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HEADLINE: SEMINOLE POLITICO TIRED OF POLITICS?

BYLINE: By Don Boyett, Seminole County Editor

BODY:

Not like it looks: Andrea Dennison moves over to the county property appraiser's office later this month. She's a former Casselberry city commissioner and mayor, was an unsuccessful candidate for county commissioner and usually is hip-deep in politics, during and between elections.

"Aha!" the politically attentive are saying about now.

They know she was a close adviser to Property Appraiser Bill Suber during his successful 1996 re-election campaign. They know also that Suber has hinted rather strongly he would not run again (he's had the job long enough for a full retirement).

It all adds up, they are thinking. The old spoils system is alive and well. Her new job is a pay-off for help in the election and positions her for a run for the appraiser's job in 2000.

"Wrong," says Dennison, who now works for a Maitland consulting firm in the information technology field.

First of all, she was among 150 applicants who answered the ad for the job, and she went through the same winnowing process as the others, she says. There was no favoritism.

Still unconvinced? How about this: She absolutely will not run for the office. Indeed, she will not ever again run for any office. And that's absolute, never, ever, forever no.

She was wounded too severely in her last outing, she says.

That was when Win Adams defeated her in a Republican primary that got down and dirty. It's the same reason, she says, that she never seriously considered a race for the clerk of circuit court's job, which she had been rumored to be considering.

That's the really sad part of this story. Not just as it applies to Dennison, but to all people who now and then give thought to seeking public office. The cost of running a campaign, and the viciousness of campaigning conspire to deter a lot of quality people from running.



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Of course, all the time she was telling me why she would never run again I kept thinking of a press conference called by Ronald Reagan while he was governor of California.

Seems he had made a statement earlier about something that would never come to pass during his administration, and that his stand was cast in concrete. Now he was having to back-track.

"The sound you hear," he said upon opening the press conference, "is that of concrete cracking."

No joke: Russ Hauck received the following e-mail:

"We have not heard from you! You were sent an invitation to this year's **White House Conference on Character Education**, given by the Communitarian Network and the U.S. Congress. The focus of this year's conference will be How to Implement Character Education. Space is filling quickly! Vice President Al Gore has been invited to deliver a keynote address. . . ."

The Altamonte Springs city commissioner responded as follows:

"Having a **White House Conference on Character Education** with the Clintons in the White House and Al Gore the guest speaker is quite a good joke. Interesting that you sent your e-mail on April 1."

The shame of it all: Last month Seminole was among 19 counties in the St. Johns River Water Management District to participate in the annual cleanup, dragging trash from the river and its tributaries.

Volunteer participation was the fourth highest in the district (525 people) and they gathered the fourth largest amount of trash (more than 17,000 pounds).

All of which caused a considerable amount of button-popping in the county's stormwater department. As it should have.

On the other hand, what does this say about the people who live here? What a shame that at just 12 sites there was more than 17,000 pounds of junk to be plucked from the river.

What's needed is a stronger anti-littering program.

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Character Education Organizations and Publications

American Institute for Character Education.

A nonprofit educational research foundation that offers a K-9 character education curriculum. Dimension II Building, 8918 Tesoro, Suite 220, San Antonio, TX 78217. Phone: (512)829-1727 or (800)284-0499.

ASCD Character Education Network.

Sponsored by ASCD and Boston University's Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character, its mission is to help teachers and administrators struggling with the ethical and character formation aspect of their work. Kevin Ryan, Boston University, School of Education, 605 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. Phone: (617) 353-3262.

ASCD Conflict Resolution Network.

Contact Mary Ellen Schaffer, Assistant Principal, Elsie Johnson School, 1380 Nautilus Lane, Hanover Park, IL 60613. Phone: (708) 830-8770 or Fax (708) 893-5452.

The Cambridge Group.

The firm used by Mt. Lebanon School district to develop and implement its strategic plan. 5795 Carmichael Parkway, Montgomery AL 36117. Phone (205) 279-7150 or Fax (205) 279-7151.

Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character.

Dedicated to helping schools recapture their role as moral educators, and has developed a model that emphasizes the curriculum as the primary vehicle for transmitting moral values to the young. The Center publicizes this model through its "Teacher Academies" for elementary and secondary school teachers and administrators. A similar program is directed toward college and university faculty responsible for the preparation of future teachers. The Center is also involved in researching and developing curricular materials for use by schools, teachers, and parents. Boston University, School of Education, 605 Commonwealth Avenue., Boston, MA 02215. Phone: (617) 343-3262.

Center for Character Education.

An academic alliance of schools and universities bringing together educators interested in implementing a new model for moral education. The Integrated character education Model is based on the view that, in a person of mature character, knowledge, affect, and action are integrated. Duquesne University, School of Education, 410 Canevin Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15282. Phone: (412) 434-5191.

Center for the Fourth and Fifth Rs (Respect and Responsibility).

Directed by Tom Lickona, this Center sponsors an annual Summer Institute in Character education, publishes a *Fourth and Fifth Rs* newsletter, and is forming a network of schools committed to teaching respect, responsibility, and related core values as the basis of good character. Education Department. SUNY Cortland. Cortland, NY 13045. Phone: (607) 753-2455.

FAX (607)753-5980.

Center for Media Literacy.

A nonprofit membership organization that translates media literacy research and theory into practical information, training, and educational tools for teachers, youth leaders, parents, and caregivers of children. Free catalog of teaching materials. 1962 S. Shenandoah St., Los Angeles, CA 90034. Phone: (800) 226-94994 or fax (310) 559-2944.

The Character Counts Coalition.

Project of the Josephson Institute which represents a national partnership of organizations and individuals involved in the education, training, or care of youth. joined in a collaborative effort to improve the character of America's young people based on core ethical values, the Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. Aims to combat violence, dishonesty, and irresponsibility by strengthening the moral fiber of the next generation. The Coalition will put the issue of character development on the forefront of the American agenda through a wide variety of grass-roots activities built on the conviction that character counts. 4640 Admiralty Way, suite 1001, Marina del Rey, CA 90292. Phone: (310) 306-1868.

The Character Education Institute of California University of Pennsylvania.

A regional institute that provides character education support to school districts, higher education, businesses, and parents; facilitates research, and offers character education courses. Character Education Institute, California University of Pennsylvania, California, PA 15419-1394. Phone: (412) 938-4000.

The Character Education Partnership.

A nonpartisan coalition of organizations and individuals concerned about the moral crisis confronting America's youth and dedicated to developing moral character and civic virtue in young people as a way of promoting a more compassionate and responsible society. Activities include a national clearing house, community programs, school support, publications, annual and regional forums, national awards and media campaign. John A. Martin, Executive Director, The Character Education Partnership, 1250 N. Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Fax: (703) 739-4967

The Child Development Project.

An effort to take research knowledge and theory about how elementary age children learn and develop-intellectually, socially, and ethically.-and translate it into a practical program for classroom, school, and home use. its comprehensive approach to character education was a powerful influence in the creation of Mt. Lebanon's character education strategy. Developmental Studies Center, 2000 Embarcadero, Suite 305, Oakland, CA 94606-5300. Phone: (510)533-0213.

Communitarian Network.

A coalition of individuals and organizations who have come together to shore up the moral, social, and political environment. This national organization is nonsectarian and nonpartisan. It sponsors an annual conference, produces position papers (on family, health care reform, domestic disarmament, character and a civil society, and organ donation), and publishes a quarterly journal, *The Responsive Community: rights and Responsibilities*. 2130 H Street, NW, #174, Washington, DC 20052. Phone: (202) 994-7997. Fax: (202) 994-1606.

Community Board Program.

A conflict resolution resource. 1540 Market St., Suite 490, San Francisco, CA 94102. Phone: (415) 552-1250. Fax: (415) 626-0595.

Educators for Social Responsibility.

School Conflict Resolution Programs, 23 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138. Phone (617) 492-1764.

Ethics Resource Center.

Working to restore our society's ethical foundations by strengthening the capacity of our institutions to foster integrity, encourage ethical conduct, and support basic values. Since its establishment in 1977, as a nonprofit, nonpartisan, and nonsectarian educational organization, the Ethics Resource Center has developed practical and effective programs that address the evolving needs of the education, business, and government communities. Resources include research support, curricular materials, workshops, and conference sponsorship. 1120 G Street, NW Washington, DC 20005. Phone: (202) 737-2258.

Exploring Ethics Through Children's Literature.

A literature based ethics program for grades 2-6. Critical Thinking Press & Software, PO Box 448, Dept. 4, Pacific Grove, CA 93950-0448. Phone: (800) 458-4849. Fax: (408) 372-3230.

The Heartwood Program.

A multicultural, literature based curriculum that uses classic children's stories from around the world to present universal values to children in grades K-8. Designed to foster moral literacy and ethical judgment by exposing students to seven core attributes: courage, loyalty, justice, respect, hope, honesty, and love. Mt. Lebanon uses this program in its elementary and junior high school programs. The Heartwood Institute, 425 N. Craig St., Suite 302, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Phone: (412) 688-8570 or fax: (412) 688-8552.

Institute on Media Education.

A summer institute to help teachers and administrators to integrate media literacy into existing subject areas; to develop new teaching methods that help students think critically about what they see, read, and watch; to analyze newspapers and television news and examine press influence on the coverage of the American political process; and to implement media awareness outreach programs in their schools and communities. Programs in Professional Education 339E Gutman Library, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Mass 02138. Phone: (617) 495-3572. fax: (617) 496-8051.

The Jefferson Center for Character Education.

Formed in 1963 for the purpose of publishing and promoting programs for schools that teach sound character values and personal responsibility. 202 South Lake Ave. #240 Pasadena, CA 91101. Phone (818) 792-8130.

The Joseph and Edna Josephson Institute of Ethics.

A nonprofit educational and leadership training organization seeking to increase the nation's awareness of ethical issues and to provide individuals with the skills to make their behaviors more ethical. Activities include research, publications, and skills training workshops; also sponsors the

Character Education coalition. Josephson Institute, 4640 Admiralty Way, Suite 1001, Marina del Rey, CA 90292. Phone: (310) 306-1868 or fax: (310) 827-1864.

National Association for Mediation in Education (NAME).

A conflict resolution resource. 205 Hampshire House, Box 33635, Amherst, MA 01003-3635. Phone (413) 545-2462.

Parent and Child Guidance Center.

The mental health agency that delivers the character education parenting series. 2644 Banksville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15216. Phone (412) 343-5698 or fax (412) 343-8249.

Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP).

A school-business-community partnership representing 22 public school districts that is designed to develop student character, personal responsibility, and achievement. The Network for Educational Development, 13157 Olive Spur Road, St. Louis, MO 63141. Phone (314) 576-3535, ext. 130, Fax (314) 576-4996.

St. Francis Health System.

The agency that conducted evaluations of the character education parenting programs the school district sponsored through a local mental health agency. The Center for Chemical Dependency Treatment, 400 45th St, Pittsburgh, PA 15201-1198. Phone (412) 622-4511.

WiseSkills

A community-Based Character-Building Program for Grades K-8. Legacy Learning, P.O. Box 3213, South Pasadena, CA 91031-6213. Phone (818) 441-7944.

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- Wynne, E.A., and K. Ryan. (1992). *Reclaiming Our Schools: A Handbook on Teaching Character, Academics, and Discipline*. New York: Merrill.

Available From:

CEP

The Character Education Partnership

809 Franklin Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Telephone: (800)988-8081 or (703) 739-9515; FAX (703)739-4967.

ASCD

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

1250 N. Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Telephone: (703)549-9110; FAX (703)549-3891.

WHAT IS CHARACTER EDUCATION?

Character education is the deliberate effort to help people understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values. It is based on the following premises:

1. Destructive youth behaviors such as violence, dishonesty, drug abuse, and sexual promiscuity have a common core: The absence of good character.
2. People do not automatically develop good character. Intentional and focused efforts must be made -- by families, schools, faith communities, youth organizations, government, and the media -- to foster the character development of the young.
3. Good character consists of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action: Understanding core ethical values, caring about them, and acting upon them. These values include respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, diligence, self-control, caring, and courage.
4. These core ethical values are not mere subjective preferences like taste in music or clothes. They have objective worth (they are good for us whether or not we know it), universal validity, and a claim on our personal and collective conscience. They are affirmed by religious traditions around the world and transcend religious and cultural differences. They are rooted in our human nature and express our common humanity.

The universal validity of these values, and our obligation to uphold them, derive from the fact that they:

1. affirm our human dignity
 2. promote the well-being and happiness of the individual
 3. serve the common good
 4. define our rights and obligations ("If I have a right to be respected, I have a corresponding duty to respect everyone else")
 5. meet the classical ethical tests of reversibility (Would you want to be treated this way?) and universalizability (Would you want all persons to act this way in a similar situation?).
5. In the absence of these values, no society can function effectively and no individual can hope to live happily. Not to teach good character based on these core ethical values would be a grave moral failure for any society.
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A Character-Based Approach to Sex Education

No discussion of moral and character education can exclude sex education. More young people, I believe, are at risk from the destructive consequences of premature, uncommitted sex than from any other single threat to their healthy physical, emotional, and moral development. To consider just one dimension of the physical dangers: In the United States, according to the Medical Institute for Sexual Health, about a third of sexually active teenage girls are now infected with human papilloma virus (the leading cause of cervical cancer) and/or chlamydia (the leading cause of infertility). Recent medical studies show that condoms provide virtually no protection against either human papilloma virus or

chlamydia.

Unfortunately, our children are growing up in what Boston University's Kevin Ryan calls a "sexually toxic" environment. This environment trivializes and debases sex and leads young people into patterns of short-lived sexual relationships that undermine their self-respect and corrupt their character.

