

CHARACTER COUNTS!

At Home & School



As a parent, you can:

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 youngster to live up to the Six Pillars of Character – everywhere, and all the time

Model

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

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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

Do:

- Demonstrate your love by developing high expectations for self and your youngster regarding the importance of trust and how it is earned by being trustworthy
- Encourage and expect honesty and promise-keeping in all interpersonal relationships.
- Be consistent in your use of encouragement as you witness courageous behavioral acts that promote trust
- Be consistent with consequences when your youngster violates pre-established family rules
- Model loving relationships that demonstrates a long-term commitment be loyal to the person that is not present in family discussions

Don't:

- Lower your expectations by becoming neutral or passive regarding issues of trust
- Engage in or permit lying or deception
- Break your commitments, promises, or make unenforceable threats of punishment
- Create an unstable home environment is unpredictable and unhealthy behavioral choices.

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Respect

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

Do:

- Treat your youngster with respect and insist on respectful treatment from your child
- Insist that your child treats everyone with respect and models respectful behavior at all times
- Model good manners
- Embrace diversity by respecting reasonable social customs of others
- Respecting privacy unless suspicious behaviors necessitate otherwise

Don't:

- Embarrass or humiliate your child with disrespectful comments or behaviors
- Be intolerant of differences
- Be inconsiderate of others
- Threaten to hit or hurt anyone
- Deal with conflict with anger, insults, threats, or abusive actions

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Responsibility

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

Do:

- Giving their youngsters tasks at home to accomplish
- Focusing on effort and a positive attitude rather than over-emphasis on outcome
- Applauding courageous social behaviors where temptations are avoided
- Taking ownership for their own mistakes
- Developing high expectations and link consequences to poor choices
- Emphasize the importance of education, role-modeling, self-control, and healthy
- Demand zero tolerance for alcohol, drug usage
- Demand sexual abstinence

Don't:

- Do for your child what he/she can do for themselves
- Be permissive when your child acts out in useless ways
- Reward responsible acts with materialistic items
- Tolerate an “I deserve it” attitude of entitlement

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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

Do:

- Create a family environment that provides opportunities for each family member to express opinions and participate in decisions.
- Embrace the uniqueness of each family member avoiding comparisons with siblings and/or friends.
- Clearly state and consistently apply rules.
- Teach open-mindedness as well as consistency.
- Frequently talk about fairness and fair play.

Don't:

- Use power and control to force your child into doing something.
- Be reactive and inconsistent in your discipline approaches
- Show favoritism to a particular child
- Make poor decisions when your emotions are strong

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Caring

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

Do:

- Demonstrate love and affection by giving time, attention and praise
- Encourage the awareness and expression of feelings
- Teach children to think of the impact their conduct will have on others
- Encourage and model caring, empathy, charity and service to others.

Don't:

- Prioritize work over family
- Forget to encourage and praise your child.
- Permit your child to hurt others with harmful statements and behaviors
- Allow your child to become numb to the pain and suffering of others

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Citizenship

- Do your share to make your school and community better
- Cooperate
- Stay informed vote
- Be a good neighbor
- Obey laws and rules
- Respect authority
- Protect the environment

Do:

- Develop a family mission and values statement that includes commitment to the Six Pillars of Character.
- Encourage service to others, cooperation and team-work.
- Model citizenship by respecting authority, obeying the rules and looking for opportunities to make a contribution
- Control the behavior of your child to assure they do not disturb others in public places
- Be reminded that a healthy community starts with your family

Don't:

- Forget to talk about the importance of values and behaviors on a consistent basis
- Engage in selfish behavior
- Be neutral and permissive related to your child obeying the rules and laws
- Allow your child to act out in self-serving ways the negatively impacts others
- Forget that your family is part of a larger community

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Family Meeting Agenda

- 1) Discuss positive “character sightings” during week**
- 2) Have each family member discuss what they appreciate about each other**
- 3) Remind family members of pre-determined rules and consequences**
- 4) Discuss important values, related behaviors and possible consequences**
- 5) Discuss family priorities and create weekly schedule**
- 6) Give allowances to teach youngsters about personal finance rather than linked to specific behaviors**
- 7) Talk about long-term family dreams and goals**

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Family Discussion Topics

Trustworthiness

Name a specific time this week when you kept a promise.

Name a time this week when you told the truth even though it was difficult.

Name a recent time in your life 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 something you could do to help others trust you more.

Name a time you wanted to talk about somebody behind their back but you made the right choice not to.

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Respect

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 this week.

Give an example today when you used good manners.

Choose a family member and describe what you respect about them.

Describe a person that has been treated with disrespect and explain how they felt.

What are you willing to do to help someone who is treated in a disrespectful manner?

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Responsibility

Describe three chores that you completed around your home this past week.

Describe a time this week when you worked hard on a project.

Describe a time this week when you did something you did not want to because it was the right thing to do.

Name a specific behavior that you are willing to do this week to help the family.

Describe a specific consequence resulting from a good or bad choice you made this week.

Describe a specific goal you have made for this year.

Describe a healthy activity that you participated in today.

Give an example of a time you improved consciously improved your attitude.

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Caring

Describe something you did to help a family member today.

Tell each family member something you appreciate about them.

Describe a time in the last week when you helped someone else.

List something you are willing to do for someone else this week that demonstrates caring.

Describe a time when you gave you gave something away to help someone else.

Describe a time when you forgave someone for a mistake even though it was difficult.

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Fairness

Describe a way you could make things more fair 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 with unfairness treatment to you in a healthy way.

Describe something that seems unfair in the world and what you are willing to do about it.

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Citizenship

Describe a time when you helped someone else and were not paid to do so.

Name a good cause that you would be willing to donate some of your money to this month.

Describe one thing you have recently did helped the environment this week.

Describe a time you voted even when you knew it would not make a difference in the election.

Name three things you appreciate about the country you live in.

Describe something you could do this week to be a better citizen.

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Good Decision Making

- 1) Describe a decision you made this week and how it affected someone else.
- 2) Describe a decision you made this week and how it related to trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and/or citizenship.
- 3) Describe a difficult decision this week and give some reasons why your choice produced the greatest amount of good.

Describe a situation that is likely to occur in the near future and practice the seven-step path to better decisions. What would you do?

- 1) Stop and Think
- 2) Clarify Goals
- 3) Determine Facts
- 4) Develop Options
- 5) Consider Consequences
- 6) Choose
- 7) Monitor and Modify

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CHARACTER DISCIPLINE SHEET

My behavioral choice:

How did my behavior affect others?

Which one (or more) of the “Six Pillars of Character” did I violate?

What will the consequences be if I choose this behavior again?

What I promise to do differently next time:

Signature/Date:
Child/Adolescent

Signature/Date:
Parent

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My Weekly Character Check-up

Current Assessment:

0 (worst in life).....(best in life) 100

What behaviors have you chosen this week that strengthened your character that you would like to continue?

If you woke up tomorrow with even a stronger commitment to be a person of great character, what specific behaviors would you be doing more of and less of...?

Describe something you could can do to strengthen your character.

Specific goal:

Possible roadblocks:

Ways to ensure goal will be met: