How to Prevent Cruelty & Promote Kindness: 20+ Strategies for Creating Caring Classrooms & Schools

Dr. Thomas Lickona
Center for the 4th & 5th Rs
www.cortland.edu/character
Character education resources:

Center for the 4th and 5th Rs website:

- www.cortland.edu/character

- See the Winter 2012 issue of our excellence & ethics newsletter on bullying
GOALS OF THE WORKSHOP

1. Have fun.
2. Learn practical strategies you can use to develop caring classrooms and a caring school.
3. Be an ethical learning community.
Class Handshake

Shake hands with (or give a hug if you prefer)—and warmly greet by name—5 people you don’t already know.
Hand signal for quiet
THE DAILY FOUR

1. Share good news (with a partner; 1 min each).
2. Tell about someone or something you’re grateful for (new partner; 1 min. each).
3. Affirm someone in the class.
4. Make us laugh. (Joke must be clean.)

—Hal Urban, Lessons from the Classroom: 20 Things Good Teachers Do
(www.halurban.com)
“Just Do It!”
Action Ideas List
Comprehensive Character Education

BIG IDEA #1:
A high-quality, comprehensive approach to character education is the most effective way to develop caring classrooms and schools—and thereby reduce bullying.
SCHOOLWIDE STRATEGIES
Caring beyond the classroom

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

- The teacher as caregiver, model, and mentor
- Teaching conflict resolution
- Ethical reflection
- Conscience of craft
- Cooperative learning
- An ethical learning community
- Character-based discipline
- A democratic classroom environment
- Teaching character through the curriculum

PERFORMANCE CHARACTER and MORAL CHARACTER

CREATING A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE AND ETHICS

SCHOOLS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITIES AS PARTNERS
The 12-point comprehensive approach to character education. . .

. . . is intentional, deliberately seeking to positively impact character development through every phase of school and classroom life.
School Climate Matters

Bullying is strongly related to overall school climate. Bullying decreases when:

- school climate improves
- students have greater voice and responsibility for solving problems and making decisions that improve their school.

—Dr. Maurice Elias, Rutgers University (based on a study of more than 100 schools)
What Commercially Available Bullying Prevention Programs Work?

_Educational Leadership (9/2011):_

- A meta-analysis of 44 bullying prevention programs found that fewer than half (19) were effective.

- Vreeman & Carrroll analysis (2007): _Classroom curricula alone did not reduce bullying._
Programs found to be effective . . .

1. Work to create a **school climate** where bullying is socially unacceptable
2. Enlist the support of the **community**
3. Increase **supervision** of playground and other areas
4. Institute firm **sanctions** for bullying
5. Use ongoing messages to help students recognize aggression and **support** and **stick up for victims**.
A student is being bullied when:

_One or more students repeatedly:_
1. say mean and hurtful things to someone
2. ignore or exclude someone
3. hit, kick, push, shove, or lock someone in a room
4. tell lies or spread rumors about someone
5. do other hurtful things.

—Olweus Bullying Prevention (olweus.org)
Olweus Bullying Prevention

Study of 18,000 students, elementary-H.S.

After 2 years of implementation, there was:

- 22% reduction in student reports of being verbally bullied
- 23% reduction in reports of being physically bullied.
The challenge:

- How to reduce the nearly 80% of the bullying that *remains* even after implementing a state-of-the-art bullying prevention program such as Olweus?
Answer:

- A comprehensive character education program that not only seeks to *suppress* the negative behavior of bullying but also to *promote* its *psychological opposites*:

  virtues of respect, cooperation, and kindness.
BIG IDEA #2:

Any virtue, and character as a whole, has 3 parts:

- Knowing (habits of the mind)
- Feeling (habits of the heart)
- Behavior (habits of behavior)
Good Character:

You have to . . .

- *know it* in your **head**
- *feel it* in your **heart**
- *show it* with your **hands**.
Billy’s Story

A 4th-grader, Billy was surly, wouldn’t do his work, and got into fights nearly every day. His father was in prison. His mother was an alcoholic. Billy himself was already starting to use alcohol.

**How could you help Billy:**

1. Stop fighting?
2. Develop his character—head, heart, and hand—so he is a more respectful and responsible person?
1. He could be the special friend and protector of a 1st-grade boy in a wheelchair.