There is fortunately now a growing effort to bring sex education into line with the principles of good character education. That means adopting an approach to sex education that develops character traits of good judgment and self-control, and guides young people toward morally sound conclusions about how to apply the values of respect and responsibility to sexual behavior. And this means helping students understand all the reasons why sexual abstinence is the only medically safe and morally responsible choice for an unmarried teenager.

"The core problem facing our schools is a moral one," writes William Kilpatrick in *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right From Wrong*. "All other problems derive from it. If students don't learn habits of courage and justice, curriculums designed to improve their self-esteem won't stop the epidemic of extortion, bullying, and violence; neither will courses designed to make them more sensitive to diversity."

Good character is what our children need and what our society needs. "Character," the Greek philosopher Heraclitus asserted, "is destiny." If we wish to have any hope of reversing our nation's downward moral slide and building a moral society, we must make character education our highest educational priority.

Thomas Lickona is a developmental psychologist, professor of education, and director of the Center for the Fourth and Fifth Rs (Respect and Responsibility) at SUNY Cortland. His books include the Christopher Award-winning *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*, *Raising Good Children*, and *Sex, Love, and You: Making the Right Decision*, a book for teenagers written with his wife Judith.

discussion.

For example:

Teacher Molly Angelini makes courtesy an important value in her fifth-grade classroom. She models courtesy in how she speaks to her students. She requires students to apologize in writing if they call a classmate a name. She teaches them to say, "Pardon me?" instead of "What?" when they wish something repeated. When they go to lunch, she teaches them to greet the cafeteria workers by name and thank them when they put the food on their tray. And she teaches her children that all these behaviors are not mechanical gestures but meaningful ways of respecting other people.

2. Creating a moral community. Students need caring relationships with adults, but they also need caring relationships with each other. When students are part of a caring classroom community, they feel valued as persons. When they are challenged to practice respect and care in their everyday peer relations, these values begin to become part of their characters.

For example:

Hal Urban, who teaches high school history and psychology, does three simple things at the start of each class that take only five minutes but go a long way toward developing a cohesive classroom community based on mutual respect and support. First, he asks, "Who has good news?" After the sharing of good news, he asks, "Would anyone like to affirm anyone else?" Students become more and more comfortable doing that. Finally, he asks students to take a seat different from the one they had in the previous class and take a minute to get to know their new neighbor. At the end of the semester, on course evaluations, students say that one thing they will remember about the course ten years from now is the way Mr. Urban began each class.

In developing a moral classroom community, teachers also need to promote kindness and prevent cruelty. In Kansas, the STOP Violence Coalition (9307 W. 74th St., Merriam, KS 66204) publishes a book of activities called *Kindness is Contagious...Catch It!* that gives many practical strategies for promoting considerate actions and reducing the verbal peer abuse that causes conflicts, breeds disrespect, and quickly undermines positive classroom relations.

3. Moral discipline. Moral discipline means using the creation and enforcement of rules as opportunities to foster moral reasoning, self-control, voluntary compliance with rules, and a generalized respect for others.

For example:

Kim McConnel, on the first day of school, puts her sixth-graders in groups of four. She asks each group to write down, on a large sheet of paper, classroom rules that will help them:

- ☐ Get our work done
- ☐ Feel safe
- ☐ Be glad we're here.

When they are finished, the small groups tape their lists of suggested rules on the blackboard. Drawing

from all the lists, the teacher helps the class come up a list that will serve as "our class rules."

Regardless of whether students help to create the rules, the teacher using moral discipline ensures that students understand the moral basis of the classroom rules. A high school mathematics teacher explains his approach:

"I tell my students that I have only two rules: (1) Everybody respects each other; and (2) Come prepared for class every day -- which is a form of respect for me, your classmates, and yourself. If you violate one of these rules, I will stop and point out the rule. You will need to apologize to the person you were disrespectful toward."

With moral discipline, consequences for rule-breaking seek to teach a moral lesson (for example, why the offense was wrong); require the student, whenever possible, to make reparation; and develop the student's self-control and willingness to follow the rule in the future.

4. Creating a democratic classroom environment. This means involving students, on a regular basis, in shared decision-making that increases their responsibility for making the class a good place to be and to learn. The chief means of creating a democratic classroom is the class meeting. This is a meeting of the whole class emphasizing interactive discussion and problem-solving. The class meeting contributes to character development by providing a forum where students' thoughts are heard and valued and by providing a support structure for understanding, internalizing, and practicing respect and responsibility.

For example:

Carl Fospero, a 20-year-old graduate student in education, was called to take over an unruly class (Introductory Spanish) of high school students whose regular teacher had suddenly died. In the month that followed the teacher's death, the students -- a low-achieving group with a history of behavior problems -- had become uncontrollable. They went through four substitute teachers in four weeks.

When Carl Fospero came into the class, the first thing he did was to ask every student to take out a sheet of paper and write him a letter, responding to two questions: "What are your feelings about the class? How can we make it better?"

Students complained that other substitute teacher had been "throwing worksheets at them"; they couldn't keep up with the material; they didn't understand Spanish; they often felt embarrassed when they didn't know an answer, and so on.

Carl Fospero read portions of the students' letters aloud, using them as a springboard for a discussion of how to improve the course. They decided to slow down the pace of instruction to make sure no one got lost. They decided to make time during each class for cooperative learning -- such as conversational Spanish between partners -- which students found less threatening. Teacher Fospero said he also wanted to try some new things they hadn't done before, such as writing a play in Spanish and performing and videotaping it. The class also started to write and publish a class newspaper -- in Spanish. They used their class meetings to plan these new projects, assign responsibilities, and monitor progress and problems.

Students' behavior and learning improved dramatically. Teacher Fospero had achieved this by applying a widely known but much-neglected educational principle: Involve students in making decisions about --

and sharing responsibility for -- the life of the classroom. The class meeting has been used effectively with students as young as kindergarten.

5. Teaching values through the curriculum. There are countless opportunities for teachers to use the ethically rich content of academic subjects -- such as literature, history, and science -- as a vehicle for teaching values and examining moral questions. Here the teacher's question is, what are the natural intersections between the curriculum I wish to cover and the values I wish to teach?

There are outstanding published programs that illustrate how to do this. One is the Heartwood Ethics Curriculum for Children. This award-winning program uses multicultural children's literature to foster seven character attributes affirmed by cultures around the world: courage, loyalty, justice, respect, hope, honesty, and love. Heartwood makes it clear that multiculturalism doesn't have to mean "multi-morality"; rather it can lead us to discover the universal values that underlie cultural differences and that express our common humanity.

For each of the seven attributes, the Heartwood program provides six children's books (folk tales, hero stories, legends, and modern classics from different cultures) along with interdisciplinary activities that develop children's understanding of the particular value and how to apply it. When the class finishes studying a particular character attribute, all the children, at a moment of their own choosing, look in the classroom mirror and ask themselves if they have shown that attribute (for example, "How have I shown courage?", "How have I been a respectful person?"). Then the child goes to his or her Heartwood Journal and writes a personal answer to that question. This encourages children to act upon the ethical insights emerging from their reading and discussion of the value-laden literature.

Facing History and Ourselves is another much-acclaimed curriculum, initially developed for eighth-graders and later adapted to high school and college levels as well. This 8-week social studies curriculum uses history, films, and guest lectures (including talks by death camp survivors) to investigate the Nazi and Armenian Holocausts. Along the way, it has students look within themselves to examine the universal human tendency toward prejudice, scapegoating, and even hatred.

An experimental study of this curriculum found that Facing History students were significantly superior in their understanding of how individuals' decisions are affected by their society and in the complexity of their reasoning about issues such as leadership, exclusion, and conflict resolution.

6. Cooperative learning. Whereas curriculum-based values education teaches values and develops character through the subject matter content, cooperative learning does this through the instructional process. It says to the teacher: "Take what you would normally teach, teach it through cooperative learning for at least part of every day, and you will be teaching values and academics at the same time."

Cooperative learning, which can be done in pair or small groups, contributes to character in many ways. It teaches students the value of cooperation; builds community in the classroom (reducing conflict, the research shows, and fostering friendships across racial and ethnic lines); and teaches basic life skills such as communicating and working together.

For example:

In a sixth-grade classroom in Montreal, Quebec, a teacher faced the most divisive group she had ever

taught. The class was torn apart by racial conflict; blacks and whites exchanged insults and physically assaulted each other during recess and after school.

The school psychologist observed the class and recommended that the teacher set up structured cooperative learning groups. Put together children who have trouble getting along, he said. Give them joint assignments and projects with roles for all members. Monitor them closely. Most important, stick with the groups even if they don't seem to be working in the beginning.

The teacher started having students work together -- usually in threes or fours -- in all subjects for part of each day. They worked on math problems in groups, researched social studies questions in groups, practiced reading to each other in groups, and so on.

"It took them two months to really make this work," the teacher said, "but they finally got it together. Moreover, their test scores went up." Mastering the skills of cooperative learning is a gradual, developmental process for both teacher and students, but the academic and character development benefits -- documented at all grade levels -- justify the effort.

7. Develop the "conscience of craft." The literature on moral and character education often treats moral learning and academic learning as separate spheres. But academic work and learning have moral meaning. Work is one of the most basic ways we affect the lives of others and contribute to the human community. Moreover, when students are not working to the best of their ability in school, they are learning bad moral habits -- laziness, lack of self-discipline, indifference to standards, evasion of responsibility -- that will likely carry over into their adult lives. Teachers who develop students' capacity for disciplined work typically combine high expectations and high support.

For example:

Anne Ritter is the kind of teacher who believes that every child can learn. As a new teacher in her school, she taught a class of first-graders, 85 percent of whom came from families below the poverty line. She astonished fellow teachers by getting 90 percent of her class up to grade level in reading and math. Her comment: "It's the job."

When I visited her classroom, a list of classroom rules was writ large and posted in the front. The first rule was: "Always do your best in everything." On the wall was a sign: A PERSON WILL SELF-DESTRUCT WITHOUT A GOAL. The "value of the month," featured on the class bulletin board, was AMBITION, defined as "hard work directed toward a worthwhile goal."

8. Encouraging moral reflection. This strategy focuses on developing the several qualities that make up the cognitive side of character: being morally aware; understanding objectively worthwhile moral values; being able to take the perspective of others; being able to reason morally; being able to make thoughtful moral decisions; and having moral self-knowledge, including the capacity for self-criticism.

Bringing this knowing side of character to maturity is one of the most difficult challenges of character education. It requires clear ethical thinking by the teacher as well as a sophisticated set of teaching skills. Teachers can foster moral reflection through reading, research, essay writing, journal-keeping, discussion, and debate. At the secondary level, a promising approach to developing moral reflection through controversial issues is called "structured academic controversy." Developed by cooperative

learning experts David and Roger Johnson, this approach defines controversies as "problems to be solved rather than win-lose situations."

The teacher assigns students to groups of four, composed of two, two-person "advocacy teams." Within each group, one team is assigned the responsibility of advocating one position (for example, that there should be more government regulation of hazardous waste disposal), the other team the task of arguing the opposite position (that there should be less regulation), both teams using background information supplied by the teacher.

In the course of the week, each team must do a position-switch and argue for the position it originally opposed. Finally, the four group members synthesize what they see as the best information and reasoning from both sides into a consensus solution and write and submit a group report. Following that, each student takes an individual test, which holds everyone accountable for learning the information and arguments on both sides of the issue.

Ten years of research on the academic controversy process finds that students gain in their perspective-taking abilities and demonstrate greater mastery of the subject matter than is true with either debate or individualistic learning formats.

9. Teaching conflict resolution. Teaching students how to resolve conflicts without force or intimidation is a vitally important part of character education for two reasons: (1) conflicts not settled fairly will prevent or erode a moral community in the classroom; and (2) without conflict resolution skills, students will be morally handicapped in their interpersonal relationships now and later in life, and may end up contributing to violence in school and society.

There are a great many ways to teach conflict resolution skills in the classroom. Susan Skinner, a kindergarten teacher at Heathwood Hall Episcopal School in Columbia, South Carolina, uses two methods she finds effective. When two children have a conflict, she stops the action and uses it as a teachable moment. She invites two other children (not the ones involved in the dispute) to come to the front of the class to role-play a positive solution to the conflict. She then asks the whole class for their suggestions. Finally, the two children who were involved in the conflict are invited to act out a positive solution that draws on what they have just seen and heard.

When one child has hurt another, teacher Skinner teaches a reconciliation ritual. She instructs the offending child to say, "I am very sorry -- will you please forgive me?" If the victim judges the apology sincere, that child is instructed to respond, "I do forgive you."

These behavior patterns have the best chance of becoming part of a child's character when they are learned early and practiced often. But effective training is still possible at the adolescent level, where the stakes are even higher because conflicts more easily explode into deadly violence.

Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Smith, a Harvard professor and physician, has developed a 10-week mini-course that teaches teenagers what causes violent conflict and how to avoid it. Says one 18-year-old who took the course at a Boston high school: "I had my share of fights, and I learned how to avoid them by talking things out. Otherwise I could lose my life over something really stupid like stepping on someone's shoe and not wanting to say, 'Excuse me.'"

Schoolwide Strategies for Character Education

The preceding examples demonstrate that it is clearly possible for the individual teacher, acting within the classroom, to foster good character. But teachers feel more secure, and their efforts are greatly enhanced, if the whole school -- and ideally the community as well -- is working to promulgate, model, teach, celebrate, and enforce high standards of respect and responsibility.

