



CHARACTER COUNTS! COURIER

CHARACTER COUNTS! Washington County

CHARACTER COUNTS! Courier

May 2022

Integrity

“Integrity, the choice between what’s convenient and what’s right.” – Tony Dungy

Calendar:

Month Long: Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Mental Health Month, National Bike Month, National Water Safety Month, Physical Education Month

Week of:

May 2-8 Children’s Book Week

May 1-7 Teacher Appreciation Week

May 1-7 National Music Week

May 8-14 National Prevention Week

(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration)

May 8: Mother’s Day

May 5: Cinco De Mayo Day

May 21: Armed Forces Day

May 29: Memorial Day

May 31: World No Tobacco Day

A person who is mindful of their CHARACTER is: Trustworthy, Respectful, Responsible, Fair, Caring, and a good Citizen.

People of CHARACTER: wear a mask, wash your hands, and keep the distance!

For more resources, please visit *charactercounts.org* and *Random Acts of Kindness*.

Integrity, by definition, means doing the right thing and acting in ways that are aligned with your values.

What is integrity and why it is important?

Integrity is the core quality of a successful and happy life. Having integrity means being totally honest and truthful in every part of your life. And it is integrity that enhances all your other values. The quality of person you are, is determined by how well you live up to the values that are most important to you.

What are examples of integrity?

- Keep your promises even if it takes extra effort.
- Go back to a store and pay for something you forgot to pay for.
- Never betray a friend's trust even if you get in trouble.
- Inform the cashier he gave you too much change back.
- Do not gossip or talking badly about someone.

For youth, that means being honest in academic situations despite pressures to succeed, listening to their own inner voice about what is right, and behaving in ways that earn the trust of people around them, as well as standing up for themselves and for others in social situations.

It takes moral courage for students to stand up against injustices and take action in the interest of fairness and justice. Standing up against discrimination based on race, gender, sexual identity, or religion may involve risk-taking, inconvenience, or disapproval from others—like telling someone that their racist joke was unacceptable or speaking up in class when someone makes an offensive comment about another student.

Four recommendations for educators striving to cultivate integrity in children and youth.

1. Integrity begins with us—the adults!

Modeling is a best practice in education—that means educators have to “walk the walk,” not only “talk the talk.” Demonstrating respect for others who hold different views and resolving conflict in responsible ways are behaviors that students learn by watching the adults around them. Educators need to act with integrity because children and youth are watching us all the time, and they are excellent at detecting our shortcomings!

2. Expose the complexities underlying challenging decisions

Situations of right and wrong are rarely simple, and educators can use this reality to cultivate integrity. To do so, teachers need to acknowledge complex issues, and introduce a variety of perspectives on those issues. Teachers can shed light on difficult decision-making by transparently talking about weighing pros and cons and balancing competing ideas or values. These conversations need to address inequity openly and prioritize our shared humanity.

3. Create opportunities for students to work together and take a stand on issues they find important

Issues like the environment, immigration, and civil rights history lend themselves to service-learning activities. Service learning is a type of project-based learning in which students work with each other to take action to address an important problem, ideally one that they identify themselves. Youth-led activities give students an opportunity to practice integrity, or act in line with their values.

4. Cultivate social-emotional skills to help students notice and respond to injustice

Many educators are already familiar with the importance of self-awareness and social awareness. In simplest form, self-awareness refers to our ability to recognize our emotions and corresponding behaviors. Social awareness refers to our ability to see different perspectives and empathize with others. Acting with integrity, especially in situations requiring moral courage, demands a wider range of self- and social awareness skills.

BY ALLISON R. WARD-SEIDEL, SARA E. RIMM-KAUFMAN | FEBRUARY 7, 2022. TO LEARN MORE VISIT

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/four_ways_to_help_students_cultivate_integrity

Integrity doesn't come in degrees: low, medium, or high. You either have integrity or you don't. - Tony Dungy

“Peaceful Place”

Mindfulness Activity: Build an imaginary hideaway

1. Lie down on a mat or blanket. Let your arms rest loosely by your sides.
2. Imagine you are in your own peaceful place. Notice details of the landscape. Listen for animals or water. Smell the trees and flowers.
3. Imagine doing something fun! You could ride a whale, fly with an eagle, or run with an elephant.
4. Before you leave, discover a hidden gift. It is just for you.
5. To return to the present moment, say goodbye to your peaceful place and your animal friends.
6. Bring your attention back to the sounds around you. Open your eyes. Can you hold your peaceful place in your heart?

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