2. He could help the boy on and off the school bus, sit with him at lunch, be his guardian on the playground, and visit him daily in his class.

3. If he got in any kind of a fight at school, he lost the privilege of further contact with the 1st-grade boy for the rest of that day.
Richard Curwin, *Rediscovering Hope: Our Greatest Teaching Strategy*

- Problem teens were paired with seniors in nursing homes and kids in hospitals.
- They made daily visits, helped them in various ways, & formed close attachments.
- For most of these teens, *significant changes in attitudes and behavior occurred.*
- Many subsequently said they wanted to go into a “helping profession.”
Young people develop character by what they see, what they hear, and what they are repeatedly led to do. *Directed practice* is the most important part.

—James Stenson, *Compass: A Handbook of Parent Leadership*
BIG IDEA #3:
Students need **MORAL VIRTUES** to become good and behave ethically.

They need **PERFORMANCE VIRTUES** to become smart and do their best work.
What is good character?
The Mission of Every School:

- To develop *performance character* and *moral character*—best work and best behavior—through an *ethical learning community*.
A Growing Character Problem:

- School bullying
- Cyberbullying
Children remind me of chickens, seeking out the weak and wounded and pecking them to death.

They have discovered that my 9-year-old son, who is autistic, is bothered by loud noises, and they scream and whistle in his ear until he cries.

—A mother
When students are victims of peer cruelty, it:

- Interferes with their learning.
- Disrupts their social and moral development.
- Makes school a miserable experience.
- Causes some to seek revenge.
- Causes others to become depressed and even suicidal.
All my life I have been teased. I love you very much, but I just couldn’t stand it any more.

—An 8th-grade girl’s suicide note to her parents
Suicide and Bullying

- Each year, 14% of U.S. high school students seriously consider suicide.

- Victims and perpetrators of bullying are both at higher risk of depression and suicide.

- The effects of chronic bullying can persist into adulthood.
U.S. Secret Service Study:

- Two-thirds of the student shooters had been bullied by fellow students.
The Societal Costs of Bullying

- By adulthood, 60% of school bullies will have a criminal conviction.
The Educational Costs of Bullying

- Peer exclusion in kindergarten is associated with lower academic achievement in later grades.

- Even observing someone else being bullied can lower a student’s academic performance.
Two Kinds of Bullies

- **Socially marginalized** bullies (who may be victims of bullying themselves)

- **Socially connected** bullies, who often have many friends and strengths such as social skills, athleticism, and physical attractiveness.
American Sociological Review (2/10)

Asked 4,000 students, grades 8-10: “Have you ever engaged in peer aggression, physical or verbal?”

- One-third said yes.
- The *more popular* students reported *more frequent social aggression* (rumor-spreading, exclusion, and the like).
10-year U.S. study

- Of 70,000 middle and high school students, only 37% agreed with the statement:

  “Students in my school show respect for one another.”

—National Center for Student Aspirations
U.S. Students Who Say They Are Bullied 2-3 Times Monthly

- 23% of elementary students
- 17% of middle schoolers
- 11% of high school students

—Olweus (www.olweus.org) study of more than a half-million students grades 3-12 in 45 states.

- 10% of middle and high school students say they are bullied 1-2 times a week.
- 13% (grades 6-10) report being cyberbullied.
Characteristics Increasing Risk of Being Bullied

- Low self-esteem and low assertiveness
- Anxiety, depression, and withdrawal
- Aggressiveness in early childhood—leading to peer rejection and isolation

These risk factors interact with:

- Family environment
- School environment
Bullied During the Past Year

- 2005 survey of students ages 13-18:

“65% reported being verbally or physically harassed or assaulted because of their perceived or actual appearance, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or religion.”
PROMOTING AUTHENTIC RESPECT

“We uphold standards of behavior which honor the dignity and worth of all individuals regardless of gender, ethnicity, race, age, physical or mental abilities, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background.”
What does it mean to respect someone?

Respect does *not* mean we have to agree with all of a person’s values, beliefs, or behaviors—sexual or otherwise. We may deeply disagree.

But we nevertheless respect that person’s right to believe and live according to their conscience, as long as they do not infringe on the rights of others in doing so.