A comprehensive approach therefore calls upon schools to implement three schoolwide strategies. These are:

1. Creating a positive moral culture in the school -- developing a total moral environment or schoolwide ethos (through the leadership of the principal, schoolwide discipline, a schoolwide sense of community, meaningful student government, a respectful and cooperative moral community among adults, and making time at all levels to discuss moral concerns) that supports the values taught in classrooms;

2. Fostering caring beyond the classroom -- using positive role models to inspire altruistic behavior and providing opportunities at every grade level to perform acts of school and community service; and

3. Recruiting parents and the community as partners in character education -- letting parents know that the school considers them their child's first and most important moral teacher; giving parents specific ways they can support the values the school is trying to teach; and seeking the help of the community (including churches, businesses, local government, and the media) in promoting respect and responsibility.

A more detailed look at the 12 Steps - Comprehensive Approach to Education.

Institutions with an interest in Character Education

- The Institute for Global Ethics, based in Camden, Maine, is an independent, nonsectarian, and nonpolitical organization dedicated to elevating public awareness and promoting the discussion of ethics in a global context. This nonprofit think tank is an international, membership-based organization focusing on ethical activities for corporations, educators, professionals, and communities. "Building Values and Character: A Role for the Schools" is their accredited course for teachers that focuses on ways to incorporate character education into curriculums. The Institute has also developed curriculum materials for use in middle schools and high schools. Contact wethics@midcoast.com.
- Studies in Moral Development and Education, a program based at the University of Illinois at Chicago. This is a new web site (with impressive use of technology) which aims to connect educators in Illinois and beyond who are interested in the "developmental/constructivist" conception of moral development and education. Contains several full-text articles about moral education. Contact: [Larry Nucci](#).
- Character Education Institute, San Antonio, Texas. The mission of the Character Education Institute is to help children develop into responsible citizens by serving as the leading recognized educational foundation devoted to the development, distribution, and implementation of the Character Education Curriculum in elementary, middle, and high schools throughout the world." The "Character Education Curriculum," was "created in 1969 by teachers for teachers and continually revised, [and] is the most comprehensive, instructional program available that builds self-esteem, develops critical thinking skills, and instills universal values in students. Through these objectives, young people learn right from wrong and become responsible, productive citizens." The curriculum currently focused on K-9 graders, and there is a high school component being developed. The curriculum is built around 12 "universal values," which are: Honor, Honesty, Truthfulness, Kindness, Generosity, Helpfulness, Courage, Convictions, Justice, Respect, Freedom, and Equality. Contact: [Louis J. Sanchez](#) Executive Director.
- The Character Education Partnership (CEP) is a nonpartisan coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to developing moral character and civic virtue in our nation's youth as one means of creating a more compassionate and responsible society. While CEP's primary focus is on young people, it understands that the problems affecting our youth reflect the broader social and economic problems of our country as a whole and that it is the responsibility of all adults to model good character and to help strengthen civic and moral foundations. Among other activities, the CEP runs a National Resource Center: Collecting and distributes information on educational and community programs designed to develop moral character and civic virtue.
- The Character Education Institute at California University of Pennsylvania serves as a resource to the University's colleges, departments, employees, and student organizations as they contribute to the moral development of its students and provides an outreach to regional school districts that want to learn more about formal character education strategies. The address is The Character Education Institute, California U. of PA, 250 University Avenue, Box 75, California, PA 15419-1394, Telephone 412-938-4500. The Institute's director is [Henry Huffman](#).
- THE CENTER FOR THE 4TH AND 5TH Rs (Respect and Responsibility) serves as a regional, state, and national resource in character education. THE CENTER disseminates complimentary articles on character education, sponsors an annual summer institute in character education, publishes a Fourth and Fifth Rs newsletter, offers a browsing library of character education materials, and is building a network of "Fourth and Fifth Rs Schools" committed to teaching

respect, responsibility and other core ethical values as the basis of good character. Contact: Director-Dr. Thomas Lickona, or Administrative Secretary-Marthe Seales, at Tel: (607) 753-2455 or Fax: (607) 753-5980.

- Project Wisdom is an interesting for-profit organization which provides schools with one-minute messages containing "universal wisdom from around the globe and across the ages." These messages are read over the school public address system or in-house television system during daily announcements. According to the organization, "Project Wisdom builds character, by teaching students to make wiser choices, builds self esteem by motivating them to be the best they can be, and builds a greater sense of community on campus by inspiring students to honor one another's differences and to contribute to the world around them. It is rich with biography, social studies, and multicultural studies. It includes fascinating bits and pieces of philosophy, science, and etymology. Project Wisdom fits nicely into the time slot once used for prayer. It's simple. It's effective. It works." The messages contain "commonsense philosophy, inspiration, and guidance through the universal wisdom found in diverse races, religions, and cultures throughout the world. This program opens hearts and minds to the beauty of diversity while celebrating commonly shared values." For more information, contact Leslie Luton Matula, founder.
- The Giraffe Project is devoted to spreading the word about people who "stick their necks out for the common good" in order to move other people to do likewise (to be giraffes themselves). It utilizes the media to publicize the heroic deeds of the unsung heroes of the world, and also produces the Standing Tall Curriculum, which teaches children how to stick their own necks out, through a three-part plan of instruction: "Hear the story"--in which children read and are told stories about more than 800 real-life heroes; "Tell the story"--in which children find out about and speak or write about the real-life heroes in their local communities, and "Be the story"--in which children actually put into practice their own plans for being helpful. For more information, contact The Giraffe Project.
- America's Heroes AND YOU, a set of curriculum materials which presents stories about eleven American heroes, each associated with a character trait. Available for \$7.00 plus \$3.00 shipping. For more information, contact Peace Runs Publishing.
- Hyde School, a private, coeducational boarding school in Bath, Maine devoted to the development of character in youth, ages 13 to 20. Hyde is developing a new web page (but there's not much on it yet).
- The Chicago Foundation for Education has a program in character education for Chicago public schools, based upon 15 "universal values": honesty, tolerance, generosity, helpfulness, justice, freedom of choice, freedom of speech, courage, conviction, kindness, honor, good citizenship, sound use of time and talent, right of individuality, and rights of equal opportunity. The program is currently utilized by 31% of public elementary schools in Chicago (according to the Foundation); the Foundation also publishes a Newsletter (although the edition on the web is a year old). Contact: Chicago Foundation for Education.
- WiseSkills, a multicultural curriculum that uses the words and lives of historical figures to teach character for elementary and middle schools. The creator of WiseSkills, Legacy Learning (a for-profit organization), also has materials to help parent volunteers arrange community service projects for classrooms and find local career speakers. WiseSkills is in about 200 schools. Legacy Learning, P.O. Box 3213, South Pasadena, CA 91031-6213, (818) 441-7944. Contact: WiseSkills. NOTE: WiseSkill's web site also includes a list of character education sites, including some not listed here.
- Live Wire Media produces and distributes guidance videos for character education for K-12. Their commitment is toward helping children become ethical, responsible, respectful people who think critically, solve problems non-violently, and make choices based on what's right instead of what's

expedient. These programs are designed to build self-esteem and good values while preventing violence, drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, school drop-out and suicide. Topics for elementary school include anger management, conflict resolution, bullying and teasing, prejudice and respect, cooperation, and doing the right thing. For secondary school, programs cover friendship and sex, drinking and driving, coping with pressures, communicating with parents, and handling emotions. Live Wire Media videos have won the Parents Choice award and the Cine Golden Eagle and have been broadcast nationally on public television.

- Kutztown University, Department of Elementary Education, Kutztown, PA. (Contact: [Dr. Edward J. Earley](#))
- [Jefferson Center for Character Education](#), in Pasadena, California. The Jefferson Center for Character Education has been in operation since the 1960s. Their home page contains information about the Center's programs, including its STAR (Stop, Think, Act, Review) decision-making program, which is being implemented in all elementary schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Contact [Bob Jamieson](#), CEO.
- [The School of Total Education](#), Queensland, Australia.
- [The Poyner Center for the Study of Ethics and American Institutions](#), at Indiana University. (Contact: [Poynter Center](#)).
- [The Values in Action Network](#), based in Irvine, California, is a for-profit initiative developed by [Gene Bedley](#). Values in Action is currently in use at over 1000 elementary, middle, and high schools. It's goal is to get children to ask "Is it an ethical thing to do?," before they act. A school-wide program (including coordinator's guide, teachers guides, a slide show for parents and the community, an "Attitude Umbrella," and rights to duplicate the materials, is available.

Officials say overseeing and coordinating the project will cost from a half million to a million dollars a year over the life of the project, with money coming from foundation and corporate support. Expenses to individual schools will come out of normal operating budgets.

Mrs. Schlafly said many parents will be skeptical of such programs.

'What are we paying teachers for?' she asked. 'Supposedly we pay them to teach knowledge to children, not to go on field trips. There's no way to grade this kind of thing, no objective standards. It's a waste of time.'

But, even many educators with initial misgivings say the initiatives in the partnership do not detract from traditional academics but instead add an element that schools and society need.

'When I first heard about service education 8 or 10 years ago I thought, 'Look, I don't know,' ' said Brandon Cordes, principal of Wyoming Middle School in Cincinnati. 'But my mind was made up when I realized the community wanted it. There's something to life that goes beyond meeting one's own personal needs, and this is a way that we give kids that experience. If that is a little hokey, well, that's how I feel.'

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EXAMPLE

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Abstract: Values like good citizenship and respect for others, once confined to social studies classes-if taught at all-are becoming a formal part of the curriculum in more and more public schools across the US. The approach coincides with rising national interest in values and education. Value, or character, education has proliferated partly in response to public concerns about the behavior of young people and partly as an alternative to efforts to put prayers and religious values back into schools.

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Article Text:

WEST BLOOMFIELD, Mich. -- When a public elementary school in this affluent Detroit suburb recently adopted a policy of 'character education,' every class was to spend a few weeks on each of several values: respect, citizenship, caring, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness and justice.

The problem was how to teach good citizenship, for example, as part of every subject from art to gym. The art teachers ended up assigning a color to each virtue -- purple for respect and blue for good citizenship -- and devised projects like color-coded paper dolls. The gym teachers invented a game in which second graders take turns as good citizens and bad citizens throwing balls over a low volleyball net.

The game is rigged so that the good guys always win.

'The moral of our game is, if you're a good citizen, you always come out on top,' Sheryl Schmidt, the physical education instructor, told her class.

Values like good citizenship and respect for others, once confined to social studies classes -- if taught at all -- are becoming a formal part of the curriculum in more and more public schools across the nation. The approach coincides with rising national interest in values and education, as shown by the recent Presidential and Vice-Presidential debates. When President Clinton was asked at the last debate what he had done to promote the values of the nation's founding fathers, he replied, 'I supported character education programs in our schools, drug-free schools programs.'

Value, or character, education has proliferated partly in response to public concerns about the behavior of young people and partly as an alternative to efforts by Christian groups to put prayer and religious values back into schools.

In Michigan, after months of discussion, the State Board of Education is meeting on Oct. 24 to consider a new policy encouraging the state's school districts to adopt character education, as West Bloomfield has already done.

Michigan would not be the first state to do so. Georgia already asks its school districts to teach 36 values. Mississippi, New Hampshire and New Jersey have less specific policies. And in individual school districts, a recent study by the National School Boards Association found 182 of 399 responding to a survey were pursuing character education.

But Michigan's longtime role as a social policy laboratory for the nation is attracting attention from other states.

'Michigan is a trend setter in education,' said Anne L. Bryant, the executive director of the National School Boards Association, which is based in Alexandria, Va.

The debate over character education has been particularly vigorous here, centering on a fundamental question: Whose values should be taught?

Some educators urge explicit references to religious ideas, but other educators, civil liberties groups and members of the clergy argue that only secular values belong in the public schools.

To be sure, teachers have always taught values, in ways requiring that students show respect by not interrupting one another. While the turn-of-the-century McGuffey Eclectic Reader stressed virtues like piety, thrift and humility, the teaching of specific ways to lead a life fell out of fashion in the 1960's. Teachers at schools with character education programs are now able to present values more systematically, advocates say.

The Michigan Board of Education's final version of a character education policy appears likely to be a little closer to the secular values taught at the Scotch Elementary School here than the more Christian-influenced values initially sought by some of the board's eight members.

These members, including Clark Durant, the board's president, contend that because the writings of the nation's early leaders were influenced by religious ideas, these ideas should be studied along with the documents.

A draft statement of state education policy now being reviewed by board members says that some basic principles 'transcend religious beliefs and are the foundation for an orderly and civil society.'

Another section provides examples: 'Principles such as respect, responsibility, caring, trustworthiness, justice, civic virtue and citizenship determine the character of our people and the tenor of the society in which we live.'

Sharon A. Wise, a board member, expressed some disappointment that the policy statement would not do more to advance religious values. 'To completely erase the Word of God from our system of education is doing a tremendous disservice to our children,' Ms. Wise said.

The document is vague enough to give considerable discretion to local school districts. Mr. Durant said he hoped that it would leave room for, say, lessons on the life of Moses.

'Even if the story of Moses is complete fiction, it's a study of great perseverance,' he said.

The American Civil Liberties Union has been active in pushing the state board in a more secular direction. Wendy Wagenheim, the group's legislative affairs director for Michigan, said the alternative was for school districts to find themselves sued for violating the constitutional separation of church and state.

'School boards need to spend money in the classroom and not the courtroom,' Mrs. Wagenheim said.

There has been little controversy about the character education curriculum here in West Bloomfield, partly because it was drafted by an influential group of local ministers, rabbis, former politicians and business executives. The Rev. Harry T. Cook, the rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in nearby Clawson, Mich., said that he organized the group as a less divisive alternative to efforts by House Republicans after the 1994 elections to allow prayer in schools.

