

Activity: **Caring Members**

Ages: **Youth to Adult**

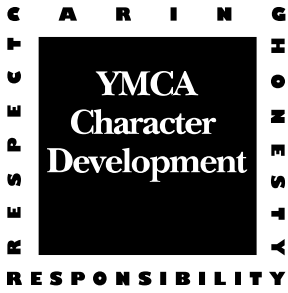
Value(s): **Caring**

Facility and Equipment: **Contact cards with names**

Description:

1. Have Y members write letters to other Y members who have not visited or participated in YMCA programs for a period of time (two to three months) to suggest ways in getting reinvolved in the YMCA. Members show they care about other Y members.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Be Good to a Friend Day**

Ages: **Adult**

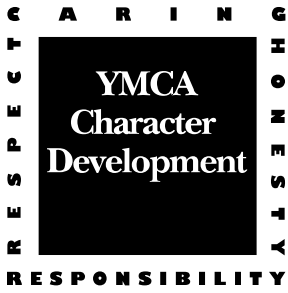
Value(s): **Caring**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. Designate one day as a free "Be Good to a Friend Day," where members and class participants are encouraged to bring someone to the YMCA for the day. Y members show they care about their friend by participating in a program or workout together.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Spirit Wall**

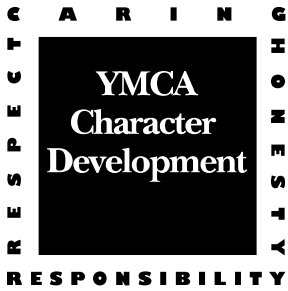
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring**

Facility and Equipment: **Bulletin board, preprinted notes, push pins**

Description:

1. A "spirit wall" is located in a high traffic area for everyone to come in and write a little note to let someone know that they were thankful that they had lifted their spirits in some way.



Activity: **Spirit Campaign**

Ages: **All**

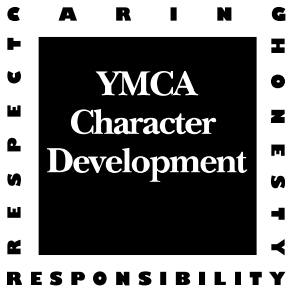
Value(s): **Caring**

Facility and Equipment: **100 wooden dowels 1/4" by 6", painted in character development colors, preprinted notes, spirit T-shirts**

Description:

1. "Thanks for caring for others" is a preprinted note that includes the character development theme, colors, and a line for a member's or staff member's signature.
2. When someone gives a member or staff member a spirit stick for exemplifying the caring value, the member or staff member signs the form, which is then placed on the "Spirit Wall."
3. Members and staff members can receive many spirit sticks from several people. Each time you receive a spirit stick, you must then pass it along to someone new who has lifted your spirit.
4. Every member or staff member who initially receives a spirit stick during the spirit campaign should receive one "spirit" T-shirt.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **10-5-1 Member Rule**

Ages: **Y staff**

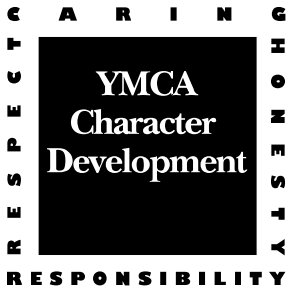
Value(s): **Respect**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. When YMCA staff are within 10 feet of a member, they must smile and acknowledge the member's presence.
2. YMCA staff who are within five feet of a member must smile, acknowledge, and greet the member by a handshake and call the member by name.
3. YMCA staff who are within one foot of a member must smile, acknowledge, greet, and ask the member, "How was your visit at the YMCA today?"
4. Reward staff for modeling this behavior.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **10-5-1 Staff Rule**

Ages: **Y staff**

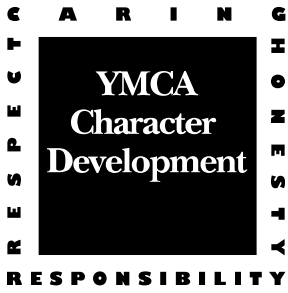
Value(s): **Respect**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. YMCA management staff who are within 10 feet of another staff member must smile and acknowledge the staff member's presence.
2. YMCA management staff who are within five feet of another staff member must smile, acknowledge, and greet the member by a handshake and call the member by name.
3. YMCA management staff who are within one foot of another staff member must smile, acknowledge, greet, and ask the staff member, "What can I do to help you do your job at the YMCA today?"
4. Reward staff for modeling this behavior.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Members as Volunteers**