In the same way, that person must respect our right of conscience to disagree with some of their values or choices.
Sex Differences

- **Girls’** bullying peaks in 8th-grade, when 10% of girls say they bully others 2-3 times a month, then **declines steadily** through 12th-grade.

- **Boys’** bullying reaches a high of 14% in 8th-grade, then **remains at that level** throughout high school.

— Olweus ([www.olweus.org](http://www.olweus.org)) study of more than a half-million students grades 3-12 in 45 states.
3 Secrets of Success

1. Staff involvement
2. Student involvement
3. Parent involvement
“How to Make Your School a School of Character”

- Ch. 11, *Character Matters*, p. 219

How to get staff involved
Create a Touchstone

pp. 220-221
Develop a school touchstone or “way.”

Written by staff and students together, the touchstone expresses the school’s core moral and performance values.
THE PLACE WAY

At Place School, we pursue excellence in scholarship and character. We celebrate and honor each other by being respectful, honest, kind, and fair. We give our best inside and outside the classroom.

This is who we are, even when no one is watching.
TOUCHSTONE RESOURCE:

Building an Intentional School Culture

—Charles Elbot and David Fulton
THE ROOSEVELT WAY
(S & G, p. 36)

“There’s a way that students here are expected to act, and a way that they expected not to act.”

—High School Counselor
Developing a Touchstone Rubric

Suppose one part of a School’s Touchstone is:

“We respect ourselves, each other, our school, and our community.”
Respect rubric for bullying

**Underdeveloped:**
You bully others physically or emotionally.

**Developing:**
You never bully.

**Highly accomplished:**
You never bully, and when you see someone being bullied, you do something to try to stop it.
Self-Study: **Touchstone Implementation**

**Visibility**
The touchstone is displayed in all classrooms and included in all school documents.

**Academics**
Teachers make connections with the touchstone when teaching their subject area.

**Discipline**
Staff refer to the touchstone when disciplining.

**New students**
There is a plan for teaching the touchstone to students who enroll during the school year.
Leadership of Character Ed

1. Use the school’s existing infrastructure.

2. Divide the labor and maximize involvement through multiple committees, *each with a different task*.

3. Make sure all groups are represented.
100 Ways to Promote Character Ed

1. **Circle** those things you’ve already done.
2. **Star** those things you haven’t done but would be willing to try.
3. With a partner, share **one thing** you’ve done and **one thing** you’d like to try.
4. Make a date to share, with your partner, the results of the new thing you try.
Ongoing Professional Development

- Regular staff sharing of best practices (through buddy system, faculty and dept. meetings, etc.)

- Staff training in cooperative learning, class meetings, and other key strategies
Assess School Culture

1. Gather baseline data: e.g., *Respect & Responsibility School Culture Survey* (Winter/Spring 2012 issue of excellence and ethics, [www.cortland.edu/character](http://www.cortland.edu/character)).

2. Implement program.

3. Repeat survey.

4. Use data to plan improvements.
“Involve Students in Creating a School of Character”

Ch. 12, *Character Matters*, p. 247

How to get students involved
Kids of Character Committee

- St. Leonard Elementary School *(Character Matters, p. 248)*
20 Kinds of Class Meetings

- And How to Get Kids To Talk in Class Meetings

_Educating for Character_, T. Lickona,
Ch. 8
Participatory Student Government

1. Each classroom elects 2 rep’s.
2. They lead their classroom’s discussion of how to solve school problems such as peer cruelty.
3. All class rep’s report their class suggestions at the student council meeting.
4. Rep’s then bring the student council’s proposed solutions back to their class for further discussion.
5. Rep’s then report their class feedback on the proposed solutions to the student council, etc.—until action plan is ready to implement.
Student Voice and Cyberbullying

- Challenge student gov’t: “What can students, parents, and the school, working together, do to prevent cyberbullying?”
- Have schoolwide discussion, with delegates from each classroom.
- Ask students to take responsibility for a schoolwide campaign.
- Resource: www.stopcyberbullying.org
Get students to take responsibility:

- Counselors create anti-bullying “intervention teams” at each grade level. (Team members step in when they see someone being picked on.)

- Students provide emotional support to victims.
WELCOMING FRESHMEN

- Seniors plan and lead a half-day welcome for the new freshmen.