The six elementary schools here, which span the second through fifth grades, now spend a few weeks on each value. Every Monday morning, weather permitting, all 565 pupils at Scotch Elementary School stand around the flagpole to recite the pledge of allegiance, sing 'The Star-Spangled Banner' and listen to their principal read out the names of children who have distinguished themselves as kind and respectful citizens in the previous week.

The classes were recently doing 'respect.' In language arts, second graders wrote sentences about the importance of good manners. 'When somebody gives you something, say thank you,' one child wrote.

In music class, they sang of rainbows, peace and harmony, with refrains that carried a strong message of respect for ethnic diversity. 'Each of us is different/And that's O.K. with me,' the class chirped to a rock beat.

Afterward, a particularly articulate boy said, 'It's not just that we're singing songs, we're learning that each of us is different and we shouldn't be prejudiced and we should all be together.'

The school district is now developing character education programs for its two middle schools and high school, said Seymour Gretchko, the superintendent, who added that educators from as far as California and Tennessee had been calling for information.

One common goal of character education programs is to improve school discipline, and many educators say it works.

At the Scotch Elementary School here, two dozen second graders lined up quietly, the boys in one neat row and the girls in another. No one giggled, chattered or poked anybody. Mary Ellen Sobetsky, their music teacher, beamed with approval.

'Look at this class, this wonderful bunch of citizens, they follow the rules and everything,' she said before leading the children into the room and into their song about rainbows.

Caption:

Photo: Values are a part of the curriculum at Scotch Elementary School in West Bloomfield, Mich. In a recent music class, second graders sang a song of ethnic diversity: 'Each of us is different/And that's O.K. with me.' (Peter Yates for The New York Times)

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Title: TEACHING RIGHT FROM WRONG
Authors: FRED MUSANTE

Title: What works.

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(wild-article)

Build a sense of character

We all know that millions of American kids are growing up without a moral compass. But they can be instructed at school in the basics of good character. And when they learn those, discipline, effort and good grades tend to follow. In 1989, The Allen Classical Traditional Academy (formerly The Allen School) ranked fifth from the bottom in academic achievement among Dayton, Ohio, elementary schools. With 78 percent of its students in families that receive welfare, familiar behavior problems spilled over into school. By 1993, Allen was second from the top. It requires that each week, homeroom teachers introduce a new character trait ("responsibility," "kindness," "punctuality," "citizenship") and discuss it for five minutes. Throughout the day, teachers try to work the trait into lessons. If the "word of the week" is "honesty," the math teacher might give a student wrong change from a dollar and see how he reacts. The rest of Dayton is now also moving to "character education." Nationally, a much larger character-building program, Stop, Think, Act, review (STAR), is now being tried with thousands of students.

- Dayton, OH

Some of the most effective character education comes from peers. In Philadelphia, a local nonprofit called the Good Shepherd Neighborhood House has contracted with the school district to teach students and staff at 60 middle schools and high schools how to help settle disputes. Similarly, at the Stoddard Fleisher Middle School, disciplinary suspensions dropped by two thirds after the peer-mediation program began. And the hope is that after learning to keep peace, students can take some of the same cool-down skills to settle fights in the streets.

→ Philadelphia

As responsible parents know, character-building works best when it starts young. Alternatives for Girls, a teen-pregnancy prevention

cockfight in their basement. 'We had to confront that.'

She has 'lost' only one student. The mother used drugs, Smith-Hansen says, and 'she believed that using drugs was a personal right. She told me she didn't want her child to develop negative attitudes toward her or her friends. I was pretty speechless.' The child, Smith-Hansen added, developed a drug problem of her own.

THE CORTLAND-LANSING-ITHACA AREA IS BY AND LARGE LIBERAL politically and culturally, and it is not surprising that Lickona's teaching has taken hold. I did speak with one local skeptic. Richard Baer Jr., a professor of natural resources in the school of agriculture at Cornell, has found fault with the content of some courses ('bland pabulum') and he complained to me that there is no empirical evidence that character education actually improves character. But Baer's main concern is that the public schools will become centers of a cultural war between those on the right who believe that character education must incorporate religion and those on the left who do not want religious teaching included at all.

Educators and parents around the country share this concern of Baer's about the intrusion of religion. The American Civil Liberties Union is leery of character education, on the grounds that it will provide opportunities for people to impose religious views. Nadine Strossen, the A.C.L.U.'s president, argues that 'it's very hard to sort out subtle indoctrination or abuse. The students may not realize what's going on.' On the right, meanwhile, organizations like Concerned Women of America and Citizens for Excellence in Education are hostile to character education because they believe that public education cannot be trusted with moral issues -- that in its insistent secularity it will wind up being antichurch.

Charles Haynes of the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University says that the now widely used 'outcomes based' curriculum, which requires a demonstration that an education show concrete results, has scared some conservatives off character education. 'They're asking: 'Will students have to prove themselves tolerant? If that's the outcome, will our religion be labeled intolerant?' ' Thus, while few religious organizations have a formal stand on character education, most are opposed in general to the notion of schools getting involved in what has traditionally been the province of church and family. As the character education movement grows, religious leaders are likely to become more vocal in opposition to it.

Still, when asked for any examples of abuses in character education classes, neither religious groups nor liberal watchdog organizations like the A.C.L.U. can cite them. Maybe this is because the movement is so young. Or maybe it has to do with the fact that, as Derek Bok, the former president of Harvard, puts it, 'There are certain fundamental principles that are not a matter of debate.' Or as Charles Haynes, who himself approves of a modest approach to character education, sees it: 'We need a civic framework. This country was founded on an understanding that one has to be a good citizen. About character education most people are not asking 'if' but 'how.' '

THE 'HOW' QUESTION IS KEY, AND IT BRINGS ONE BACK TO LICKONA, the teacher of those who teach. The question involves not only the personality and methods of the teacher but the values and how they are expressed. The old 'whose values' problem remains and, in a way, Lickona both settles the problem and exacerbates it. He is a former antiwar protester and Eugene McCarthy campaigner, and a conservative Catholic as well. Possessed of a self-scrutinizing mind, he is willing to reconsider ideas that he also holds as tenets of faith. In this complicated combination of explorative and authoritarian thinking, he embodies the full range of his movement's possibilities, which may be why he is best qualified to lead it. Yet, intellectual fair play aside, if a teacher of character education truly believes in definite rights and wrongs, especially if they are spiritually

or dogmatically based, why would he or she wish to refrain from promoting his or her absolute values?

I put this question to Lickona on a visit to his home in Cortland -- a small frame house a short walk to the campus, where he and his wife, Judy, have reared their two boys. Its atmosphere speaks both for Lickona's scholarship and for his faith. The few places where there are no piles of books and papers, there are religious icons. In the living room, a painting of Jesus hangs above a large plaster statue of the Virgin.

Facing me, he takes the easy chair with the broken cushion springs. We talk in a small wing at the far end of the house. A picture window displays the backyard. The ground is covered with snow from which rises a grotto to the Virgin and a statue of St. Francis -- 'to protect the birds from the cat,' he says. 'I have no statue to protect the cat from the dog.' His voice, a soothing rumble, sounds a bit like Tom Brokaw's. He is 52 and his face is young, but he surrounds it with an Amish-like beard that gives him a look of the ancients.

I ask him: 'How do you discuss the touchier items of moral inquiry and debate without on the one hand asserting a value and on the other stating that all values are equal?'

'Students must be challenged to investigate the best arguments and evidence on both sides of the question,' he says. 'I think students have more intellectual freedom if the teacher doesn't tip his or her hand on the issue at the outset. But even if the teacher does disclose a personal position on the controversial issue, the teacher must scrupulously refrain from using the classroom as a platform for advocating a personal ideology on a given issue. In dealing with an issue like abortion, the teacher's first job is to make it clear that this is a highly controversial issue and to make available the full range of opinion. The whole debate. To challenge students to read and reflect on opposing views. One should also encourage students to interview their family members about the controversial issue at hand, which tends to build trust between the school and the family.'

'But I also think that we should avoid tackling the controversial issues until the character program is firmly established. And then save more difficult inquiry for the secondary level. A lot of people, when they think values, they immediately think value conflict. And they know that society is deeply divided on issues of gay rights, euthanasia and capital punishment and they assume that values education is going to mean bringing all these controversies that are tearing our country apart into the schools. Which will, you know, then simply tear our schools apart. So I think it makes a good case that the proper emphasis at the outset is to teach the basics. Teach the basic qualities of honesty and hard work and decency, justice, caring, loyalty, friendship and so on. And to save other issues for later on down the road.'

I ask him: 'But if one believes, as you do, that abortion is wrong, why not teach that abortion is wrong?'

'Well, the distinction would have to be made between virtues that everyone agrees on and the application of the virtues to a particular problem. Abortion becomes a difficult case because values are in conflict. Life on the one hand and liberty on the other. One can get students to press beyond simply recognizing that there's a conflict to examining the reasons that would underlie one or another position. It's not an easy road for a teacher to take, obviously, because the teacher's own bias will always be a factor. Some people split on this issue and think that the educator, in assuming a neutral position in the classroom, teaches a bad moral lesson -- that the hottest fires of hell are reserved for those who seek to preserve moral neutrality in the face of a crisis. And yet there's an issue of accountability. The teacher has to avoid using the classroom to influence either side of the controversial question because there are parents out there and constituencies out there who do not want the

classroom used to promote one or another position on certain issues.'

'What about sex education?' I ask.

'Sex education sort of provides a middle case,' he says, 'because, on the one hand, there is controversy about whether it's right to have sex without marriage. Or whether you're being a responsible person if you use, quotes, 'protection.' On the other hand, there is an increasingly compelling case that teen-age sexual intercourse is harmful to teen-agers, harmful to their partners and harmful to the society at large; that sex is not for kids. There is a less widely accepted argument that sex should be reserved for marriage, and marriage only.'

'Do you believe that?' I ask.

'Yes.'

'So we come to this same question of whether to teach what one believes to be right.'

'When I speak to young people, I reason in the following way: I say, when you are engaged in this physical act, you are as physically close to another human being as you can be. You can't get any closer than that. When this is part of marriage, the sexual union is an expression of a larger union. The sexual love is a symbol or a sign of a marriage love. So you're joining your bodies because you've joined your lives. You're giving yourself completely, in the physical sense, because you've given yourself completely in the marriage commitment. So that the sexual union has a meaning of representing something that is much deeper, larger. Is this something that you could as readily do on the first date or after you get to know the person a little bit better? Well, you really should know them a bit better. Would it be as fitting with somebody that you didn't really care about? Well, caring can certainly make it better. And so on.'

I ask him: 'So, the idea, as in the other examples that you talked about, is that while you can't really say, 'How do you do, I'm Professor Chastity,' you can build the education up to the point where sexual activity, before marriage, is less attractive and less compelling. Is that what you mean?'

'Educating for chastity would stop short of trying to get kids to that goal, because that turns kids off,' he says.

'But you know where you want them to be?' I suggest.

'You know where you want them to go,' he says. 'And would we have ever reached a point where the institution of marriage, commitment to marriage, the institution of the family as an extension of marriage, was sufficiently re-established in society that educators could educate as forthrightly for chastity as they now do against racism and for honesty and for respect and responsibility? I hope so.'

'As long as we're on the thorny subjects,' I ask him, 'what about prayer in the schools? You firmly believe in God as moral authority. Shouldn't God be part of character education?'

'I believe in a moment of silence,' he says. 'That's as far as I'll go.'

'Yet you would say that moral conscience comes from God?'

'It does,' he says. 'But God creates us free. And we are free to acknowledge Him or not to acknowledge Him. And, in a way, he sets the educational standard in this regard.'

I ask him: 'In sum, is it fair to say that the more problematic and complex the moral question, the harder character education is to teach?'

'I think it's misleading to characterize these kinds of problems as lying at the heart of the movement. They do provide challenges at the higher end, but that's all. This is a very difficult enterprise. One of the virtues one teaches, and I hope practices, is the virtue of striving toward virtue. Tennyson said that humility is the mother of the other virtues because it acknowledges the struggle of leading a moral life. We have to recognize that we're often blind to our own moral shortcomings. And that we might be wrong.'

OTHER QUESTIONS probably ought to be asked about the movement: What is the quality of the books used or recommended as texts? Should character education be incorporated into existing curriculums, as Lickona believes, or should it be taught in independent courses like Smith-Hansen's? How effective can it be if the society a child enters appears to offer no disincentives for antisocial behavior? And a question somewhat different from, yet at least as important as, who's values: who should be doing the teaching?

Concerning the issue of books, it is astonishing how much literature is being produced on this subject. Included among the most recent titles are: 'Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong'; 'Character Building: A Guide for Parents and Teachers'; 'Developing Character in Students'; 'Moral Classrooms, Moral Children'; 'Knowledge Without Goodness Is Dangerous,' and 'Hooray for Heroes.' Few of these works are especially learned or revealing, except about the troubled public feeling they tap, and almost all raise as many educational problems as they purport to solve.

In 'Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong,' William Kilpatrick suggests that the emulation of heroes is a valuable tool for character building, but his 'guide to great books for children and teachers' is frequently superficial and misleading. Captain Ahab is characterized as 'a good man destroyed by pride.' Joseph Conrad's Captain MacWhirr, the 'hero' of 'Typhoon,' is commended for his 'bravery and moral responsibility,' when he is seen by most readers as pigheaded. An interesting omission from the list is 'The Great Gatsby,' since Gatsby got to his weird place on earth by strictly following a prescription for character education.

However nuanced Lickona is in his thinking and teaching, in his own popular and influential book, 'Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach,' he is prone to lapses and offers some skewed interpretations as well. The book names Darwin and Einstein as figures who contributed to a disintegrated view of experience -- rather than having expanded knowledge. A recommended school curriculum includes Charles Lindbergh as an exemplar of courage without mentioning Lindbergh's pro-German activities in the early years of the Second World War.

