

Sample Proclamation

(for Mayors, City Councils and Other Officials)

WHEREAS young people will be the stewards of our communities, nation and world in critical times, and the present and future well-being of our society requires an involved, caring citizenry with good character;

WHEREAS concerns about the character training of children have taken on a new sense of urgency as violence by and against youth threatens the physical and psychological well-being of the nation;

WHEREAS, more than ever, children need strong and constructive guidance from their families and their communities, including schools, youth organizations, religious institutions and civic groups;

WHEREAS the character of a nation is only as strong as the character of its individual citizens, and the public good benefits when young people learn that good character counts in personal relationships, in school and in the workplace;

WHEREAS scholars and educators agree that people do not automatically develop good character and, therefore, conscientious efforts must be made by youth-influencing institutions and individuals to help young people develop the essential traits and characteristics that comprise good character;

WHEREAS character development is, first and foremost, an obligation of families, though efforts by faith communities, schools, and youth, civic and human service organizations also play a very important role in supporting family efforts by fostering and promoting good character;

WHEREAS in July 1992, the Aspen Declaration was written by an eminent group of educators, youth leaders and ethics scholars for the purpose of articulating a coherent framework for character education appropriate to a diverse and pluralistic society;

WHEREAS the Aspen Declaration states that “effective character education is based on core ethical values which form the foundation of democratic society” — *trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring* and *citizenship* — and these “Six Pillars of Character” transcend cultural, religious and socioeconomic differences;

WHEREAS the Aspen Declaration states that “The character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of society; therefore, every adult has the responsibility to teach and model the core ethical values and every social institution has the responsibility to promote the development of good character”;

NOW THEREFORE the City Council of the City of _____ hereby endorses the “Six Pillars of Character” and urges all city employees to seek out opportunities to incorporate these core ethical values into their work with young people in park and recreation activities, child care programs, community events, and intern and employee training, and encourages all citizens, corporate and individual, to model these traits of good character in an ongoing commitment to promote character development and ethical behavior in the youth of our community, and;

FURTHER, declares the week commencing the third Sunday in October as “[name of city] CHARACTER COUNTS! Week” in perpetuity, and calls on the people of [name of city] and interested groups to embrace these Six Pillars of Character and observe that week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2020