Ages: **Adults**

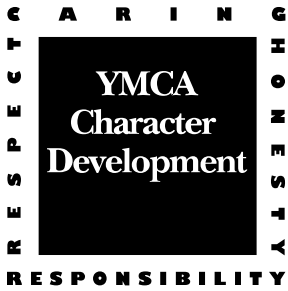
Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. Invite members to demonstrate their responsibility by becoming volunteers in a program or event that interests them.
2. Keep track of volunteers in a volunteer responsibility book in the YMCA lobby.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Staff can be Volunteers Too!**

Ages: **Y staff**

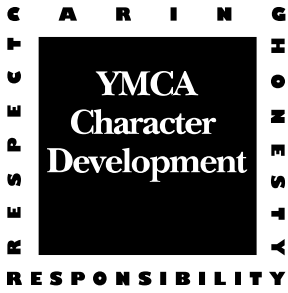
Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. Invite staff to demonstrate their responsibility by becoming volunteers in a program, event, or campaign that interests them.
2. Keep track of volunteers in a volunteer responsibility book in the YMCA lobby and highlight staff on the employee character development bulletin board.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Membership Cards**

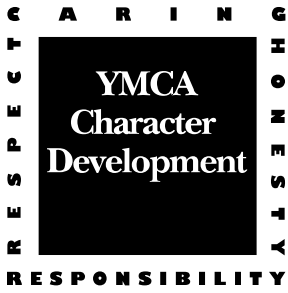
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Responsibility stickers (easy to remove)**

Description:

1. Thank members periodically for bringing their membership cards by placing a thank-you sticker on their membership card.



Activity: **YMCA Character Buddies**

Ages: **Adults**

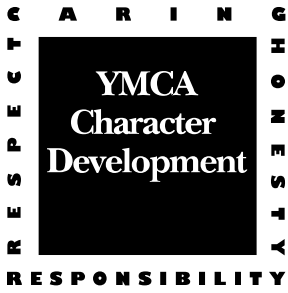
Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Special T-shirt or member nametag**

Description:

1. Initiate the YMCA Character Buddies program.
2. Train special volunteers to be "character buddies" to new YMCA members by helping in carpooling, getting new members involved, working out as partners, etc.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Informing Members**

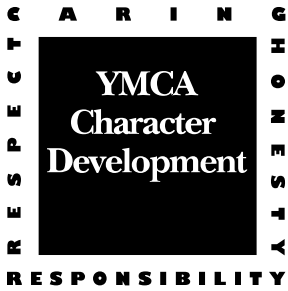
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Quarterly newsletter and promotional items**

Description:

1. Help inform Y members and program participants about the YMCA focus on the four values by distributing a quarterly character development newsletter with tips for families to try at home.
2. Track members by including a character development coupon in the newsletter to redeem for a YMCA promotional incentive (towel, magnet, T-shirt) with the character development logo.



Activity: **Informing Staff**

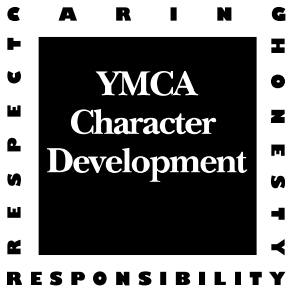
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Quarterly newsletter and promotional items**

Description:

1. Help inform Y staff members about the YMCA focus on character development by distributing a quarterly employee newsletter with character development tips for all staff.
2. Reward YMCA staff for newsletter submissions on character tips with a YMCA promotional incentive (towel, magnet, T-shirt) that includes the character development logo.



Activity: **Staff Bulletin Boards**

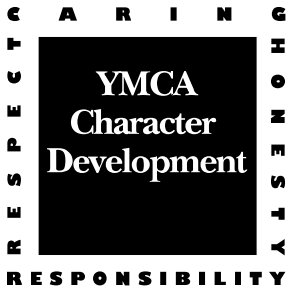
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Bulletin boards in employee lounge or staff area**

Description:

1. Design a character development bulletin board in the staff lounge or in areas where staff socialize. Decorate it with the four core values and their colors. You might want to use the entire bulletin board to highlight a particular core value.
2. Highlight staff or departments exemplifying any or all of the four values.