*Smart & Good High Schools*,
[www.cortland.edu/character](http://www.cortland.edu/character), p. 38
FRESHMAN TRANSITION PROGRAM

- Older students are assigned as mentors to all freshmen.
- The school trains the mentors.
- Mentors and their freshmen meet weekly.
BUDDY CLASSES

- An older class is paired with a younger class.
- The buddy classes get together weekly or bi-weekly.
- The older kids read to their little buddies, help them with their schoolwork, do a special project together, and so on.
Create Safe Bus Rides

1. Conduct bus meetings:
   - “What does a safe and respectful bus ride look like? Sound like?”
   - “What can each of us do to create a safe and respectful bus ride?”

2. Hold follow-up meetings 2-3 times during the school year: “How are we doing?”
“Build a Strong Home-School Partnership”

- Ch. 3, *Character Matters*, p. 60

How to get parents involved
Communicate to Parents:

1. “Parents are the first and most important character educators.”

2. “The school’s job is to reinforce the character virtues being taught at home.”
Raise Expectations for Parent Participation

- Hilltop Elem. School story
- Jefferson Jr. High
- Kennedy Middle School
Get the Program to the Parents

Let parents know what the school is doing in character education—and how they can help. (p. 65)
Inform Parents about Bullying

1. Let parents know what the school is doing about bullying.
2. Share results of the *Respect & Responsibility Survey*.
3. Provide talking points they can use with their child to discuss bullying.
4. Suggest specific ways parents can help promote kindness.
5. Ask parents to report any problems.
Parents and Cyber-Bullying

- Send home guidelines to help parents monitor kids’ online activity.

(See Michele Borba’s article, p. 8, in Winter/Spring 2012 excellence & ethics)
Character Education Homework

- Parent and child, independently, each make a list:
  “Who are 5 of your heroes? Why?”

- Then compare and discuss lists.
Parent Peer Support Groups (p. 67)
Combating the Media (p. 75)
Positive Phone Calls

- Before school year starts: “What can you tell me about your child that will help me do a better job as his (her) teacher?”
Positive Phone Calls or Email

- Good News call to every parent during the first month of school
Monthly Calendar
Promoting Family Conversation

- 2013 Winter/spring excellence & ethics
Component #1 (inner wheel)

The teacher as:
1. caregiver (building bonds)
2. model
3. mentor (moral and spiritual guide/coach)
Resilience Research

Resilient kids possess 4 strengths:
1. Social competence
2. Problem-solving skills
3. A sense of identity
4. Hope for the future.

They often cite a “special teacher” who was a confidant and an inspiring role model.
The Difference a Teacher Makes

“I was a bully before I came to this school. I used to make little kids cry. “When I met Mrs. Brown, I changed. I’m not a bully anymore, because Mrs. Brown taught me about character.”

—a 6th-grade boy
“Help Me Know Your Child”

Jenny Carnahan, 4th-grade teacher, sends home a questionnaire:

- List 5 words that describe your child’s character or personality
- What motivates your child?
- What upsets your child?
- What are your child’s outside-of-school interests?
- What else should I know?
Who are you? (high school)

Your answers will remain private. Skip any you wish. Feel free to ask me the same Q’s.

1. What’s your favorite leisure-time activity?
2. What’s something you do well?
3. What would you like to do for work/career?
4. What are two words that describe you?
5. What is your best quality?
6. What do you like most about school? Least?
7. What co-curricular activities are you involved in?
8. What else would you like me to know about you?

—Hal Urban, Lessons from the Classroom: 20 Things Good Teachers Do  www.halurban.com
CLASS INTERVIEW (Day 1)
(Kim McConnell, 6th-grade teacher)

1. “You may ask me questions about my life as a teacher or my life outside of school.

2. “Please take notes on my answers.”

3. “Your first homework assignment is to write a one-page Biography of Mrs. McConnell.”

4. “Read it to an adult in your family and turn it in tomorrow.”

2nd assignment: Interview another adult in the school.
Handshake at the Door

“In the second it takes me to shake a hand, I renew my relationship with that student.”

“I can tell in a heartbeat what kind of a day a kid is having. You can nip problems in the bud at the door.”
Conversation at the Door

- I asked “SP” (strategically positive) questions—ones that would elicit a specific and positive answer, such as:
  - What’s been the highlight of your day so far?
  - What’s a goal you’re working these days?

