



Parents Make a Difference

“If we want our children to possess the traits we most admire, we need to teach them what those traits are.” ~William Bennett

September’s Character Trait: **RESPECT**

Each month this page will include ideas for building and reinforcing positive character in your children. Parents set the tone and lead by example. Parents *do* make a difference. Take advantage of your influence and spend time with your children talking about the character traits you value and look for in others.



Remind your children that although we may look different on the outside, we all have the same feelings on the inside. Encourage them to respect others by treating them the way they want to be treated. Tell them to zip their lips and count to ten instead of saying something mean or disrespectful to someone.

Respect at Home:

- ♥ After a family meal, take turns having family members share something they **respect** and appreciate about one another.
- ♥ Take a cup full of uncooked rice and dump it on a plate. Ask family members to take turns retrieving each grain using chopsticks or two toothpicks. Compare this difficult task with “picking up” unkind words that have spilled from our mouths.
- ♥ Establish a “no put down” policy in your home. For example: Anyone who says something unkind to another family member must make that person’s bed.
- ♥ On the next trip to the grocery store with your child take the opportunity to point out ways to show **respect** to others. While waiting in line, let someone with fewer items go ahead of you or allow someone who has been waiting longer than you to move over to the check-out lane that just opened. Be polite to the cashier and take your cart back to the corral when you are finished. Explain to your child that actions like these show that we value and **respect** others and their property.
- ♥ As a family, write down on small pieces of paper all of the unkind and disrespectful words (e.g., stupid, ugly, hate etc.) you have said or heard. Commit to never use them again, crumble each piece of paper, and throw it away!