Activity: **Member Bulletin Boards**

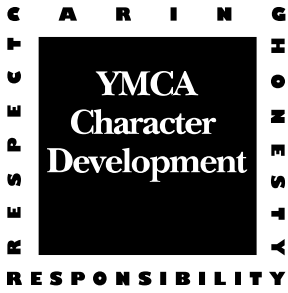
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Bulletin boards in high traffic areas**

Description:

1. Design a character development bulletin board in the Y lobby, areas where members socialize, and in high-traffic areas. Decorate them with the four core values and their colors. You might want to use the entire bulletin board to highlight a particular core value.
2. Use different age-appropriate each time you change the boards.



Activity: **Character Development Challenge**

Ages: **All**

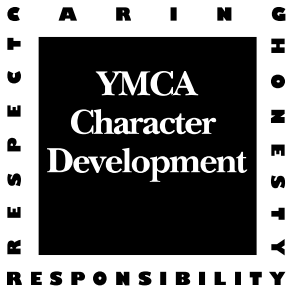
Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Character development activity box**

Description:

1. Sponsor a character development challenge. Invite all members, young and old, to contribute ideas that can build character.
2. Design the activity so that people who contribute ideas have an opportunity to become winners and receive a character development promotional item as a reward.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Staff Character Development Challenge**

Ages: **Y staff**

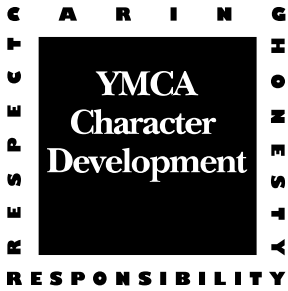
Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Character development activity box**

Description:

1. Sponsor a staff character development challenge. Invite all staff to contribute ideas that can build character.
2. Design the activity so that staff who contribute ideas have an opportunity to become winners and receive a character development promotional item as reward.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **We Caught You at Your Best**

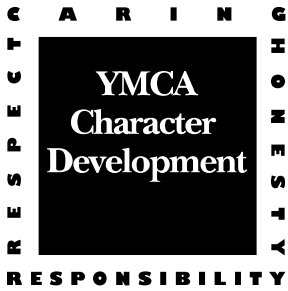
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Tracking box, bulletin board, forms**

Description:

1. Recognize Y members or staff who display one of the four character development values.
2. Develop a form to track how they displayed one of the values. Display each form on a "Character Development Wall of Fame."
3. Post a brief biography of how someone caught that member demonstrating one of the core values under his or her picture as a positive example for others.



Activity: **Member Appreciation Day**

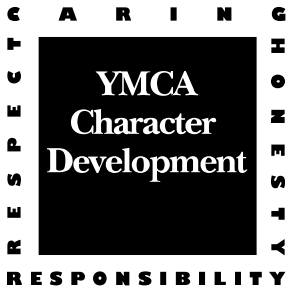
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Small items such as food, promotional items, tokens, and gifts**

Description:

1. Each department of the Y should take turns carrying out a member appreciation day or week.
2. Give a small token of appreciation to each member as they exit the Y facility. "We Care," "Honestly...Just Because," could be possible themes.



Activity: **Staff Appreciation**

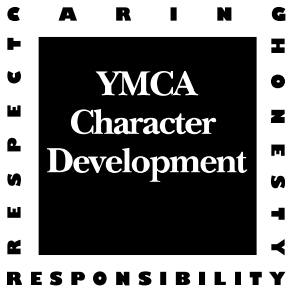
Ages: **Y management staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Small items such as food, promotional items, tokens, and gifts**

Description:

1. Management staff should take turns carrying out a staff appreciation day or week.
2. Give a small token of appreciation to each staff member. "We Care," "Honestly...Just Because," could be possible themes.