- My students and I brainstormed more than 100 SP questions.

—Hal Urban, *Positive Words, Powerful Results* (www.halurban.com)
Attitude Box
Gloria Shields, 9th-grade English teacher

“If you’re going to do your best work, you don’t want to come in with a bad attitude.”

“If you do arrive with a bad attitude, write down what’s bothering you on a slip of paper and drop it in the Attitude Box.”

“Write on the bottom if you’d like to talk to me about it.”
Teacher’s Corner

1. In my Teacher’s Corner, I display pictures of my husband, children, and dog; photos of classes I taught when I lived in California; my college diploma; favorite books; sports I enjoy; and other things that reflect my interests.

2. During the first few weeks, I meet with each of my kids in the Teachers Corner for about 10 minutes. They bring an “All About Me” book they’ve made. These conversations have given me a closer relationship with each child.
Teacher as Model: Self-Inventory

1. Do I warmly greet each student?
2. Do I seek other opportunities to connect with each student?
3. Am I well-prepared for class? On time?
4. Do I model patience and courtesy, even under stress?
5. Do I treat my all students impartially?
6. Do I challenge all of them to do their best work?
TEACHER AS MENTOR (MORAL COACH)

Hal Urban’s

20 Gifts of Life
Teacher as Mentor:
Quote of the day

Life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it.

—Charles Swindoll
QUOTE OF THE DAY

1. Copy the quote in your notebook.
2. Then write it in your own words.
3. Share what you wrote with a partner.
4. Class discussion.
Teacher as Mentor: Storytelling

- Tim Kent
Component #2

A caring classroom community

1. Students know each other.
2. Students affirm and care about each other.
3. Every student feels like a valued member of the group.
Seat Lottery

Janet Fagal, 5th-grade teacher:

1. Struggled with cliques.
2. She arranged desks in a “U” and gave each a number.
3. At the end of the week, students drew a number—their new desk for the next week. It changed the social chemistry of the class.
PARTNERS

Ways We’re Alike

Ways We’re Different
2-Minute Interviews

“I used the **first 4 minutes** of every class during the first month of school to have students do paired 2-minute interviews (they had to finish it on their own in the next 3 weeks):

1. What’s something you own that’s special to you?
2. What’s your proudest achievement so far?
3. What’s an important goal you have for your life?
4. A special interest you have?
5. Who is someone you greatly admire? Why?
6. A question of your choice.

—Hal Urban, *Lessons from the Classroom*
They had to fill in a sheet with the information for every class member—and turn it in, as with any assignment.

We continued until every student had interviewed every other student. They were required to interview me as well, and I interviewed each of them.

My students loved this activity. After 3 weeks, we all knew each other well.

*The first test asks them to list the names of all class members.*
Anonymous Compliments

1. Each student draws the name of a classmate.

2. By the week’s end, the student writes an anonymous compliment about that person on a strip of paper, shows it to the teacher, and puts it in the Compliment Box.

3. On Friday, the teacher posts all the compliments on the bulletin board.
At the end of the day:

- “Who saw kindness today?”
- “Who saw respect?”
- “Who saw determination?”
- “Who saw sharing?”

—Jenna Smith, 3rd-grade teacher
Practice Kindness

At the start of the day, all students take out their Good Deeds Journal and write:

1. *A good deed I did yesterday...*
2. *A good deed I will do today...*

In all subjects, teachers make a connection to the good deeds theme.
SCHOOLWIDE STRATEGIES

Caring beyond the classroom

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

The teacher as caregiver, model, and mentor
An ethical learning community

Teaching conflict resolution
Character-based discipline

Ethical reflection
A democratic classroom environment

Conscience of craft
Teaching character through the curriculum

Cooperative learning

PERFORMANCE CHARACTER and MORAL CHARACTER

Awareness
Attitude
Action

Creating a Culture of excellence and ethics
Schools, Parents, and Communities as partners
Component #3

- Character-Based Discipline
Character-Based Discipline

- Promotes positive behavior and good character
- Deters and corrects negative behavior
- 3 essentials:
  1. High expectations
  2. Clear rules
  3. Clear consequences.
Teaching Courtesy

- I teach my kids to greet and thank the cafeteria workers.

- The cafeteria staff say they always know when my kids are coming through.

- My students have a very high level of self-respect—because of the respect they show to other people.