Sometimes it appears that any book with words like 'morality' or 'virtue' in the title is automatically welcomed into the approved canon. A serious study like 'The Moral Sense' by James Q. Wilson is placed on the same shelf of authority with William J. Bennett's commercial anthology, 'The Book of Virtues,' a collection of stories, essays and poems often explained in a simplifying and distorting way. The famous fence-whitewashing passage from 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer' is included in Bennett's book to illustrate the virtue of work rather than the cleverness of a con game -- which is the lesson Twain explicitly gave it. 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,' generally thought to be the most morally useful novel in American literature, is omitted except for a note that it 'deserve[s] to be read.'

The matter of where character education is most effectively located gets more problematical the higher one goes in school. Karyn Freshwater, 29, is a former student of Lickona's who teaches kindergarten in Homer, a town near Cortland. Directing 5-year-olds, she needs to make no distinction between an intellectual and a moral curriculum because the requirements of the children are basic.

'I try to teach the whole person,' she says. 'The little ones come to me with so few social skills. They don't even know how to ask a friend, 'Can I play?' A whole generation has grown up in a vacuum, a valueless kind of teaching that says whatever you think is right. There is so little moral education given in the home -- where it rightly should be -- that I feel I have to provide a foundation. One of the simplest things I do is just to teach the children to greet each other in the morning. Just say 'Hello.' Recognizing each other as people.

'I use Tom Lickona's words, 'respect' and 'responsibility,' right from

the beginning of the year. Even 5-year-olds can come up with definitions of respect. I ask them, 'What is a friend?' They answer, 'A friend plays with me.' I connect that answer to the idea of respect, but I try not to ask yes or no questions. I ask, 'What does respect look like?' We make books of drawings -- what a friend looks like, what a friend does.'

Smith-Hansen says: 'The age hardly matters. I do the same sort of thing with my sixth graders. We start on a very basic level. Read biographies. Use characters from history. Discuss current events. I feel that my job is to continually define moral issues -- naming, naming, naming. A girl had her broken arm in a sling. She wanted to go to a dance, but her parents, fearing she'd be injured, said no. Then they relented, but they told her to keep the sling on during the dance. She brought the problem to the class and the kids chipped in with everything from 'Obey your parents' to 'Take off the sling; they'll never know.' At each point, I'd stop and say: 'Now, is this honesty? Is this subterfuge? Is this personal strength?' If they give names to the associations they make, they'll know better what they're thinking.'

'What did the girl finally do?' I asked.

'She said she'd go back to her parents and try to work out a compromise. Keep the sling on most of the time, but take it off for the slow dances.'

But Smith-Hansen has deliberately separated her discussions of moral issues from the other subjects taught in her school. Other former Lickona students -- like Ron Schuck, 34, who teaches seventh-grade science at the DeWitt Middle School in Ithaca -- have not made that separation.

I VISITED SCHUCK'S seventh-grade science class. The students had recently viewed a fictional video about a Neanderthal named Charlie the Iceman who had lain frozen for 5,000 years and was unearthed alive. The class debate was whether Charlie should be treated like a lab animal so that scientists could study his cell structure for medical research or whether, because of his uniqueness and humanity, he ought to be allowed to remain living. Unlike Smith-Hansen's class in Lansing, Schuck's is a mixture of races and ethnic backgrounds; a variety of points of view was brought to the question. He, too, is a devoted, thoughtful teacher. But in the end, one was still left wondering whether the students would be better off learning more science and less ethics.

The problem of the extent to which character education can be divorced from social sanctions is both real and impossible to assess. This problem has been raised indirectly by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan in a noted essay in *The American Scholar* called 'Defining Deviancy Down.' Moynihan's point is that deviant behavior that used to be stigmatized by society is now tolerated or readily accepted. Teen-age pregnancy has not increased since the 1950's, but 40 years ago a pregnant teen-ager, reacting to social disapproval, would simply get married to adhere to social norms. If society believes that any behavior goes, what chance does character education have? As soon as character-educated children emerge from their classes, they may be confronted by a wider world that contradicts their learning.

As is true of much in education, eventually everything comes down to the quality of the individual teacher. One can imagine the character education movement in the hands of someone less moderate and self-inspecting than Lickona. Talking with several of Lickona's students, all good and dedicated people, one is reminded of how fragile education is. If this movement is going to make educational sense, much less to have any larger social benefits, it most likely will depend on people like Smith-Hansen who know what they are doing, teach values at the right age for the students and address the subject in separate contexts of study and not as riders to existing curriculums.

There was a time when it could be assumed that the teaching of values was contained in regular subject matter, but that time may be

irretrievable. The advantage of Smith-Hansen's approach is that it teaches character straight-on to a group ready and eager to apprehend it. After a certain age, character education rises into the realm of ethics debates and rational discourse, and except for the character-building that may result from an atmosphere of open inquiry, little seems to be tapped that is applicable to personal behavior.

In Smith-Hansen's class, the kids seem to be learning processes of mind that have a chance of sticking with them, though it would be a mistake to conclude that because these students are young, they are not cognizant of the more ambiguous problems that await them. And nobody really knows how to teach virtue. In 'Language and Silence,' George Steiner lamented that teaching the great moral examples of human endeavor can lead anywhere, including to the Holocaust. For the moment, people like Smith-Hansen do what they can.

SMITH-HANSEN ADDRESSES the girl who reported on her grandfather using the word 'nigger' and urged on him the use of 'African-American': 'How did it work out?'

Girl: 'Well, my grandfather was angry at me, I think. But my dad said he was sorry and that he'd try not to do that when I'm around.'

Boy: 'I think -- going back to where prejudice comes from -- it might be from experience. Like if you were mugged by an Hispanic, you might be bitter to Hispanics your whole life.'

Smith-Hansen: 'A person could have one negative experience and then generalize about a whole people.'

The girl with the braids: 'I think it starts with stereotypes. Like last week we were talking about the words 'nerd' and 'hicks.' ' Everybody speaks at once again.

Smith-Hansen: 'O.K. We began with one of today's quotes. Let's look at the other: 'Let people know what you stand for -- and what you won't stand for.' Was that being done in Germany, do you think?'

Boy: 'Not by enough people.'

A boy with a choppy haircut: 'People didn't want to feel left out.'

Smith-Hansen: 'You're saying that Hitler's power grew because people were embarrassed to say that they didn't like what he was doing?'

Girl: 'Not exactly embarrassed, but. . . .'

Boy: 'Scared.'

Girl with the University of Hawaii sweatshirt: 'Maybe they started disbelieving themselves.'

Smith-Hansen: 'Let's look at this other word on the board. 'Conscience.' What do you know about conscience?'

Boy: 'It's like something that tells you something's bad or something's good.'

Smith-Hansen: 'Are you born with it?'

Girl: 'Yeah.'

Boy: 'No. You develop it.'

Smith-Hansen: 'Where is it located?'

Girl in the Notre Dame sweatshirt: 'In your brain.'

Smith-Hansen: 'So it has something to do with thought. It's not an organ.'

Boy: 'But it looks like people can have different kinds of consciences. What explains that? I mean, Hitler must have had a conscience. Only it was a bad conscience.'

Smith-Hansen: 'How do you develop a conscience?'

Boy: 'Parents.'

Boy: 'TV. Friends.'

Boy: 'School.'

Girl: 'But I've seen other teachers in this school who are prejudiced.'

Smith-Hansen: 'I'm sorry to say that's true. But not most of them. You just have to follow the consequences of your conscience's thinking. Isn't that so? Imagine yourself in a situation, Lindsay, where you're with kids

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Access No: 59612419970414 ProQuest - The New York Times (R) Ondisc
Title: Plan Adds 'Civil Education' To the Basics of Schooling
Authors: Peter Applebome
Source: New York Times, Late Edition (East Coast)
Date: Apr 14, 1997 Sec: B National Desk p: 8
Length: Long (1157 words) Type: News
Subjects: Education policy; Community service; Public schools; Social services; Curricula; Education reform; Education & Schools; Social Conditions & Trends
Companies: Partnering Initiative On Education & Civil Society

Abstract: Partnering Initiative on Education and Civil Society, a group of more than 40 leading educational and social service groups, plans an ambitious 10-year program aimed at dramatically increasing link among schools, communities and social service; says initiative is especially important at a time when notion of restoring a sense of community is so much a part of national debate; initiative gets skeptical reception from some groups and parents more interested in educational basics than the idea that community service should be a large part of school (M)

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Article Text:

In what is billed as a major effort to broaden the focus of American education, more than 40 leading educational and social service groups plan to announce today an ambitious 10-year program aimed at dramatically increasing the link among schools, communities and social service -- all part of a concerted commitment to what is being called 'civil education.'

The groups, which represent more than 106,000 schools and universities with 64 million students, will announce plans that call for designating 10,000 schools by June 1998 as models for involving students in a range of social service activities like food drives, environmental projects and working with the elderly. The organizers eventually hope to involve up to 16,000 school districts and 3,600 colleges and universities.

Organizers, who call themselves the Partnering Initiative on Education and Civil Society, stress that the notion is not to distract from schools' primary goals of teaching the basics of education but to integrate learning into the world outside the classroom. But the initiative is being greeted with skepticism by some groups and parents more interested in educational basics than the idea that community service should be a large part of school.

Proponents say the initiative is especially important at a time when the notion of restoring a sense of community is so much a part of the national debate and when the educational spotlight has increasingly been on a push for higher test scores, better tests and more rigorous standards. Groups supporting the initiative include the National Education Association, the Department of Education, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and the American Association of School Administrators.

Don Ernst, director of government relations for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, said: 'I think one of the things that has been lost in the past decade and maybe longer is the belief that there is more to education than simply preparing people for a job.'

'So this is about reminding us that schools also exist to educate kids to be good citizens and to re-create and reinvigorate American democracy.'

Handwritten note:
→ nationwide program set up by private/corporate to encourage service links bet schools + community

But skeptics, particularly some conservative groups, say that the initiative is a wrong-headed, feel-good diversion from the real needs of American education and that character education often leads schools to usurp parents as teachers of values. And whether such programs should be voluntary or mandatory has already been a vexing question in several communities and states.

'It's a bad idea that gets our eye off the ball of what the real problem is, which is illiteracy,' said Phyllis Schlafly, president of the conservative Eagle Forum. 'I think it's a diversionary tactic from the real problem of the schools.'

Character education, civil education, service learning, learning to serve -- the various ideas loosely tied together in the group's mission have slowly grown in influence in recent years. Many states and school systems already use such programs, although on a scattered basis. The idea of the partnership is to bring them to the center of the nation's educational mission.

Earlier this month, in unveiling his President's Summit on Service, to be held April 27 to 29 in Philadelphia, President Clinton endorsed the broad notion of civil education in schools, saying, 'Today I challenge schools and communities in every state to make service a part of the curriculum in high school and even in middle school.'

Most of the programs already in place are designed to enhance classroom learning with experience in the outside world. Students often design and develop programs instead of just being passive participants.

What the organizers call civil education takes almost endless forms -- the University of Pennsylvania's social service programs in its low-income West Philadelphia neighborhood; in Kentucky, Berea College's work with local environmental organizations; the work with the Special Olympics Volunteer Program at Windsor High School in Windsor, Conn., and the project at the Scarsdale Alternative School bringing food and clothing to the homeless in New York City.

At the Harmony School in Bloomington, Ind., students organized a project to save a piece of sculpture that had served as a community landmark and gave up an annual trip to Chicago to spend time doing flood relief work on the Mississippi River.

In all the programs the idea is not just to do worthy service but to incorporate service into education -- learning biology by an environmental program cleaning up a polluted stream or learning history by building relationships with World War II veterans.

At Clatskanie High School in Clatskanie, Ore., students have organized 'Help Hungry Kids,' a food drive endorsed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

'I would consider this program just as important as teaching the traditional academics because it teaches values in a very hands-on and personal way, said the school's principal, Rose Wallace. 'You don't teach values by pointing and saying: 'This is a value. Now you adopt it.' You teach it by giving people the opportunity to practice that value and see how it feels.'

Scott Kirkland, a senior active in the program, said it has taught him both the business skills of running the program and the personal ones of why it matters.

'It has really opened up my eyes to aspects of life,' he said. 'I feel very lucky because of what I've seen and what I've been able to do.'

The Partnering Initiative plans to call for designating 10,000 schools as resource centers that help other schools develop programs and involving 600 to 700 teachers and community leaders as 'coaches' helping to develop and monitor programs. It calls for a national resource center and web site to share information and a number of events to publicize the initiative. The first 'Civil Education Week' will be celebrated in the second week of November 1998.

Title: TEACHING JOHNNY TO BE GOOD
Authors: Roger Rosenblatt; Roger Rosenblatt is a contributing writer for the Magazine.
Source: The New York Times, Late Edition - Final
Date: Sunday Apr 30, 1995 Sec: 6 Magazine Desk p: 36
Length: Long (5265 words) Illus: Photo
Subjects: EDUCATION & SCHOOLS; ETHICS
Names: LICKONA, THOMAS (PROF)

More on
Character
Councils
programs

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Article Text:

TWENTY-TWO WHEATIES-BOX SIXTH GRADERS SIT IN a circle in the Lansing Middle School in Lansing, a white-bread town of 10,000 in the center of New York State. Its sights are silos, old barns, cow-crossing signs, paint-peeling houses with collapsing porches and neat, new frame houses, mostly one story, strung out on the black roads that run among the hills. A 20-minute commute from Ithaca, Lansing is home to professors' kids as well as those of merchants and farmers. The 11-year-olds look scrubbed and alert on this recent Monday morning. All wear jeans and the elaborate sneakers of the times. All are intent on the teacher, Phyllis Smith-Hansen, who is 46 years old, has a broad Scandinavian face, wheat-blond hair and blue slits for eyes and whose chair in the circle is closest to the blackboard. She has posted a quotation of H. Jackson Brown Jr., the inspirational-book author, 'Let people know what you stand for -- and what you won't stand for,' along with a slightly amended quotation from Edmund Burke, 'The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men (and women) to do nothing.'

