



a quick guide to...

BUILDING GOOD CHARACTER

Tips from **CHARACTERCOUNTS!**, the nation's most widely implemented character education framework

GOOD CHARACTER is necessary to successfully meet life's challenges. But it doesn't just happen. It's up to all of us to teach young people right from wrong.

Here are some tips to help you be your best and help others too:

- **Be a T.E.A.M. Player**
- **The Six Pillars of Character Are T.R.R.F.C.C.**
- **Good Decisions Are Both Ethical and Effective**
- **The Qualities of Effective Character-Development Initiatives**

Be a T.E.A.M. PLAYER



TEACH CHILDREN THAT THEIR CHARACTER COUNTS.

Explain that their success and happiness depend on who they are inside, not on what they have or how they look. Teach them the difference between right and wrong and guide their thoughts and actions by the Six Pillars of Character: *trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship*. Explain these words (see reverse) and use examples from your own life, history and the news.

ENFORCE THE SIX PILLARS OF CHARACTER

Reward good behavior (usually praise is enough) and discourage bad behavior by imposing fair, consistent consequences (or allowing others to do so). Demonstrate courage and firmness of will by enforcing these core values even when it is difficult and costly to do so.

ADVOCATE CHARACTER

Continually encourage children to live up to the Six Pillars of Character. Don't be neutral about the importance of character, and don't be casual about improper conduct. Be clear and uncompromising that you expect your children to be trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and good citizens.

MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOR

Everything you say and do (or neglect to) sends a message about your values. Be sure these messages reinforce your lessons about doing the right thing, even when it is difficult. When you slip, be accountable; apologize sincerely and do better!

The Six Pillars of Character Are T.R.R.E.C.C. ("Terrific")

Good Decisions Are Both Ethical and Effective

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Be honest • Don't deceive, cheat or steal • Be reliable — do what you say you'll do • Have the courage to do the right thing • Build a good reputation • Be loyal — stand by your family, friends and community

RESPECT

Treat others with respect • Follow the Golden Rule • Be tolerant of differences • Use good manners, not bad language • Be considerate of others • Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone • Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements

RESPONSIBILITY

Do what you're supposed to do • Persevere: keep on trying! • Do your best • Use self-control • Be self-disciplined • Think before you act — consider the consequences • Be accountable for your choices

FAIRNESS

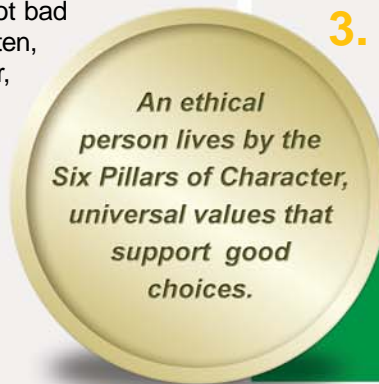
Play by the rules • Take turns and share • Be open-minded; listen to others • Don't take advantage of others • Don't blame others carelessly

CARING

Be kind • Be compassionate and show you care • Express gratitude • Forgive others • Help people in need

CITIZENSHIP

Do your part to improve your school and community • Protect the environment • Cooperate • Stay informed • Vote • Be a good neighbor • Obey laws and rules • Respect authority



Think before you act. Ask yourself:

1. Have I thought about the way my choices are likely to help or hurt other people?
2. Am I living up to the Six Pillars of Character by being *trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring* and a *good citizen* — even if I have to give up something I want?
3. If I cannot find a way to live up to one of the Six Pillar values without sacrificing another, am I making the choice I think will be best for society in the long run?

The Qualities of Effective Character-Development Initiatives

Effective character-development initiatives incorporate the Six Pillars and are:

- **Purposeful:** Articulate clear and explicit objectives and all elements of the program should influence values and behavior.
- **Pervasive:** The Six Pillars should permeate all aspects of the culture.
- **Repetitive:** Messages about the meaning and importance of good character should be frequently and conspicuously repeated.
- **Consistent:** Attitudes, words and actions must be consistent with the Six Pillars, regardless of cost or convenience.
- **Creative:** The program must go beyond moralizing. It should employ a variety of direct and indirect teaching strategies to engage the imagination.
- **Concrete:** The values should be expressed explicitly in the context of realistic and relevant situations.

CHARACTER COUNTS! provides extensive training programs and a wide range of age-appropriate teaching aids for parents and character educators. For more information, please contact us at:

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"CHARACTER COUNTS!," the "Six Pillars of Character," "Character Development Seminars," "Ethics in the Workplace" seminars, "Foundations for Life," "Honor Above All" and the "Pursuing Victory With Honor" sportsmanship campaign are service marks of the Josephson Institute of Ethics.
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