—Molly Angelini, 5th-grade teacher
Gary Robinson, 4th, 6th, and 9th-grade teacher:

- Hello-Goodbye Rule
- The Golden Rule

“How would you like to be treated in this class—by me and everyone else? Write down 2 or 3 ways.”
The Compact for Excellence

1. Put students in groups of 4. Give each a large sheet of paper and marker.

2. “Write down 2 rules that will help us DO OUR BEST WORK and 2 rules that will help us TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT AND CARE.”

3. Guide the class in combining the ideas into one Compact.
4th-grade Compact for Excellence

excellence & ethics newsletter, fall '09, “Best Work, Best Self”

4th-grade compact, p. 3
To make the Compact effective:

1. Have all students **sign it.** Post it.
2. Review it at the start of each day (class).
3. Stop and ask, “What are we forgetting?” when necessary.
4. Have the class assess: “How are we doing on (a particular Compact item), on a scale of 1-5?” (Each student rates it.)
5. **Set goal:** “What item should we work on next week?”
TIME OUT

1. Settle down and get control.
2. Make a plan and show it to the teacher.
3. Get back in the game.
Five-year-old Brian repeatedly called Jonathan, a kindergarten classmate, “Tan Man”—because his skin was light brown.

Jonathan’s mother called the teacher and said that the name-calling upset Jonathan so much, he didn’t want to go back to school.

What would you say to Brian?
“Brian, there are two kinds of hurts: outside hurts that you can see, like a cut or a bruise, and inside hurts that you can’t see—like a hurt feeling. The inside hurts actually hurt more and last longer.”
“When you call Jonathan ‘Tan Man,’ you’re making an inside hurt for him that hurts so bad that he doesn’t want to come back to our class.

“Our class has to be a safe and happy place for everyone. I would never let anyone make that kind of inside hurt for you, and I can’t let you make that kind of hurt for Jonathan.

“Now tell me what I said.”
Have Kids Make Up for What They Did (Restitution):

“If a student calls someone a name, or is unkind in any other way, I ask that child to write a sincere letter of apology to the person he or she has offended.”
Individual Behavior Plan

1. I will sit away from Joe when we have individual work to do.
2. If we both get our assignments in on time, we can work together on the group project at the end of the week.

Signed: Carlos
Date: September 15, 2011
Behavior contracts have proved helpful with kids who bully.

“I will not hit or hurt anyone. If I do, I will have to call my parents and report what I did.”
Dear Parents, I’d like to fill you in on my discipline plan. I believe that success in life develops through self-discipline, so I want to give students every opportunity to manage their own behavior. Here’s our plan:

**Expectations:**
1. Be respectful of yourself, others, and our classroom.
2. Be responsible for yourself, your belongings, and our classroom materials.
3. Participate in our safe and caring classroom.
4. Do your best; never give up!
5. Follow the Golden Rule.

When expectations are not met (we rarely have to go beyond #2):
1. Reminder.
2. Thinking zone—3 minutes.
3. Thinking zone in another 3rd-grade classroom—3 minutes.
4. Parent called.
5. Conference—student, parent/guardian, Mrs. Conley, and principal.

The children and I have discussed this plan together, but please review it with your child. Thanks very much!
Ask parents . . .

- “If you have reason to think that a teacher or other staff member may not have been fair to your child, or you’re just not sure what happened, please contact the principal without telling your child you are doing so.

- “This will help us to work together to solve any problem in a way that’s best for your child.”
Component #4

- A democratic classroom environment
CLASS MEETINGS

1. involve students in shared decision making that gives them responsibility for making the classroom the best it can be.

2. a face-to-face, interactive circle discussion

3. can deal with problems (cutting in lunch line, put-downs, homework issues) or help to plan upcoming events (the day, a field trip, a cooperative activity, the next unit).
1. **Set the meeting rules:** “What rules do we need in order to have good talking and good listening?” “What should we do if someone doesn’t follow those rules?”

2. **Set the agenda; ask kids to describe the problem:** “What’s been happening when we line up for lunch?”

3. **Pose the challenge:** “How can we, working together, solve this problem?”

4. **Conduct interactive discussion:** “Who would like to comment on John’s idea?”