Smith-Hansen is about to teach a class in character education, a subject unheard of a generation ago, but today taught to millions of American children in the nation's public schools. She is a devoted student, if not a disciple, of Thomas Lickona, a developmental psychologist and a professor of education at the State University of New York at nearby Cortland. Lickona is an acknowledged leader of the burgeoning character education movement. He has recently established the Center for the 4th and 5th R's (Respect and Responsibility) at SUNY-Cortland, which is becoming something of a national center for the study and development of character education curricula.

Character education represents an effort to teach moral behavior to primary- and secondary-school students in a time perceived to be morally rudderless and to be without such teaching in local communities or in the home. Across the country, teachers are confronting children with moral dilemmas and asking them to think and talk. The felt need for this kind of education is so deep and widespread that it has spurred a movement that has attracted as many former activists of the 1960's -- Lickona is one -- as it has conservative thinkers and politicians of the 1980's. (Supporters include Barbara Jordan, Barbara Bush, Marian Wright Edelman, Jesse Jackson, Tom Selleck and Nathan Glazer.)

It is a quiet movement, and a rather disparate one, encompassing not only Lickona's methods but also other approaches to the teaching of basic values and moral reasoning. Its goal is simple and vast: to fix a broken America, an America whose children no longer seem to know right from wrong. Last year, the Mississippi Board of Education voted unanimously to develop a plan for 'the teaching of values.' The New Hampshire Department of Education recently announced that a like-minded program would be set up in that state. The New Jersey Department of Education has endorsed a set of 'core values' for school education and set up a council to define commonly accepted values. Similar efforts are in progress at the local level -- in big cities like St. Louis, Seattle, Chicago and San Antonio

What
states
are
doing

and in smaller places like Frankfort, Ky. Classes in character education are held in rural and suburban schools, like those around Lansing, and in inner-city schools, like Theodore Roosevelt High School in the Bronx.

There already has been one White House Conference on Character Building for a Democratic, Civil Society and a second conference is in the planning. President Clinton and Congress have declared Oct. 16-22 as National Character Counts Week. That one could devise such a name without embarrassment suggests how seriously people take the movement.

Beside Lickona's center at Cortland, there is the Josephson Institute of Ethics in Los Angeles, which supports a Character Counts Coalition. Amitai Etzioni, a leader of the Communitarian movement, has devoted the energy of his Communitarian Network to advance the cause. Boston University has established the Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character specifically to develop character education. All this is in addition to the work of individual schoolteachers and educators at the university level who are turning the idea that values can be formally taught into a field of study -- Kevin Ryan at Boston University; Kevin Walsh at the University of Alabama; William Damon at Brown University, and others. Kevin Ryan says: 'We've had 10 years of talking about school reform. This issue is at the heart of school reform.' For Kevin Walsh, the ultimate purpose of character education is nothing less than 'to prepare the next generation to inherit society.'

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institutes

Phyllis Smith-Hansen has just finished showing some members of the next generation a film on the Nazi persecution of the Jews. She now writes the following words in a vertical row on the board behind her: 'stereotype, prejudice, cliques, Holocaust.' Beside that row, she writes 'conscience.' She asks the class: 'Can you relate any of the first row of words?'

A girl in a Notre Dame sweatshirt: 'The Nazis didn't like the Jews because they thought only they were the best. They had their own special group.'

Smith-Hansen: 'So a clique is an excluding group of people. How would stereotypes fit into what a clique is?'

A boy in a backward baseball cap: 'Well, like the rumor was that if you had dark hair and dark eyes, then you're automatically a Jew and you're not a perfect Christian, so you're evil or bad or something and you should be put to death.'

Smith-Hansen: 'So you're saying that a stereotype is a belief about a group supervisor of a local electric power plant, talked over the subject matter with Smith-Hansen before Nate took the course. He walked away, he said, with 'no reservations at all.' He calls character education 'a great hope for our future.'

The reason Smith-Hansen's class is especially valuable, he says, 'is that it encourages kids to discuss the issues with their parents at home.'

I asked him: 'But what if home doesn't want to hear such talk?'

'Then,' Holden replied, 'those are the kids who need the class most.'

Over the years, Smith-Hansen has been challenged by parents who were afraid that her course would contradict their religious beliefs. 'I respect the religious traditions of any family,' she says, 'and I know that what I teach would survive inspection by any religion.' Yet she has been willing to compromise. One of her students this year is a Christian Scientist. By agreement with the parents, that student will be absent when Smith-Hansen teaches about AIDS prevention, since such a discussion involves viruses as a cause of illness and death.

The reality is that Smith-Hansen will not know where parental opposition lies, because it's usually hidden. 'I encourage understanding that precludes racial hatred, violence in personal conflicts, stereotyping and other such attitudes. Of course, this teaching will clash with the attitudes of some parents. It's far more likely that they will trash me at the dinner table.' A child once reported that his father ran an illegal

rest of article = interview.

(R) Service.

NYT - June 11, 1995

Article Text:

Roger Rosenblatt's 'Teaching Johnny to Be Good' (April 30) addresses the growing national dialogue about character building for a democratic and civil society. Schools are right to attempt to address this issue. First, however, character building -- like all learning -- must begin in the home.

The Department of Education is pleased to co-sponsor the second annual White House Conference on Character Building for a Democratic, Civil Society -- a bipartisan national forum for young people. And our department soon will be providing small grants to schools to develop character education programs that fit their needs.

RICHARD W. RILEY
Secretary of Education
Washington

Access No: 9300013076 ProQuest - The New York Times (R) Ondisc
Title: TEACHING JOHNNY TO BE GOOD
Source: The New York Times, Late Edition - Final
Date: Sunday Jun 11, 1995 Sec: 6 Magazine Desk p: 14
Length: Short (72 words) Type: LETTER
Subjects: EDUCATION & SCHOOLS
Names: ROSENBLATT, ROGER; MCDONNELL, SANFORD N
Companies: CHARACTER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP INC

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(R) Service.

Article Text:

Since retiring as chairman of McDonnell Douglas in 1988, I have been devoting myself full time to getting character education back into the public schools. We don't want young people graduating into our corporations or communities who are brilliant but dishonest, who have great intellectual knowledge but don't really care about others.

SANFORD N. MCDONNELL
Chairman, the Character
Education Partnership Inc.
Saint Louis

Access No: 9300013078 ProQuest - The New York Times (R) Ondisc
Title: TEACHING JOHNNY TO BE GOOD
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Length: Short (61 words) Type: LETTER
Subjects: EDUCATION & SCHOOLS
Names: ROSENBLATT, ROGER; GALVIN, ROBERT W

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(R) Service.

Article Text:

I was pleased to read your report on character education. The movement provides hope that the workers of the future will be first-rate people as well as first-rate intellectuals. We can expect no less if our country is to continue as the world's foremost economic power.

ROBERT W. GALVIN
Chairman of the
Executive Committee,
Motorola Inc.
Schaumburg, Ill.

Access No: 9300013079 ProQuest - The New York Times (R) Ondisc
Title: TEACHING JOHNNY TO BE GOOD
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Length: Short (62 words) Type: LETTER

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(R) Service.

Article Text:

As employers, we obviously need employees who understand science, mathematics, history and communications, to name but a few disciplines. But without a high set of personal standards, like those emphasized in character education programs, all the traditional subjects are of little value.

NORMAN R. AUGUSTINE
President, Lockheed Martin
Corporation
Bethesda, Md.

Access No: 9300007292 ProQuest - The New York Times (R) Ondisc
Title: TEACHING JOHNNY TO BE GOOD
Source: The New York Times, Late Edition - Final
Date: Sunday May 21, 1995 Sec: 6 Magazine Desk p: 12
Length: Short (130 words) Type: LETTER
Subjects: EDUCATION & SCHOOLS; ETHICS
Names: KIRSCHNER, JOSEPH

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(R) Service.

Article Text:

Rosenblatt states that character education was a 'subject unheard of a generation ago.' On the contrary, in the 1960's and 70's there was intense interest in teaching values in school. One strong impetus came out of the human-potential movement and another out of Lawrence Kohlberg's work on the theory of moral development.

Interestingly, the public schools in 19th-century America adopted not only the rhetoric but the practice of character education. Using the famous McGuffey's Eclectic Readers, virtues were fostered, including thrift honesty, piety, punctuality and industry.

Yes, let's address the matter of values and character in the rearing of our young. But let's examine and learn from our long history with this issue.

JOSEPH KIRSCHNER
Evanston, Ill.

Access No: 9300001913 ProQuest - The New York Times (R) Ondisc

The Sweet Home Story

A Districtwide Approach. In 1988 Dr. James Finch, then superintendent of Sweet Home Schools in Amherst, New York, wrote a letter to all district staff asking three questions: "Are you concerned about the values and attitudes of our students? Should the school be doing something about this? If so, would you like to be involved?"

Seventy-five persons wrote replies. Dr. Finch set up a 19-member District Values Education Council, chaired by Middle School teacher Sharon Banas and representing teachers, parents, administrators, paraprofessionals, classified personnel, students, and the School Board. The District Council then charged each building with the task of identifying its top values concerns and coming up with strategies for addressing them.

The building character education committees have continued the approach of getting everyone involved. Building committees have included administrators, teachers, librarians, nurses, secretaries, custodians, guidance counselors, parents, and students. Once a month, representatives from each building meet to report activities they have successfully implemented in their schools. A monthly Values Education Newsletter describing these activities goes to all staff and parents.

At Sweet Home Middle School, students have made large vinyl banners that read **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY DAY** and **I WANT RESPECT AND I SHOW IT** and hung them in school corridors. Daily messages on the themes of respect and responsibility are included in the morning announcements and repeated on the electronic message board in the cafeteria.

The Middle School **S.M.I.L.E.** Club ("Students Motivated In Leading Each other"), whose only qualification is that "you be a person who cares about others," raises funds for school projects, sends a card to all students and staff members on their birthday, provides a buddy for new students to ease their school transition, and prepares and distributes to all students a monthly **Caring Calendar** with daily suggestions for how to show caring (e.g., "Compliment another student today," "Be kind to the office and cafeteria staff," "Compliment a teacher," "Don't spread rumors").

A **Positive Bus Program**, led by bus driver Mary Zimmerman, promotes respect and responsibility on all the school busses.

"There hasn't been a single parent complaint about the school teaching values," says Dee Serrio, President of Sweet Home's PTA Council. "Parents had input, and this whole program contains nothing more than the values parents said they wanted for their children."

Sweet Home's districtwide values program has been written up in the New York Times, featured at the Annual Values Education Conference sponsored by the New York State Education Department, and presented at national conferences.

Contact: Sharon L. Banas, Values Education Coordinator, Sweet Home Middle School, 4150 Maple Road, Amherst, NY 14226; (716) 837-3500. Available for ordering: Sweet Home Values Education

The Chicago Miracle

When Sylvia Peters arrived at the Alexander Dumas School (K-8) in Chicago, chaos prevailed. "It was," she says, "in no meaningful sense a school." She comments:

I began by collecting the guns and the knives. One of the first things I did was to put my hands on everyone. I'd gently take their faces even ones who were taller than I am and talk to them. You could feel the whole place calm down. It also stopped a lot of bad behavior.

We had sixth-graders getting pregnant. I thought for a long time about what I could say to these children about sex. I knew what kinds of situations they were coming from. I decided to tell them, "Do not have sex until you are married you will wreck your life."

Principal Peters also:

1. Implemented a character education curriculum (developed by the American Institute for Character Education) at all grade levels
2. With her faculty, defined seven values the school stood for
3. Wrote a pledge affirming these values that children and staff said together at the start of every day.

Dumas School Daily Affirmation

Let us join together and create a new approach to learning, living and loving. Let us celebrate the seven principles of self-love, respect, purpose, perseverance, integrity, creativity, faith and unity. Let us strive each day to be the best possible, treating each other as we wish to be treated and respecting human differences; and finally, let there be peace.

4. Developed a program in the arts
5. Got parents to make a commitment to encourage their children's learning

Under Sylvia Peters's leadership, Dumas School was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for educational excellence and featured on NBC television for its drug-free environment and character education program.

The Dumas education program is presented in the video "See Dick and Jane Lie, Cheat, and Steal: Teaching Morality to Kids." Available from Aims Media, 9710 DeSoto Ave., Chatsworth, CA 91311-4409; (800) 367-2467. Also contact: American Institute for Character Education, Dimension II Building, 8918 Tesoro, Suite 220, San Antonio, TX 78217; (800) 284-0499.

Let's Be Courteous, Let's Be Caring

Several years ago, Winkelman Elementary School, which serves a diverse community north of Chicago (some children are from welfare families, others come to school in limos), found itself unhappy with student attitudes and behavior. Fights and put-downs among children were common. Students would frequently "smart-off" ("I don't have to listen to you!") to teachers and other adults.

To address this problem effectively, Winkelman's principal and faculty decided they needed a schoolwide approach. They launched a project called Let's Be Courteous, Let's Be Caring that emphasized the values of courtesy and caring at every opportunity.