Activity: **Member Suggestion Box**

Ages: **All**

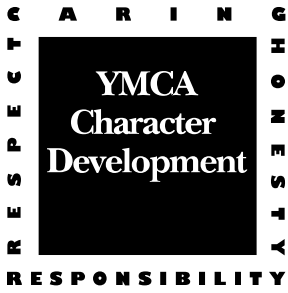
Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Suggestion box, suggestion form, bulletin board**

Description:

1. Place a sign on the Y's suggestion box that asks staff and members to tell ways they would like to see the YMCA highlight character development in their favorite program areas.
2. Post these suggestions on a character development bulletin board.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Devotions and Inspirations**

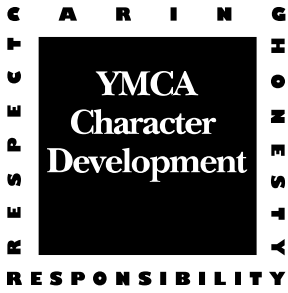
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **System to collect entries, duplication, and distribution**

Description:

1. Develop a devotional or inspirational booklet inviting staff and members to submit their favorite devotion or inspiration. Publish it and give members a copy in appreciation for their contributions.
2. You can also use them as gifts when recognizing volunteers and staff.



Activity: **Character Night at the Y**

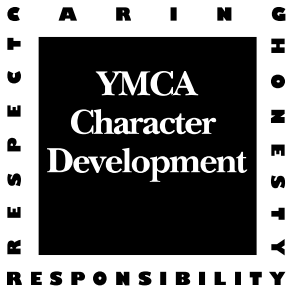
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Outdoor area or gymnasium**

Description:

1. Organize a character night at the Y that would include a movie, storytelling, games, and activities all centered around the four values.



Activity: **Read the Writing on the Wall**

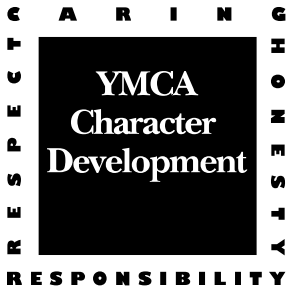
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Wall space or bulletin board**

Description:

1. Post a scriptural or inspirational quote reflecting one of the four character attributes in the lobby or in high-traffic areas.
2. Change the quote monthly.
3. Name the source and list any books or articles by the author to stimulate interest in reading.



Activity: **Prayer Box**

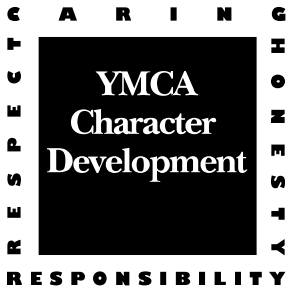
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Prayer box**

Description:

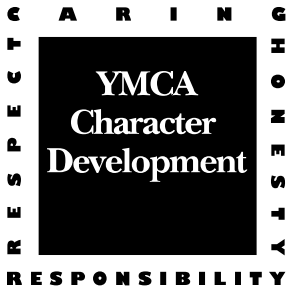
1. Provide a prayer or thoughts request box in high-traffic areas in the Y. Provide pen and paper with an inspirational message on the box.



Activity: **Values on Hold**
Ages: **Y staff**
Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**
Facility and Equipment: **Message on hold machine**

Description:

1. Provide encouraging quotes and positive character development messages for your members and potential members to hear while they are on hold.



Activity: **Walk the Talk**

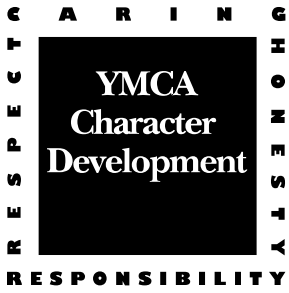
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. All YMCA staff walk the floors with a smile, modeling behavior of the four values to members and other staff.



Activity: **Display**

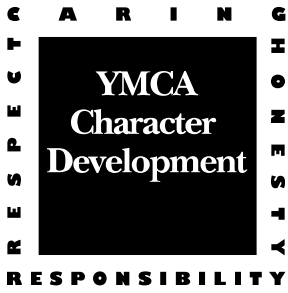
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Posters and frames**

Description:

1. Neatly frame and display the character development posters proudly on your walls in high-traffic areas.



Activity: **Happy Birthday**

Ages: **All**

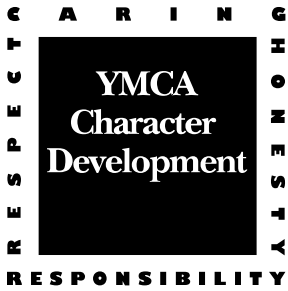
Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Happy birthday cards made by preschoolers in the YMCA**

