

# Character Education

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## Introduction

Throughout the past thirty years American education has sought to balance its instruction for the whole child. We have an extensive track record of academic success. Our track record in social and emotional learning is less stellar. Research in character education (Dr. Lickona), multiple Intelligences (Dr. Gardner), life skill training (Dr. Botvin) and Social Emotional Learning (Zins, Weissbery, Way, Walbery and Goleman) has proven that integrating these affective wisdom approaches with academic study will provide the following data ("US Department of Health and Human Services, 2002) improved grades, standardized test scores, graduation rates, increased grade point average, improved reading, math and writing skills. Other school performance measures found improved attendance, fewer out of school suspensions, retentions and special ed. referrals".

## The Six Pillars of Character

### Trustworthiness

*Worthy of trust, honor and confidence*

Honesty: trustful, sincere, nondeceptive, candid, not cheating

Integrity: Morally courageous, principled

Promise-Keeping: dependable, reliable

Loyalty: faithful, allegiant, supportive, maintains confidences

## The Six Mistakes of Man

1) The illusion that personal gain is made up of crushing others.

2) The tendency to worry about things that cannot be changed or corrected.

3) Insisting that a thing is impossible because we cannot accomplish it.

4) Refusing to set aside trivial preferences

5) Neglecting development and refinement of the mind, and not acquiring the habit of reading and study.

6) Attempting to compel others to believe and live as we do.

-Marcus Tullius  
Cicero

# The Six Pillars Continued

## Respect

*Regard for dignity, worth and autonomy of all persons (including self)*

Treating others with courtesy, civility, politeness

Tolerating others' beliefs

Accepting individual differences without prejudice

Refraining from violence, coercion, intimidation

## Responsibility

*Acknowledgement and performance of duties to others and self*

Accountability: answerable for consequences of decisions

Pursuit of Excellence: diligent, perseverant

Self-discipline: self-control, restraint

## Justice and Fairness

*Making decisions on appropriate factors: impartiality, avoidance of conflicts of interest*

Commitment to equity and equality

Openness to information and ideas

Reasonableness

Due process

Consistency

Fair play

## Caring

*Regard for the well-being of others*

Kindness

Compassion

Consideration

Unselfishness

Charity: altruism, giving

## Civic Virtue and Citizenship

*Recognition of and living up to social obligations*

Participation in democratic process

Law abidance

Protection of environment

Community service

Doing one's share