

Video Guide

for

SHAPING OUR FUTURE BY BUILDING CHARACTER IN STUDENTS

Overview

This video is designed to help educators, administrators, and other adults learn about and get started with a character education program.

Character education teaches students to be responsible for themselves and to treat others with respect. Showing students how developing better character can help them prepare for and succeed in life is one goal of character education.

Character education is not an additional responsibility for teachers to take on; rather, teachers can provide an example of character in all they do. They should not ask more of their students than they can give themselves, but should make character education an integral part of the education they provide.

By integrating character education into a curriculum and all school activities, you can improve the learning environment, reduce the amount of time spent on discipline, and instill common values.

In this video educators and students discuss what they think character education is and how it has been implemented in real school environments. Topics covered include the following:

- understanding what character education can do for you
- how to begin your own character education program
- forming a team
- finding the right character education model
- implementing your initiative
- getting people involved
- looking forward to the future

Concept Checklists

Here are quick checklists of key points made in each segment of the video. Use these points to pursue additional research or begin a dialog about character education at your school.

What Can Character Education Do for You?

- Improve classroom control and management
- Instill self-confidence
- Create a better learning environment
- Create a common language of values
- Show students how to excel in the workplace and beyond

How to Begin Your Character Education Program

- Get the commitment of school leaders and staff
- Work out the logistics and implement the program systematically
- Provide training (books, videos, conferences, Web sites)
- Designate champions at different levels

Form Your Team

- Don't put the effort on one person's shoulders
- Don't ask teachers to take on another task; make it clear this is part of what they already do
- Make your expectations explicit
- Involve teachers, supervisors, and students

Finding the Right Model

- Clearly define character up front
- The model you select must be holistic and ongoing
- Integrate character education into the entire life of the school
- Choose a model that is simple and one that kids 'get'
- Address at risk students' special needs
- Understand that if you take a program off the shelf you may have to customize it

- Create methods for internal assessment
- Find a model that works across grade levels

Implementing Your Initiative

- Make the initiative school-wide
- Focus on a character trait for each month in the year
- Put up posters and signs around the school
- Integrate character education into the curriculum

Get Everyone Involved

- Get parents' buy-in
- Bring in the whole community (business, youth programs, civic clubs, etc.)
- Show students the role they can play in their community

Looking Forward to the Future

- Combine service learning (volunteering) with character education
- Build bridges through the program
- Help students see how their future success relates to character
- Create good habits (heart/caring; head/academic; hand/giving and sharing)

Character Traits to Target

You must create a language for character education at your school, which might include any or all of the following character goals:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Trustworthiness
- Self-control
- Perseverance
- Integrity
- Caring
- Fairness

- Citizenship (school, community, employer, country, world)
- Courtesy
- Leadership

Quotes from the Video

Use these quotes as a basis for research and discussion among your supervisors, peers, and students, or as the basis for posters and signs you place around your school.

“Character education is not a program, nor an event, rather it is an ongoing process of teaching by example so that students will learn to know and practice what is right and have the courage to do the right thing.”

Duane Hodgkin

“Character matters. The question we must ask is...how much does it matter to me?”

Anonymous

“We judge individual men and women as we do nations and races...by the character of their achievement and the achievement of their character.”

Edward Abbey

“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved.”

Helen Keller

“What a man’s mind can create, a man’s character can control.”

Thomas Edison

“There are no rules here, we’re trying to accomplish something.”

Thomas Edison

“It takes a village to raise a child.”

Ancient African Proverb

“Character, in the long run, is the decision factor in the life of an individual and of nations alike.”

Theodore Roosevelt

“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically...intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Other Sources

If character education interests you, take a look at some other resources to give you ideas, inspiration, and insight.

Web Sites

JIST Publishing. A resource for award-winning career and educational materials, including character-focused books, instructor's guides, curricula, pamphlets, videos, posters, inventories, and games.

Address: www.jist.com. Or call 1-800-648-JIST for more information and free school and character education catalogs.

Indiana Clearinghouse for Citizenship and Character Education. Information on principles and standards of character education.

Address: <http://reading.indiana.edu/chared/>

Goodcharacter. A resource for teaching guides, products, information on service learning, and more.

Address: www.goodcharacter.com

National Character Education Center. A resource for preschool through high school character education materials and information, with both kids' and parents' pages, a bookstore, and ethics links.

Address: www.ethicsusa.com

The Character Education Partnership. A nonprofit organization that provides a list of the Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education, as well as links to other resources.

Address: www.character.org

The Character Education Network. Includes sample curricula and activities. This site is useful to educators, students, and parents.

Address: www.charactered.net

Materials Created by Character Education Experts

Call 1-800-648-JIST or visit www.jist.com for details on these materials.

A Meeting at the Crossroads: Straight Talk from Real Teens About Substance Abuse, produced by Vincent Yarbrough. Video in VHS and DVD, JIST Publishing.

Becoming the Best Me, by Robert M. Orndorff, JIST Publishing. Instructor's guide also available.

Character: A Guide for Middle Grade Students, by Ed DeRoche, Michelle Gallo, Nancy Girvin, C.J. Moloney, JIST Publishing. Instructor's guide also available.

Character Education Activities, by Lori Wiley, Ph.D., JIST Publishing. Instructor's guide also available.

Character Education Pamphlet Series, by KIDSRIGHTS, an imprint of JIST Publishing.

Down But Not Out: The Inspiring Story of Alphonso Bailey, video in VHS and DVD, JIST Publishing.

Exploring Your Character, video in VHS and DVD, JIST Publishing. Instructor's guide also available.

Service-Learning, by Marie Watkins and Linda Braun, JIST Publishing. Instructor's guide also available.

Young Person's Character Education Handbook, by the Editors at JIST, JIST Publishing.