A giant display inside the school entrance defined "courtesy" in terms of observable behaviors: **(1) Saying please, thank you, you're welcome, and excuse me; (2) Being a good listener; (3) Waiting your turn; (4) Acting politely everywhere; and (5) Discussing problems.**

"Caring" was defined as: **(1) Sharing; (2) Respecting others' feelings; (3) Following rules; (4) Working cooperatively; and (5) Being a good friend.**

When teachers set up classroom rules with their students at the start of the year, they asked, "What rules do we need that will help us show courtesy and caring toward each other?"

When a child broke a rule, the teacher took him or her aside and asked, "Did that behavior show caring?" or "Did it show courtesy?" In this way, students learned to use these values as a yardstick for assessing their behavior.

Students wrote a school song on the theme of courtesy and caring, and planned and conducted weekly school assemblies on courtesy or caring presenting a skit or bringing in a speaker. When teachers had teacher-parent conferences, they said to parents, "We're working in school on courtesy and caring, and we need your help at home."

All students became involved in community service working, for example, with the physically handicapped or with the elderly in nursing homes so that they learned to care by giving care.

The moral environment at Winkelman steadily improved. Parents say fights are now very rare; children say that if you forgot your lunch, you can always count on somebody to give you some of theirs; and a veteran teacher who has taught in several other schools says that Winkelman students show an unusually high level of respect for adults and each other. Three years after beginning its character education project, Winkelman was recognized in a Chicago-area competition for excellence in both academic achievement and character development.

Contact: Winkelman Elementary School, 1919 Landwehr Road, Glenview, IL 60025.

The San Marcos Story: Keys to Total Success

The San Marcos, California school district faced a serious teen pregnancy problem 147 high school girls known to be pregnant during the 1984-85 school year.

San Marcos put together a multi-faceted program called Decision Making: Keys to Total Success. It included:

- ❑ **Daily 10-minute lessons for junior high school students on "how to be successful"** (using materials from the Jefferson Center for Character Education)
- ❑ **A 6-week course for 7th-graders on self-esteem and positive moral values**
- ❑ **A 6-week pro-abstinence course for 8th-graders, "Sexuality, Commitment, and the Family."**

The "Sexuality, Commitment, and the Family" course, created by **Teen Aid, Inc.**, offers these messages to young people:

1. **The only real, safe sex is having sex only with your marriage partner who is having sex only with you.**
2. **Abstinence offers freedom from guilt, doubt, worry; sexually transmitted disease; pregnancy; the trauma of abortion; loss of reputation; and pressure to marry early.**
3. **Abstinence offers freedom to become more creative in sharing feelings; develop skills and abilities; develop healthy self-appreciation; achieve financial stability before having a family; and develop greater trust in marriage.**
4. **After having been sexually active, it is possible to regain the advantages of abstinence. Decide to change; forgive yourself and others; change old habits; and develop new ways of sharing that do not include sexual activity.**

These ideas are developed through discussions and videos such as **Why Wait?** (leading students to discover for themselves the advantages of avoiding premarital sexual activity) and **Window to the Womb** (ultrasound footage of fetal development, demonstrating to students the power of their sexuality to create new human life). Teen Aid's program also sends summaries of all lessons to parents and encourages them to participate in a workshop on how to talk to teens about responsible sexual behavior.

San Marcos reports that two years after implementing its Keys to Total Success program, known pregnancies in the school dropped dramatically and have continued to remain significantly lower than they were before the program. Drug referrals, grade point averages, standardized test scores, and attendance rates also showed marked improvement.

The San Marcos character-building program won a California state award for excellence in education and is included in the National School Boards Association's handbook of 100 outstanding school programs.

Contact: David Brooks, Jefferson Center for Character Education, 2700 East Foothill, suite 302, Pasadena, CA 91107; (818) 792-8130 (for information on the character education curriculum).

Contact: Teen Aid, E. 723 Jackson, Spokane, WA 99207; (509) 482-2868 (for information on the

Shoreham-Wading River Middle School : An Advisory System

As adolescence approaches and peers become more important, it often becomes harder for students to communicate honestly and trustingly with parents and teachers. And yet they need adult guidance. Shoreham-Wading River Middle School has built its entire program around an advisory system that emphasizes support and advocacy for every child. Besides giving adults a context in which they can effectively guide students, the advisory system provides students with a supportive peer group and strengthens communication between school and home.

1. **Each student is placed in an advisory group with one staff member and 7 to 12 other students.** Advisors include academic teachers; art, music, physical education, and library teachers; and administrators.
2. **Every morning, the advisor's job is to meet with his or her group of students for 12 minutes, similar to the familiar homeroom period.**
3. **The advisor meets again daily with the group for 15 minutes during advisory lunch.** a) The advisory group discusses school issues, shares what has been happening to its members, plans group functions, and discusses current events. The group is a source of identity.
4. **Advisors have built into their schedules a conference period three mornings a week specifically for meeting with advisees on a one-to-one basis or in small groups.**
5. **On a fourth morning the group of advisory teachers meets to discuss students.** This conference period is held during the first period when music rehearsals are also scheduled. (There are two bus runs each morning.) This allows each child and advisor to be alone while the other students are still at home. A sixth grade teacher notes: "First period is what makes advisory what it is. Without the first period option the 12-minute advisory would be just like homeroom in the old days."
6. **During the conference period, the student and the advisor can discuss academic progress, work on a project together or discuss home or school problems.** a) The advisor is responsible for knowing enough about his or her advisees to make proper recommendations to parents and teachers about the children's programs.
7. **Emergency conferences may be called by either the advisor or the advisee and take place at lunchtime, after school, or between classes.**
8. **The advisor keeps the advisee's parents informed of academic progress or problems.** Parents appreciate the fact that when they have questions about their child, they know whom to contact at the school.
9. **Advisors meet formally with parents three times a year.**
10. **Advisors have the responsibility of keeping in touch with their advisees' teachers, especially at report card time.**

Following implementation of its advisory system, Shoreham-Wading River found that student discipline problems declined, staff morale improved, and parent involvement in the school including parent volunteers increased.

The Child Development Project

In the early 1980s, the Child Development Project (first piloted in San Ramon, California) set out to answer this question: Does a multifaceted character development program, begun in kindergarten and sustained throughout a child's elementary school years, make a measurable and lasting difference in a child's moral thinking, attitudes, and behavior? The CDP character program has five interlocking components:

1. A language arts curriculum that uses children's literature to reflect on values
2. Cooperative learning, giving students regular practice in learning to work with others
3. Discipline that uses class meetings to involve students in sharing responsibility for creating a classroom that respects others and supports learning
4. School service programs, such as cross-age tutoring and "buddy classes" (e.g., a 5th-grade class "adopts" a 2nd-grade class), that enable older kids to help younger ones
5. Family activities that offer parents ways to develop their children's character.

An example of component 5: Every two to three weeks, CDP teachers send home "family homework." Family homework often consists of value-laden, sometimes humorous stories for families to read together and talk about. Other activities: "Discuss family chores" and "List 4 rules you must follow at home, then discuss with your parents the reason behind each rule."

Says a mother of a 3rd-grade boy in a CDP school: "Once you get into it, it turns into fun. I learn things about Joey I never would have known. Instead of the usual, 'What did you do in school today?', conversations started by family homework let me discover the inside part of him."

In a longitudinal study, students in three CDP elementary schools, compared to students in matched control schools, were found to be: (1) more considerate and cooperative in their classrooms; (2) more likely to feel accepted by peers; (3) more skilled at solving interpersonal problems; and (4) more strongly committed to democratic values such as including everyone in a decision.

In a follow-up study in eighth grade, students who had had the CDP program showed stronger conflict resolution skills, had greater self-esteem, were involved in more extracurricular activities, and were less likely to use marijuana or alcohol.

Developmental Studies Ctr., 2000 Embarcadero, Suite 305, Oakland, CA 94606; (510) 533-0213



Lexus search on
character education
stories on char ed'n.
3rd floor

- [Click here](#) to read the Los Angeles Unified School District report.

THE PITTSBURGH STUDY

Excerpted from THE VALUE OF CHARACTER: SUMMARY by Judith McQuaide, Joyce Fienberg, and Gaea Leinhardt of the Learning Research & Development Center, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, October 1994

The Value of Character: SUMMARY examines the nature and effectiveness of the STAR character education program that has been widely adopted by school districts across the country. The STAR program of the Jefferson Center for Character Education is aimed toward fostering respect and responsibility in students and creating more positive school climates.

Two Pittsburgh foundations, the Scaife Family Foundation and the Vera I. Heinz Foundation, wanted an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the Jefferson Center's STAR program in use in a number of Pittsburgh area schools.

Professors Judith McQuaide, Joyce Fienberg and Gaea Leinhardt with the University of Pittsburgh School of Education conducted the study. Data were collected during one academic year in three elementary schools which serve very different populations (suburban, urban, and inner-city), and which are considered to be exemplars of STAR program use. The analysis focused on STAR lessons delivered to 5th graders on the grounds that students in their last year of elementary school would have been exposed to the STAR program the longest and would represent the most complete picture of what the program can do.

In their report, released in October 1994, the researchers state "Although teaching the concepts of good character to public school students is not new, the increase in attention focused on character education is a relatively recent phenomenon as school districts throughout the country add character education programs to the curriculum. This increase indicates that a growing number of educators perceive a need for such programs." "Attempts to determine the effectiveness of such programs," the report states, "are few and far between. ...with most program evaluations in this area coming primarily from the program developers themselves."

The professors' chose the STAR program because of its widespread acceptance and use in their local area as well as elsewhere throughout the country. In order to understand and evaluate how the program worked, the professors conducted extensive observations of the program in action, as well as in-depth interviews with students, teachers and school principals.

Data were collected from three very different schools which are not named to protect their right to confidentiality.

Answers were sought to the following questions:

- What are the perceived needs for this program in each school?
- What are the critical components of successful program use?
- Does the program meet the local needs?
- What are student's understandings of the program?

STATEMENTS BY THE RESEARCHERS

In all three schools, the STAR program was seen as being beneficial not only to the students but also to the

adults who were expected to model the behaviors. From discussing the STAR program in faculty meetings to planning displays and lessons, to looking for good student behavior to recognize and reward, all adults in the school found the STAR program concepts becoming part of their daily life, helping to foster a positive attitude throughout the building.

The STAR program was seen as one important component of a comprehensive effort to teach social skills. Each school in our study also used other, similar programs. In each case, the STAR program was considered to be the foundation; other programs were seen as complementary, building upon and reinforcing STAR concepts.

The STAR program was seen by the teachers and principals as a language-based tool which, by providing a common vocabulary, supported their efforts to enhance appropriate student behavior. Improving student behavior was seen as a logical prerequisite to the goal of improving students' academic success.

A major strength of this program, according to school principals and teachers, is in its simplicity and ease of use. Materials are well developed and easy to follow. No additional preparation is necessary for teachers or principals, and the program can easily be integrated into the life of the school.

STATEMENTS BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL

"The STAR program is a very positive program and I have been very pleased with it; and I have seen success with it; and I firmly believe in it. I firmly believe that this is a need of the hour in public education. Oh, if we could just somehow really infuse this as never before in these kids. Get these kids before they go off the deep end."

"I see the STAR program as developing language, and through repetition, and through it being implemented and built into every discipline within the school, the kids get it no matter where they are. Our focus here is to develop a language within the child and because we believe that language affects attitudes and attitudes affect behavior. So I see all of that linking together, tied together. "

"You're not pushing something else out of the curriculum. It is not time consuming; it's an attitude and it's a vocabulary change for some people."

"Teachers feel very comfortable implementing (STAR) because it is very simple. . . The program is planned; the banners are made; the posters are made. Scripts are there. It's appealing. The program is appealing enough to make you want to use it. It will meet the needs of the student; you will spend more time teaching after the program kicks in."

STUDENT RESPONSE

To determine whether or not students knew what the STAR program was all about, the researchers began by asking what the acronym "STAR" represents. Almost all students (28 out of 30) could state the phrase Stop, Think, Act, Review.

- Students answered this question with little or no hesitation. Such a high degree of recall suggests that this meaning for the STAR acronym has been very solidly learned by a large majority of students.
- Students were then asked if they actually practice the skill of stopping to think before acting. Responses were categorized as "yes, " "no, " and "sometimes. "
- Only two students answered "no, " that they did not stop to think before acting. Twelve students

- ☉ Only two students answered "no," that they did not stop to think before acting. Twelve students answered "yes" and sixteen answered "sometimes." They were also asked to give an example of a time when they did stop to think before acting, or when they should have first stopped to think. All thirty students were able to give examples, demonstrating not only that they knew the slogan, but also that they had internalized the ideas of stopping to think before taking action.
- ☉ Fewer students recalled the underlying theme (Success Through Accepting Responsibility) as a meaning for the STAR acronym (11 out of 30 or 37%).
- ☉ Students were next asked for a word representing a monthly theme that they had discussed, in order to determine if they were familiar with, or remembered, any of the monthly STAR themes, and also to discover which concepts were most often recalled... 23 out of 30 students (approximately 77%) remembered at least one theme.
- ☉ Student answers to this question reflect most of the actual program themes: How can I be a STAR? How can I be kind and courteous? How can I make good choices? How can I be of service to others? How can I show courage? How can I be honest and trustworthy? How can I show respect for myself and others? How can I carry out my commitments? How can I reward myself for being responsible? Thus, there seemed to be concrete evidence here of significant student internalization of the STAR program goals.
- ☉ To determine whether or not students were able to do the STAR actions, the researchers relied primarily on classroom observations and on students' self-reports during classroom discussions. Although the students in our study were not consistent models of ideal STAR behavior, there was a strong sense that they did try to enact appropriate behavior and that the frequent discussion helped to focus their attention on the program goals. As the school year progressed and students came to know each other well, they exhibited an increased ability to respond sensitively and positively toward each other.