5. **Reach consensus on a plan of action.**

6. **Agree on consequences for not following the plan:** “What should we do if someone doesn’t follow our plan? What’s a fair consequence?”

7. **Ask all students to sign the plan.**

8. **Plan a time for a follow-up meeting:** “When should we meet again to evaluate how well our plan is working?”

9. **Post the plan where all can see it.**
Jenna Smith article

p. 1 of the fall 2004 newsletter, The Fourth and Fifth Rs

- **Weekly class meeting** every Wed. morning

- **Posted list:** “Write your name and a problem you need help solving.” (Problem must involve more than one other person.)
Weekly H.S. Class Meetings

“Weekly class meetings are important for discussing and role-playing what bystanders can do.”

Resource: *Class Meetings That Matter*

— *Olweus program* (www.olweus.org)
Foster Interdependence

*In a class meeting, ask:*

“Who has a problem the rest of us could help solve?”
Use class meetings to discuss bullying:

“Give examples of bullying, but no names please.”

“How do you feel when someone does these things to you?”
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PERFORMANCE CHARACTER and MORAL CHARACTER

Awareness

Attitude

Action

Creating a Culture of excellence and ethics
Schools, parents and Communities as partners
Components 5 and 7

- Teaching character through the curriculum
- Conscience of craft (doing your best work)
Share the Daily Agenda

1. **What** we’re going to learn today.
2. **Why** it’s important to know this.
3. **How** we’re going to learn it.
   (e.g., 15-minute lecture, small-group problem-solving, then class discussion).
Make the CHARACTER CONNECTION

In discussing literature, ask questions such as:

1. What have you learned from this character that could help you in your life?
2. Who in this story had the best character? Why?
3. Who had the worst character? Why?
William Kilpatrick, *Books That Build Character* (annotated bibliography, early childhood through teen years)
Jenna Smith article

p. 2 of the fall 2004 newsletter, The Fourth and Fifth Rs

- #4 Monthly character expectations

- #5 Curricular integration: Students consider the character lesson taught by stories they are writing.
Jan Gorman, 1st-grade teacher, asks her students:

1. What is caring?
2. Who can show caring?
3. Where does caring take place?
4. How can each of us show caring?
   □ In our classroom?
   □ In our school?
   □ In our families?
She then reads the book, *Teammates* (the story of baseball players Jackie Robinson and Pee Wee Reese) and asks:

- Who in the story showed caring?
- Who did *not* show caring?
She then challenges her class:

- “Remember this story, and make it a goal to show caring toward each other during the rest of the day.”

- When a child behaves in a caring way, she publicly compliments that child.

- When a child behaves in an uncaring way, she privately corrects that child:
  - “Did that behavior show caring?”
  - “Remember our story, remember our discussion.”
On each subsequent day of the week, she reads a different book about caring and repeats this process. She says:

“By the end of the week, caring has been established as an expectation in my classroom.”
Using a Book for a Whole Year

excellence & ethics, fall ’09, p. 6:

1st-grade class read: *Johnny Appleseed: A Tall Tale*

1. They created a life-sized Johnny Appleseed who watched over the class.
2. The teacher gave small groups problems to solve: “What would Johnny Appleseed do?”
3. The class made pillowcases for hospitalized, chronically ill children.
4. The class performed a skit about their service project and the connection to Johnny A. for the whole school.
Make Learning Meaningful

Ron Berger: An Ethic of Excellence: Building a Culture of Craftsmanship with Students
Work of excellence is transformational. After students have had a taste of excellence, they’re never quite satisfied with less.

—Ron Berger
Practices That Motivate Quality Work

1. Work that inspires
2. Models of excellence
3. A culture of critique (feedback)
4. Multiple revisions
5. Opportunities to present one’s work to classmates and other audiences.
Senior Biography Project

Berger had each of his 6th-graders:

1. conduct a series of interviews with a senior citizen
2. write that person’s biography in the form of a small, bound book
3. give that as a gift to the senior citizen.
“Because my students’ work was going to be presented to someone else (the senior citizen), they read the drafts of their biographies to the whole class for their suggestions. They did many drafts of their cover designs. They wanted their books to be perfect.”
Rules for the Culture of Critique:

- Be kind.
- Be specific.
- Be helpful.
Steps in the Culture of Critique

1. **Presenter**: “I would especially like your suggestions on . . .”