Description:

1. Have Character Buddies (see Character Buddies activity) send birthday cards to members from information in the YMCA's membership database.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Happy Anniversary (wedding, adoption, accomplishment)**

Ages: **All**

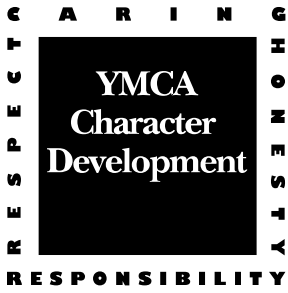
Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Happy anniversary cards made by preschoolers in the YMCA**

Description:

1. Have Character Buddies (see Character Buddies activity card) send anniversary cards to members from information in the YMCA's membership database.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Volunteer Recognition**

Ages: **Teen to adult**

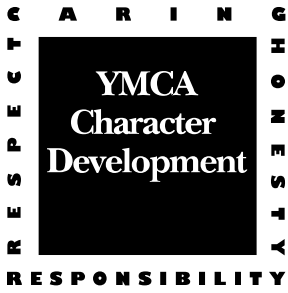
Value(s): **Caring, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Y bulletin board**

Description:

1. Highlight a volunteer each month on your character development bulletin board and outline the values of responsibility and caring.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **How May We Help You Today?**

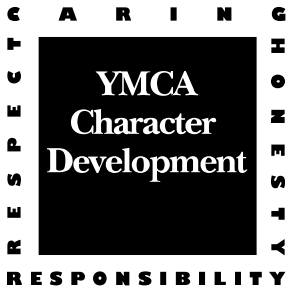
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. When members call with a question or concern, all staff members should respond with the utmost concern and caring in their voices and facial expressions
2. Search for the answer to a question that you are not able to answer immediately and get back to the member within an hour. Your responsible actions make a big difference.



Activity: **What's that Member's Name?**

Ages: **Y staff**

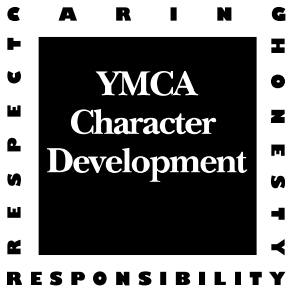
Value(s): **Caring, Honesty**

Facility and Equipment: **Paper and pen**

Description:

1. Staff members should greet members by name when they enter the Y's doors or pass by the reception area. People feel cared about when you know their name.
2. Front-line staff can keep track of how many members' names they remember and call by name.
3. Reward staff at the end of each month.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **Complainers into Champions**

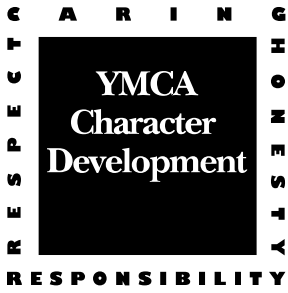
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Respect**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. If you hear a complaint, address the issue immediately and look to see how you can resolve the issue. "Wow" the member by going the extra mile.
2. During customer service staff meetings, role play an encounter with an upset member.
3. Use conflict resolution skills and resolve the issue by demonstrating the four core values as your "behavior guide." Discuss the role play situation and identify how the positive words, tone of voice, posture, etc., aided the staff representative and the upset member. Discuss ways in which the staff member could have responded differently.



Activity: **Where Everyone Knows Your Name**

Ages: **Y staff**

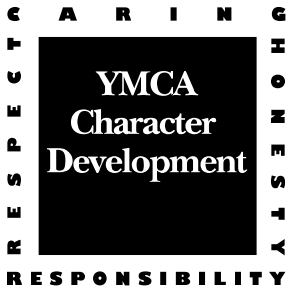
Value(s): **Caring, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. When giving tours, introduce the prospective members to staff you pass along the way. make your guests feel they are a part of the YMCA family.

