

All About Your...Character

"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are."

John Wooden, former basketball player/coach

Character is built into our lives from the time we are little. We emulate the adults we are exposed to and often imitate what we see. The character we develop as children and fine-tune into adulthood influences our decisions and the choices we make in life. Often times parents don't think their children are watching that closely. They are. They will not only imitate our good qualities, but also the qualities we struggle with.

Teach your children to:

RESPECT themselves and others

Be **POLITE** to everyone

Make **WISE** decisions

Be **PATIENT**

Be **RELIABLE**

Have **COURAGE**

Be **DETERMINED** to get their work done

A word cloud of character traits in various colors and orientations. The words include: Respectful, Trustworthy, Responsible, Reliable, Self-Controlled, Intelligent, Determined, Honest, Diligent, Generous, Courageous, Patient, Motivated, and Hard-Working.

Everyday we are put in situations that are opportunities to develop our character:

- ◆ Commit to Taking the Time - time is something so many of us feel we don't have. We live in an over-scheduled society and sometimes it seems easier to overlook a troublesome action our child/children demonstrate than to address it. In the long run, it's always easier to address an action initially, than to correct an undesirable behavior later on. Investing time into our children is the most worthwhile thing we can do.
- ◆ Developing good character has a lot to do with repetition - we spent lots of time on the milestones; getting them to say a word or phrase, teaching them how to walk, etc. Good character is achieved by diligent repetition. It may seem tedious to keep saying the same things again and again, but that is how they will learn.
- ◆ Consistently enforce rules and boundaries. That seems like something that should be a given but surprisingly, many parents have a problem doing so.
- ◆ Be a good example. Remember, your children are watching, and as the old adage goes, *"Actions speak louder than words."*

"Character is, for the most part, simply habit become fixed."

C.H. Parkhurst, social reformer, 1842-1933