

Unit 6: Character

Character development is an integral component of 4-H programming. Character Counts is outlined for you in this learning unit.

Learning Objectives:

1. You will understand character education as the framework for all 4-H programs.
2. You will review the Six Pillars of Character.

Preview Questions:

1. Why is it important for Missouri 4-H to focus on making 4-H programs those of character?
2. Can you name the Six Pillars of Character?

Character education is a program anchor in Missouri because it is not a separate, stand alone program. Rather, it flows through everything we do – all projects, all events, everything. Being a person of good character is something we model, teach and talk about with 4-H youth. Our "Show Me Character" is based on the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition's Six Pillars of Character, a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics. Missouri 4-H faculty and staff, volunteers, and families are encouraged to display good character, not only while involved in 4-H programs, but as an essential part of daily living.

A person of character:

- Is a good person - someone to look up to and admire;
- Knows the difference between right and wrong and always tries to do what is right;
- Sets a good example;
- Makes the world a better place;
- Lives according to the "Six Pillars of Characters" - Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship.

The Six Pillars of Character are:

Trustworthiness

Be honest • Don't deceive, cheat or steal • Be reliable — do what you say you'll do • Have the courage to do the right thing • Build a good reputation • Be loyal — stand by your family, friends and country

Respect

Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule • Be tolerant of differences • Use good manners, not bad language • Be considerate of the feelings of others • Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone • Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements

Responsibility

Do what you are supposed to do • Persevere: keep on trying! • Always do your best • Use self-control • Be self-disciplined • Think before you act — consider the consequences • Be accountable for your choices

Caring

Be kind • Be compassionate and show you care • Express gratitude • Forgive others • Help people in need

Citizenship

Do your share to make your school and community better • Cooperate • Get involved in community affairs • Stay informed; vote • Be a good neighbor • Obey laws and rules • Respect authority • Protect the environment

Fairness

Play by the rules • Take turns and share • Be open-minded; listen to others • Don't take advantage of others • Don't blame others carelessly • Caring • Be kind • Be compassionate and show you care • Express gratitude • Forgive others • Help people in need