Complements: **Member Involvement**



Activity: **We Caught You at Your Best**

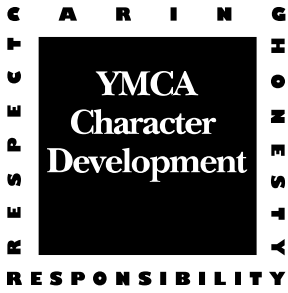
Ages: **Adult**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Form**

Description:

1. Recognize a staff member who demonstrates one or more of the values in their work.
2. Have staff, members, or volunteers fill out this triplicate form. One copy goes to the staff member, the second copy goes in their employee file, and the third copy goes to the executive director or CEO.



Activity: **Count Values**

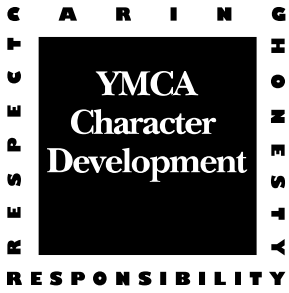
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. Greet fellow staff members with a smile or a big "hello." Say the four values to yourself before you inform them that the aerobics instructor called in sick, again.



Activity: **Job Descriptions**

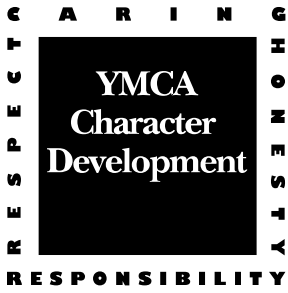
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. Ensure that the job descriptions of all staff members include a statement that says they are responsible for and held accountable in demonstrating the four core values.



Activity: **Character Rules**

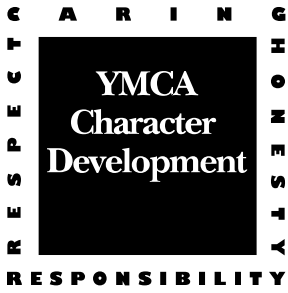
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Signs**

Description:

1. Post the following signs in the Y lobby and in high-traffic areas:
 - a. Teach the YMCA values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility.
 - b. Consistently model the YMCA values.
 - c. Celebrate values in action.
 - d. Practice values consistently.
 - e. Praise and reinforce modeled behaviors.
 - f. Confront behavior inconsistent with YMCA values.



Activity: **Character Kid Rules**

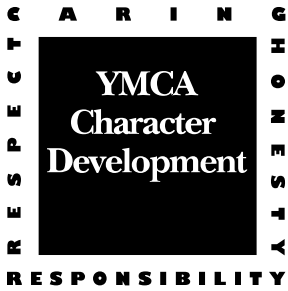
Ages: **6-17**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **Crayons and paper**

Description:

1. Have youth and teens draw pictures that describe each of the following four values and post the signs in areas that youth and teens are found:
 - a. Be Caring
 - b. Be Honest
 - c. Be Respectful
 - d. Be Responsible



Activity: **Character Development Training for Front-Line Staff**

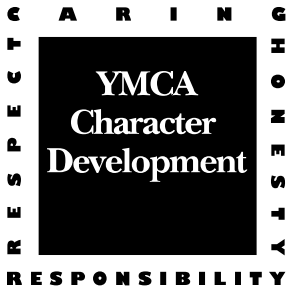
Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. In all staff and training meetings for front-line staff, discuss each of the four values as related to their daily interactions with members and program participants.
2. Discuss the four character development values of the YMCA and how they help members develop in spirit, mind, and body.
3. Ask staff for examples of each of these values while they are on the job. Have them share how they were caring or respectful, and how the member received it.
4. Ask staff for examples of behavior that goes against these values (by staff and members).
5. Ask for suggestions on how the staff can practice each value in their relationships with members.



Activity: **Character Development Stories**

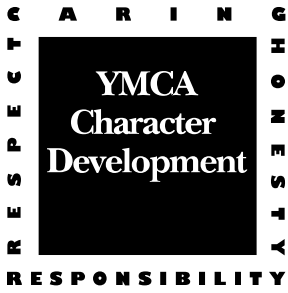
Ages: **All**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. Ask members of all ages to submit stories of "character development in action at the YMCA," which tell of a personal experience at the YMCA that showed one or more of the values in action.
2. Print the best stories in the YMCA's newsletter.



Activity: **Character Colors Day**

Ages: **Y staff**

Value(s): **Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: **None**

Description:

1. Encourage staff to wear clothing in the color representing each value on designated days.