a time you consciously improved your attitude.
- Name a specific goal you have made for this year.

Fairness

Discussion Topics



- Describe a way you could make things fairer for a family member at home this week.
- Tell about a time when you did something that was unfair and how it affected someone else.
- How could you share your toys, possessions or money with others in a way that demonstrates fairness?
- Name a person in your family that seems to have more things to do and what you are willing to do to help.
- Name a way you can deal in a healthy way with being treated unfairly.
- Identify something that seems unfair in the world and describe what you are willing to do about it.

Caring Discussion Topics



- Describe something you did to help a family member today.
- Tell each family member something you appreciate about them.
- Describe a time when you forgave someone for a mistake even though it was difficult.
- List something you are willing to do for someone else this week that demonstrates caring.
- Describe a time when you gave something away to help someone else.
- Describe a time in the last week when you helped someone else.

Citizenship Discussion Topics



- Name a good cause that you would be willing to volunteer for or donate some of your money to this month.
- Describe a time you voted even when you knew it would not make a difference in the outcome.
- Describe one thing you have recently done that helped the environment.
- Name three things you appreciate about the country you live in.
- Describe something you could do this week to be a better citizen.

For more information. . .

- charactercounts.org
- **3 day training sessions close to home include:**
 - April 27-29, 2011, Chicago, IL
 - June 14-16, 2011, Columbus, OH
 - October 24-26, 2011, Chicago, IL

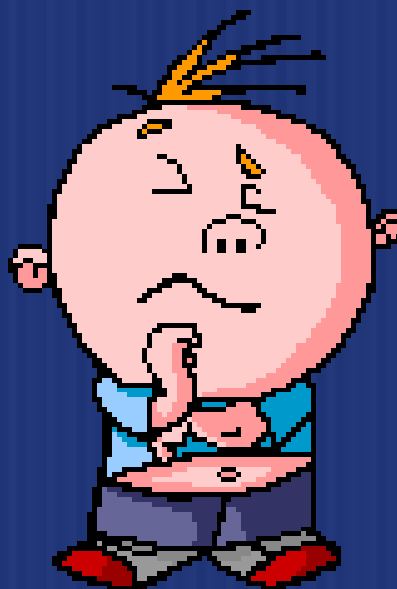


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- Questions?



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