2. The class first gives positive feedback.

3. Students then offer suggestions, often in the form of questions:
   “Would you consider . . .?”
   “Have you thought of . . .?”
In Berger’s classroom, students are:

- Developing *personal* responsibility by striving to do their best work
- Developing *social* responsibility by helping each other do their best work (by giving each other feedback on projects).
Component #6

- Cooperative Learning
COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Cooperative learning, used about 1/3 of instructional time, improves peer relationships and academic achievement.

What Works in Character Education
www.characterandcitizenship.org
Mark’s story
Learning Partners

- One teacher has Learning Partners who work together at least once a day.
- They do the question or problem individually first, then compare and explain their answers.
- Every two weeks, students draw a new Learning Partner.
Quality cooperative learning: Brainstorm

WE WORK BEST TOGETHER WHEN ...

1. We help each other and don’t fight.
2. We are kind to each other (no put downs).
3. Everyone contributes.
4. We listen to all ideas.
   (and so on)
Cluster Group Seating

1. Students are randomly assigned to groups of 4.

2. There are 3 rules:
   - You have final responsibility for your own work and behavior.
   - You must be willing to help anyone in your group who asks.
   - You may not ask the teacher for help unless all four of you have the same Q.

—Marilyn Burns, The I Hate Mathematics! Book
Cooperative Learning Resources

- Spencer Kagan, *Cooperative Learning* (KaganOnline.com)

- T. Lickona, *Educating for Character* (Chapter 10; 8 kinds of cooperative learning)
Mark Schumacher, 7th-grade math teacher

Spring 2009 excellence & ethics

www.cortland.edu/character
Component #8

- Ethical reflection
Study Your Hero; Become Your Hero

*Give a report to the class:*

1. Why did you choose this person as your hero?
2. How are you like your hero? Not like your hero?
3. What, specifically, are you doing to try to become more like your hero?
4. Report on your progress in 2 months.
Practice Goal-Setting

At the end of the day, students take out their Character Record Book and answer 3 questions:

1. How did I show kindness* today?
2. How did I **not** show kindness?
3. How will I show kindness tomorrow?

* The focus virtue changes weekly.
Goal Strips

- Fold a colored strip of paper into 3 sections.
- Write I will on the first section, what you will do on the second section, and when you will do it on the third section.
- “I will say only positive things about others this week.”
- I will do a kind deed for someone each day this week.”
- “I will report or try to stop any bullying I see this week.”
“LOOK WHAT I DID TODAY”

- “I followed directions.”
- “I let someone else go first.”
- “I helped someone.”
- I gave a compliment.”
- “I said excuse me.”
- “I calmed myself down.”

Kids each had a sheet, added a sticker for each thing they did, and took it home.
“10 Emotional Dangers of Premature Sex”

www.cortland.edu/character

(Character-Based Sex Education Tab)
The Rewards of Waiting

1. Waiting will increase your self-respect.
2. It will teach you to respect others.
3. It means a clear conscience (no guilt, no regrets).
4. By waiting, you’re developing the kind of character (virtues such as respect, self-control, modesty, and courage) that will attract a person of character.
Why Wait?

“Sex is so special, it deserves a special home. It is most meaningful when it’s part of something bigger. When you are married, your sexual intimacy expresses your total commitment to each other.

“The ultimate intimacy belongs within the ultimate commitment.”
The Real Love Character Test

1. Is this person respectful and kind to me?
2. Does this person always expect to get his or her own way?
3. Can I trust this person?
4. Does this person ever pressure me to go against my values?
5. Would I be proud to be married to this person?
6. Would I want this person to be the father/mother of my children?
Other books (written for kids) about doing the right thing:

- Sean Covey, *The 6 Most Important Decisions You’ll Ever Make*

- Tom and Judy Lickona, *Sex, Love & You: Making the Right Decision*
Component #9

Teaching conflict resolution
TALK IT OUT SPACE

1. Stop and cool down.
2. Talk & listen ("Make an I-statement.").
3. Find out what you both need.
4. Think of ways to solve the problem.
5. Choose the idea you both like.
Free character education resources:

Center for the 4th and 5th Rs website:

- [www.cortland.edu/character](http://www.cortland.edu/character)

- See the winter/spring issue of our excellence & ethics newsletter on bullying