

# Respect Character Connection

Aretha Franklin's song "R-E-S-P-E-C-T!" made the word famous, but do we know what it really means? Ethical people are respectful of others, and demonstrate it by recognizing and honoring everyone's right to be themselves, to make decisions, and to have privacy and dignity.

Respect means:

- Following the Golden Rule
- Using good manners, not bad language
- Practicing tolerance
- Being considerate of the feelings of others
- Not threatening, hitting or hurting anyone
- Dealing peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements

## ***Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers***

The foundation of respect begins in infancy. The best way for you to begin teaching your child respect is by modeling the behavior. How you show respect to other family members and friends will influence the ways your child is respectful of others. Even in infancy, your child will benefit from experiencing kind words and actions.

Keep in mind that toddlers may find that the easiest way to solve problems is with a hit or grab because they are not skilled at using language. Continue to let your toddler know what behavior you want to see.

As your toddler grows to be a preschooler, you will want to have her show respect by using good manners. Praise and encourage your child when she says please or thank you at the appropriate time.

## ***Let's Pretend To Take Turns Activity***

Taking turns is not a natural action, it must be taught. Help your child learn to take turns by having everyone in the family take turns playing with a favorite toy or doing a favorite chore. Talk about how important it is for everyone to get a turn.



## ***School-age, Middle School and Teens***

Respect is an essential foundation for good relationships. Being respectful means respecting others' differences. This should begin at an early age by learning about the differences of children at CYS and learning how they are unique and special. You should encourage the same respect as they grow older. Children and teens who know how they are unique and special will be better prepared to handle an encounter with someone who is not respectful of individual differences.

Praise her when she handles difficult people or circumstances respectfully. Likewise, immediately explain why other behaviors are disrespectful.

As always, modeling respectful behavior and treating your children with respect are important.

### **Respect In Movies Activity**

Watch a current movie with your teen. Agree before the movie starts that everyone will watch the movie particularly watching for both respectful and disrespectful behavior. When the movie is over, compare your results. Do you agree with your teen's assessments? If not, take time to discuss your differences considering everyone's point of view.

### ***Practicing Respect 1***

People of good character are respectful of others. You show respect by recognizing and honoring everyone's right to be themselves, to make decisions, and to have privacy and dignity.

- Be courteous and polite.
- Be kind and appreciative.
- Accept individual differences and don't insist that everyone be like you.
- Judge people on their merits.

Are you respectful? Spend some time talking to your children about being respectful and how respect and disrespect is shown in every day situations. Encourage them to talk about one of the following:

- A friend borrows one of your toys and won't return it. Is that friend being respectful? What do you do?
- You tell a friend a secret and he tells it to a few other people. Is that friend being respectful?
- You're at the monthly 4-H meeting; raise your hand to make a comment and everyone listens quietly while you talk. Are members of the 4-H club being respectful? Are you respectful when others are talking?



## ***Practicing Respect 2***

Aretha Franklin's song "R-E-S-P-E-C-T!" made the word famous but do we know what it really means? Ethical people are respectful of others, and demonstrate it by recognizing and honoring everyone's right to be themselves, to make decisions, and to have privacy and dignity. Ethical people deal with others using one of two principles:

1. Respectful people give others the information they need to make wise decisions about their lives.
2. Ethical people accept individual difference without prejudice. Respect is given because you are a person of good character.

Use these guidelines to strengthen your character:

- Be courteous and polite
- Be kind and appreciate
- Accept individual differences and don't insist that everyone be like you
- Judge people on their merits, not on race, religion, nationality, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, genetic information, family structure, physical or mental condition. Or socio-economic status.

## ***Exercise***

Using good manners is a way to show you respect yourself and others. Send this month learning about table manners, dating etiquette and business etiquette. Go to the library, do a web search or ask an expert to help you in this exercise.

Ask a group of your friends ways they want to be shown respect. Then turn this list into a checklist on how you will treat others your age for the next week. Then try it for a second week.

