

Character Trait of the Month: Citizenship

Why Is Teaching Children About Democratic Citizenship Important?

Democracies are built on the belief that people should be free, should have choices and opportunities, and should work together to make each other's lives better. If we want to maintain our democratic society, we must teach our children to be good citizens – which goes beyond teaching them to obey the laws of the land. We must also teach them about how their freedoms began and how they're maintained. We must teach them that they can make a difference and that if they don't become involved democratic citizens, they risk losing their free way of life.



What We Can Do To Help Our Children Learn

- Listen to them and pay attention to their problems.
- Read with them.
- Tell family stories.
- Limit their television watching.
- Have books and other reading materials in the house.
- Look up words in the dictionary with them.
- Encourage them to use an encyclopedia.
- Share favorite poems and songs with them.
- Take them to the library--get them their own library cards.
- Take them to museums and historical sites, when possible.
- Discuss the daily news with them.
- Go exploring with them and learn about plants, animals, and local geography.
- Find a quiet place for them to study.
- Review their homework.
- Meet with their teachers.

Do you have other ideas?



Oops!

Sometimes, as parents, we don't act the way we should in front of our children.

What to do:

1. Try to be honest with yourself and your child if you find that you've done something that sets a bad example. Sometimes we need to think a little bit about an event to realize that we've done something inappropriate.
2. If your child has observed your behavior, it's especially important that you be honest. A simple statement is appropriate in most cases; there is no need to turn your admission into a major event.
3. Follow up with an apology to anyone you have treated badly and, if possible, by making up for what you have done.

It's important that our children, especially older ones, see that we face up to our own mistakes.

Traits of good citizenship:

- Being a good neighbor by caring about others.
- Sharing your time and skills to the community to make it better, cleaner and safer.
- Conserving resources by practicing the three R's: Reduce. Re-use. Recycle.
- Staying informed on issues and voicing your opinions by voting.

You can be a positive role-model for citizenship by doing the following:

- Show concern for the success and safety of others.
- Use non-judgmental language that does not offend or demean.
- Do the right thing, especially when it is difficult.
- Do the right thing, even when no one is looking.
- Take responsibility for your actions.
- Reflect on how your actions affect the welfare of others.

Veteran's Day - November 11, 2009

Who is a Veteran?



Veterans are people who served in the military (U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard) in times of war or peace.

Who do you know who is a veteran? Maybe it is your mother, father, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, grandfather, grandmother, cousin, neighbor, or teacher. You can be very proud of them. Many have given much to keep us safe and free.