CONCLUSIONS

The research team reached the following conclusions:

- ☉ The STAR program is carefully thought out and comprehensive, easy to use, and does not need to interfere with other curriculum demands.
- ☉ Because the STAR program addresses what most would consider to be universal values, the program can meet the needs of diverse school situations and populations. Regardless of the size of the school or the nature of its student population, no one argues against the need for students to have a sense of respect, responsibility, concern for others, and for reinforcement of ethical behaviors. All of the school personnel we interviewed felt that the STAR program met their local needs.
- ☉ One concern is finding ways to promote the program so that other principals will want to adopt and use it. Each principal knew of schools in which the program was not effective because of lack of commitment.
- ☉ Overall, the findings indicated that the STAR program was a highly valued, language-based social skills program which had a strong positive influence on the behavior of students in each school. In addition to the specific skills and themes of the STAR program, its ease of use and adaptability were significant to its success.

This research was supported in part by funds from the Scaife Family Foundation and the Vera I. Heinz Foundation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Los Angeles Unified School District

The current survey was designed by California Survey Research as a pilot study for the Thomas Jefferson Center, in cooperation with the Los Angeles Unified School District, to gather data on the various

discipline problems in the schools, and to learn the opinions of school administrators in the District toward the Thomas Jefferson Center's Values Education Project. In all, thirty-one schools participated in the survey at the beginning of the Fall 1990 semester. Twenty-five of the schools in the Thomas Jefferson Center Project were interviewed at the end of the Spring 1991 semester. The following are the key findings from the survey.

- All forms of reported discipline problems decreased from the academic year before the start of the program (the Fall 1990 semester) to the end of the first year of the program (the Spring 1991 semester). The biggest drop in discipline problems was in the number of tardy students sent to the office each month (40% decrease), followed by the number of students sent to the office for minor disciplinary problems (39% decrease), and major disciplinary problems, such as fighting, drugs, or weapons (25% decrease). See "Discipline Problems In The Schools" below.
- Coinciding with a decrease in the number of disciplinary problems, the median level of student participation in extracurricular activities increased slightly from the Fall 1990 semester to the Spring 1991 semester, as did the median number of students on the Principal's Honor Roll.
- Administrators reported an increase in student morale from the Fall 1990 semester to the Spring 1991 semester, but a slightly lower teacher morale for the same period.
- Schools administrators said parents were more involved in their children's education in the Spring 1991 semester than in the Fall 1990 semester. The increase in parental involvement was reported both at the school and in the home.
- The level of student responsibility increased from the Fall 1990 semester to the Spring 1991 semester. The administrators said that the students in their schools acted more responsibly, did not blame others, resisted peer pressure, and in general understood the concepts of respect, honest and responsibility more in the Spring 1991 semester than in the Fall 1990 semester.
- The benefits of teaching values systematically were rated higher at the end of the Spring 1991 semester than at the beginning of the Fall 1990 semester. An overwhelming majority of the administrators in both the Fall 1990 semester and the Spring 1991 semester believe that the teachers in their schools should spend more time teaching values to the students.
- Overall, the program exceeded the expectations of the administrators in reducing discipline problems, and providing the opportunity to teach values. Specifically, the administrators said the program achieved more than they anticipated, better student self-discipline, an opportunity to teach values in the classroom, and a common reference point to solve conflicts.
- The two most frequently mentioned "best" features of the program were that the lessons were easy to implement and that the program provided a common language and value system. Improved student-teacher communication, consistent themes, and the program should be available in Spanish, were some of the other comments made by the administrators.

DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS IN THE SCHOOLS

All forms of reported discipline problems decreased from the academic year before the start of the program (the fall 1990 semester) to the end of the first year of the program (the Spring 1991 semester). The biggest drop in discipline problems was in the number of tardy students sent to the office each month. The next biggest decrease was in the number of minor problems, followed by the number of students sent to the office for major disciplinary problems, such as fighting, drugs, or weapons. The figures reported below are from school records and based on actual occurrences. Because of the large variance of occurrences, only the median response for each question is reported. The median is a computed numeric value such that one-half of the administrators surveyed reported figures that are below the median, and one-half of the administrators surveyed reported figures that are above the median.

DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS IN THE SCHOOLS
Median Of The Reported Number Of ...

	Fall 1990	Spring 1991	% Change
Major disciplinary problems in an average month	20.0	15.1	-25.0%
Minor disciplinary problems in an average month	42.5	26.0	-38.8%
Suspensions in past academic year	50.0	42.0	-16.0%
Tardy students sent to office/month	50.0	30.0	-40.0%
Students with unexcused absences sent to office/month	27.5	22.5	-18.2%

Continue reading L.A.U.S.D. Executive Summary.
Return to the Jefferson Center homepage.

at a basketball game and they start using racist words. And you're the only one who feels differently. What do you do?'

Lindsay: 'I think I'd tell them that I don't like that. And I'd probably go and sit elsewhere.' She hesitates. 'And I think I'd also go up to the people they were saying things about and tell them I was sorry for what my friends were saying.'

Smith-Hansen: 'Would it be easy to do that, to be the only one?'

Lindsay: 'No. I mean, you want to be with your friends. But I'd still sit somewhere else.'

Boy: 'I thought everybody had the same conscience.'

Girl: 'We do, but we don't all listen to it.'

Smith-Hansen: 'Any other ideas about conscience?'

Boy: 'Well, someone might have a more developed conscience than someone else.'

Boy: 'Yeah.'

Boy: 'There you go.'

Girl with the braids: 'Don't you find your conscience in church?'

Smith-Hansen: 'Yes, you can find it in church.'

Same girl: 'Last Sunday, my priest said that all gays are bad people and that they're going to hell.'

Smith-Hansen: 'Let's talk about that.'

Caption:

Photos: THE TEACHER -- 'My job,' says Phyllis Smith-Hansen, 'is to continually define moral issues -- naming, naming, naming.' THE TEACHER'S TEACHER -- 'One of the virtues one teaches,' says Thomas Lickona, 'is the virtue of striving toward virtue.' (PHOTOGRAPH BY SAUL LIEBERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

EXAMPLE

MILITARY FullTEXT

FullTEXT

By C. Weinberger Page 1

Magazine: Forbes, May 6, 1996

Section: Commentary on events at home and abroad

ONE WAY TO FIX OUR SCHOOLS

Much has been done to improve education in subjects such as economics and geography in America's schools. And we will continue to hear about the need to improve proficiency in American history. But what has received the most rhetoric and the least action is the effort to restore an education in values and character to the curriculum, in the hope of improving behavior and reducing crime in our schools.

Fortunately, some advances have been made toward reinstating character education. One of this movement's staunchest supporters is Sanford McDonnell, Chairman Emeritus of McDonnell Douglas Corp. In 1988 he founded a program in St. Louis called Personal Responsibility Education Process. PREP now participates in some 30 school districts representing over 200,000 students. To quote its founder, "PREP is dedicated to the concept that teaching basic values is a major answer to the problems of our young people." After the program started, McDonnell soon found that behavior and academic performance improved significantly. Inspired,

→ program which DC School + Dayton School follows

Sandy McDonnell helped found the *Character Education Partnership* (CEP), based in Alexandria, Va. This is a national organization designed to help-via consultations with experts and access to data banks-school districts all over the country establish *character education* programs. CEP is not just for inner-city junior and senior high schools. As university presidents are concluding, *character education* is as important as *education* in other areas-and should be incorporated from kindergarten through graduate school.

One of the reasons values and *character* have been so neglected, even avoided, is the great tide of secularization that washed over the country during the last 30 years. Zealots, eager to block the teaching or mention of any principles appearing to favor one religion over another-or any religion at all, for that matter-have left us with no values. Can this much-needed, long-delayed effort to restore values accomplish anything?

Two examples are particularly encouraging. The Allen Classical/Traditional Academy in Dayton, Ohio is an inner-city elementary school with 70% of its nearly 550 students coming from single parent homes, and 86% coming from families receiving welfare benefits. In 1989 this school ranked 28th among the 33 elementary schools in its district, with a large percentage of its students involved in disciplinary problems. Then Rody Bernardo was appointed principal and began a *character education* program the next year. Disciplinary problems dropped sharply, and the school rose to 5th place by 1992. Today it ranks number one. Teacher attendance is now among the best in the district. What did all this cost? There was no increase in the budget for this program.

Jefferson Junior High is an inner-city school in Wash-ington, D.C. of

about 850 students, 80% of whom are from single-parent homes and many receive financial assistance. By the early 1980s the school was engulfed in fights, theft, teen pregnancy and total indifference toward academics. Families were moving out of the school district, and the situation seemed hopeless. Principal Vera White introduced *character education* into the curriculum. The result has been a notable decline in thefts, fights and absenteeism. Jefferson is now among the top middle schools in the district in attendance and academic achievement and is a major reason families are moving back into the neighborhood. Jefferson now has a waiting list of more than 500 students per year.

Dedicated, courageous people can achieve enormous results. One of CEP's main precepts is, "Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom," and while developing *character* in children is primarily the responsibility of families, it is also a shared responsibility of communities, schools and religious groups of all faiths.

We hear a lot about "corporate greed" but not nearly enough about what one retired chief executive, Sandy McDonnell, has done with his spare time. Our students need more such people-active corporate officers as well as retirees-who are willing to do more than simply inveigh against the jungle-like quality of many of our schools.

PHOTO (COLOR): Caspar W. Weinberger

PHOTOS (COLOR): Principals Rody Bernardo and Vera White: Turning their schools around by helping their students build positive *character*.

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By Caspar W. Weinberger, Chairman

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Item Number: 9604257502



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Sixth, character education must be taught in our schools. We must teach our children to be good citizens. And we must continue to promote order and discipline; supporting communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, remove disruptive students from the classroom, and have zero tolerance for guns and drugs in schools.

*Jan 4 '97*

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## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO: TOM FREEDMAN**

**FROM: JULIE MIKUTA**

**RE: CHARACTER EDUCATION**

**DATE: JUNE 4, 1997**

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### **SUMMARY**

This administration has repeatedly called for emphasis on character education (CE) in schools. It has distributed nearly \$1.9 million to 8 states through a grant facility to encourage state/community partnerships to implement CE programs in schools. A White House Conference on Character Education was held on June, 8 1996, and another is planned featuring Vice President Gore as the keynote speaker.

### **I. PROPOSAL**

During this administration both the school and private sectors have strongly promoted CE. The number of school running CE programs has increased to approximately 20%. Three national organizations have emerged. Their advisory boards include Jesse Jackson, Barbara Bush, William Bennett and Marian Wright Edelman. One organization, Character Counts, originated the idea of designating Oct 16-22 as Character Counts Week; this resolution has been passed since 1994. I suggest a Presidential event highlighting this surge of activity.

### **II. PROMINENT PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS**

Four private organizations are motivating the introduction of CE into schools, and publicizing the issue to local communities. Their advisory boards reflect the bipartisan support for this issue.

#### **1. Character Education Partnership:**

- runs a National Resource Center on CE
- works with school boards and school personnel, teacher education programs, and interested community members
- advisory board includes: Barbara Bush, Jesse Jackson, Peter Lynch, John Pepper; supporters include C. Weinberger
- founded by Sanford McDonnell, chairman emeritus of McDonnell Douglas Corp.

#### **2. Character Counts Coalition: Josephson Institute of Ethics in Marina del Rey, CA**

- advisory board includes: William Bennett, Marian Wright Edelman
- spokespersons include: Tom Selleck and Barbara Jordan
- 'six pillars of character' are: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and

citizenship

- program based on these six pillars in over 20 school districts across nation
- responsible for Resolution to designate Oct 16-22 as 'National Character Counts Week'

3. Communitarian Network:

- founded by William Galston, deputy assistant to the president (1994) and Amitai Etzioni, a George Washington University professor
- organized three White House conferences on character building (1994-96)

4. Partnering Initiative on Education and Civil Society:

- group of over 40 educational and social service groups
- planning 10-year program to increase link among schools, community and social service
- represent more than 106,000 schools and universities with 64 million students
- began in April, 1997

### III. FEDERAL LEVEL ACTIVITY

CE is a reoccurring theme in the President's speeches. It was one of his ten principles for education for his second term. A grant facility for implementing CE programs has been established under the Improving Schools Act, and 8 states currently receive funds. The largest state, California, has a project which will involve 30 schools within 4 years.

What We've Said

- Second Inauguration Speech: 'CE must be taught in our schools,' is sixth of 10 education principles.
- Feb 10/ 97: praise for Maryland's community service requirement for high school graduates in speech to General Assembly
- State of the Union, 1/96: challenge to schools to teach CE
- Sept 5, 95: announcement of first grants under Partnership project
- encouragement of CE in various speeches and radio addresses

What We've Done

*'Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project'* (under Title X of Improving Schools Act)

- Secretary of Education can make up to 10 grants annually to partnerships of State educational agencies and local educational agencies towards implementing CE
- grantees so far: IA, UT, NM, CA (9/95); MD, CT, WA, NC (6/96)
- largest grants: \$250,000 (CA, NM, CT, NC, WA: MD, UT at over \$246,000)

*Character Counts Week, Oct 16-22*

- designated by law or unanimous consent of Congress since 1994
- introduced for this year by Sen Domenici (NM)
- Character Counts Coalition (see below) originated idea

*April, 97: Secretary Riley met with founder of CEP (see below) and told him, "All standards issues are tied into character."*

*White House Conference on Character Education: June 8, 1996*

*A second White House Conference is planned on how to Implement Character Education; Vice President Gore will deliver keynote*

### IV. LOCAL PROGRAMS

Attached table describes successful local CE programs..