



The Six Pillars of Character

CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition <http://charactercounts.org/>
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OUR CHALLENGE IS TO DRAW THE LINE AROUND THE SIX PILLARS.

I. TRUSTWORTHINESS

- ✓ **Honesty** **DO:** Tell the truth and nothing but the truth • Be sincere • Be forthright and candid
DON'T: Lie • Cheat • Steal • Be sneaky, tricky, or deceptive
- ✓ **Integrity** **DO:** Stand up for your beliefs • Be honorable and upright • Have the courage to do what is right and to try new things even when it is hard or costly • Build and guard your reputation
DON'T: Do anything wrong • Lose heart if you fail or don't get what you want
- ✓ **Reliability** **DO:** Keep your promises • Honor your word and commitments • Be dependable • Do what you are supposed to do • Return what you borrow • Pay your debts • Be on time
- ✓ **Loyalty** **DO:** Stand by and protect your family, friends, school and country • Be a good friend • Look out for those who care about you • Keep secrets of those who trust you
DON'T: Betray a trust • Let your friends hurt themselves • Do anything just so others will like you • Ask a friend to do anything wrong or spread gossip that could hurt others
- ✓ **Golden Rule** **DO:** Treat others the way you want to be treated • Respect the dignity, privacy and freedom of all individuals • Value and honor all people, no matter what they can do for you or to you • Respect others' property — take good care of property you are allowed to use and don't take or use property without permission • Respect the autonomy of others — tell them what they should know to make good choices about their own lives
DON'T: Use or manipulate others • Abuse, demean, or mistreat anyone

II. RESPECT

- ✓ **Courtesy** **DO:** Use good manners • Be courteous, polite and civil to everyone
DON'T: Use put-downs, insults, yelling, or ridicule to embarrass or hurt another
- ✓ **Autonomy** **DO:** Know and do your duty • Acknowledge and meet your legal and moral obligations
- ✓ **Tolerance** **DO:** Judge others on their character, abilities, and conduct without regard to race, religion, gender, where they live, how they dress, or the amount of money they have • Be tolerant, respectful, and accepting of those who are different from you • Listen to others and try to understand their points of view

III. RESPONSIBILITY

- ✓ **Accountability** **DO:** Accept responsibility for the consequences of your choices, not only for what you do but what you don't do • Think about consequences on yourself and others before you act • Think long-term • Do what you can do to make things better • Set a good example
DON'T: Look the other way when you can make a difference • Make excuses or blame others
- ✓ **Pursuit of Excellence** **DO:** Your best • Persevere • Be prepared • Be diligent • Work hard
- ✓ **Self-Reliant** **DO:** Take charge of your own life • Set realistic goals • Keep a positive outlook • Know the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do • Be self-reliant — manage your life so you are not dependent on others; pay your own way whenever you can

IV. FAIRNESS

- ✓ **Impartiality** **DO:** Be fair and just • Treat people equally • Make decisions without favoritism or prejudice
DON'T: Take more than your fair share • Take advantage of or blame others unfairly
- ✓ **Openness** **DO:** Be careful — get the facts, including opposing viewpoints, before blaming or accusing another

V. CARING

- ✓ **Concern for Others** **DO:** Be compassionate and empathetic • Be kind, loving, and considerate • Be thankful and express gratitude for what people do for you • Forgive others for their shortcomings
DON'T: Be mean, cruel or insensitive
- ✓ **Charity** **DO:** Be charitable and altruistic — give money, time, support, and comfort for the sake of making someone else's life better, not for praise or gratitude • Help people in need

VI. CITIZENSHIP

- ✓ **Do Your Share** **DO:** Be a good citizen and a good neighbor • Care about and pursue the common good • Be a volunteer and help your school and community be better, cleaner, and safer • Protect the environment by conserving resources, reducing pollution, and cleaning up after yourself • Participate in making things better by voicing your opinion, voting, serving on committees, reporting wrongdoing and paying taxes
- ✓ **Respect Authority** **DO:** Play by the rules • Obey parents, teachers, coaches, and others who have been given authority • Observe just laws • Honor and respect principles of democracy