

Starting With Character

Activities with Infants, Toddlers, and Twos

Great Beginnings 2018

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Why are we here?

- Identify**
 - Identify examples of good character in young children
- Examine**
 - Examine ways to support character development
- Share**
 - Share activities that support character development
- Determine**
 - Determine activities to use in your program

What is Character?

- Many Definitions
- Our Definition:

“The moral and interpersonal qualities that form the essence of a person, guiding his or her behavior especially in relation to others and the community.”
- “Charakter”



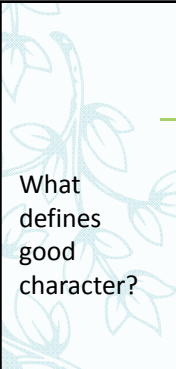
Identify Examples of Good Character in Children

What is good character?

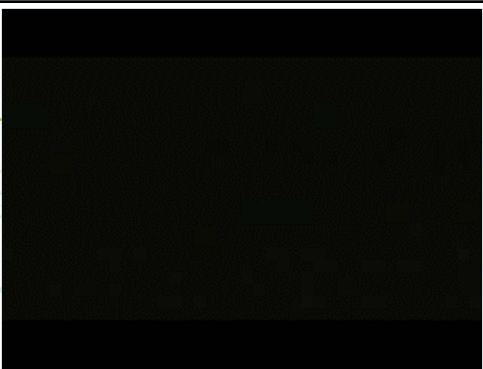
How is character developed?


Why teach good character?

When do you start teaching good character?



What defines good character?





Good Character Traits

- **Caring** – for self, others & the environment.
- **Honesty** – modeling honesty by being honest with children.
- **Integrity** – dependability, courage.
- **Respect** – honoring others feelings.
- **Responsibility** – accountability for choices.
- **Self-discipline** – problem solving and self-control.



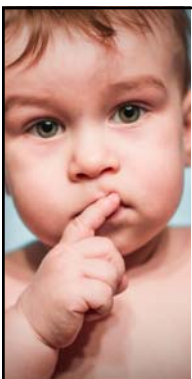
How is Character Developed?

- Traditional Views
- New Insights
- Social-Emotional Potential in Infants
- Potential Growth in Toddlers and Twos



Obstacles to Teaching Good Character

- Brain Architecture
- Poor Serve & Return Interactions
- Toxic Stress
- Diminished Resilience



Supporting Good Character

- Building Positive Brain Architecture
- Enhancing Serve & Return Interactions
- Reducing and Protecting from Toxic Stress
- Promoting Resilience through Relationships

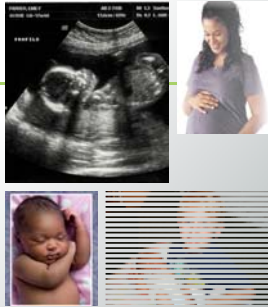
Why Teach Good Character?

We want the best for our children.

It is an investment for the future!



When Do You Start?



Supporting Character Development

- Safe, Secure Environments
- Consistent Routines
- Clear Expectations
- Demonstrating
- Conversations
- Scaffolding
- Practicing
- Modeling



Play as a Strategy



Problem Solving



Object Permanence







Sensory Exploration



Play as a Strategy Continued

- Representational Thinking
- Understanding Cause & Effect
- Relational Skills


Types of Play

- Music and Movement
- Blocks
- Science and Nature
- Puzzles and Manipulatives
- Dramatic Play
- Art

Art

Nature

Math

Music

Blocks

Dramatic Play

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Activities to Support Character Development

With Infants:

- Building Trust
- Two-Color Art
- Books



Activities to Support Character Development

With Toddlers:

- Drop the Cereal
- Jump Frog Jump
- Snowball Toss



Activities to Support Character Development

With Twos:

- Clean-Up Time
- Sharing Daily Highlights
- The Problem/Solution Jar

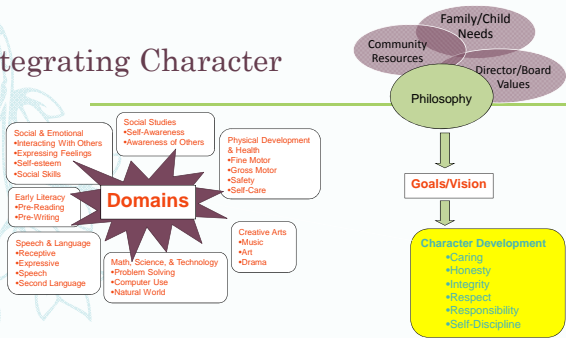


What Activities Work For You?



Time to Share Your Ideas

Integrating Character



What did we learn?



thinking



- Character development starts at birth
- Young children are uniquely ready for character lessons integrated in routines, play, and interaction with others
- Caregivers should be intentional in their approach to character development
- Plan, plan, plan

Resources:

- Promethean Foundation, Union City, TN, www.4prokids.org
- *Starting with Character: Activities for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos.* (2016). Saint Paul, MN: Redleaf Press
- Building Strong Brains, TN ACES Initiative,
- www.tn.gov/dcs/topic/building-strong-brains-Tennessee-aces-initiative

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