

The Character Chronicle

PROMOTING CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AT HOME AND SCHOOL
 Monterey Hills School / PTA

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Character pillar for the month: **CITIZENSHIP**

Character Quote of the Month

"If we want our children to possess the traits of character we most admire, we need to teach them what those traits are and why they deserve both admiration and allegiance. Children must learn to identify the forms and content of those traits."

— William J. Bennett, author and former U.S. Secretary of Education (b. 1943)

Recap of Last Month's Pillar

Our MHS Open House and the district-wide Fun Fair were excellent venues for exemplifying Caring. All classrooms creatively displayed a full range of scholarly activities, from math and writing skills to art, social studies, and science. Some classrooms displayed work highlighting the value of good character. For example, **Ms. Kathleen Ellis'** class (2nd Grade) posted a display entitled, "Our Kinder Buddies", consisting of a series of photos of her students and their respective kinder-buddies with adjectives beneath each student describing what one admires about the other.



Thank you, teachers and students, for all the care and effort you put into making Open House such an impressive and successful event!

The Fun Fair provided a great opportunity to put the pillars of Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship into action, and show our children that having fun and performing good deeds are not mutually exclusive. The event overall was a great success, bringing in reportedly over \$60,000 in gross sales with relatively few behavioral problems. The worst problem resulted in the eviction of a small group of high school students from the event. These students were caught smashing cake into the face of a fellow student in a manner that was not intended to be humorous. Interestingly, the offending students and victim were all female. This exemplifies a growing trend both locally and nationally: Girls are becoming increasingly involved in inappropriate behaviors, and "mean girl" attitudes are more prevalent than ever. Some resources that deal with this problem include:

- ❖ "A Smart Girls Guide to Friendship Troubles", by Patti Kelly Criswell and Angela Martini- An American Girl book written for girls ages 9 -12. [Note: Interestingly, this book was reviewed in the Los Angeles Times on May 27th ("Book Reviews by Kids" section) by a student from MHS! Special thanks to **Amy Wong** for alerting us about this.]
- ❖ "Nobody Likes Me, Everybody Hates Me: The Top 25 Friendship Problems and How to Solve Them", by Dr. Michele Borba – A book that covers a broader range of issues for both boys and girls of all ages. You can read an excerpt subtitled, "Six Tricky Friendship Issues that Concern Parents and How to Solve Them" at <http://micheleborba.com/Pages/ArtNLM03.htm>. The six issues are: The Tattletale, Being Teased, Bad Friends, Left Out and Rejected, Peer Pressure, and Being Bullied & Harassed.
- ❖ In addition, Dr. Borba has a web page (<http://www.micheleborba.com/Pages/Articles.htm>) that provides numerous on-line articles on raising strong and caring kids.

Demonstrating CITIZENSHIP

A *citizen* is a native or naturalized person who owes allegiance to a government and is entitled to protection from it. Citizenship is made up of the duties, rights, conduct and responsibilities of a citizen.

You can demonstrate good citizenship by:

- ☺ Doing your share to make your home, school and community better
 - ☺ Cooperating
 - ☺ Staying informed and vote
 - ☺ Being a good neighbor
 - ☺ Obeying laws and rules
 - ☺ Respecting authority
 - ☺ Protecting the environment
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CITIZENSHIP Quotes

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

– *Anne Frank, Jewish girl who kept a diary while hiding from the Nazis during World War II*

“If each person sweeps in front of his or her own door, the whole street is clean.”

— *Yiddish Proverb*

"A nation, as a society, forms a moral person, and every member of it is personally responsible for his society."

— *Thomas Jefferson, Founding Father and third U.S. president (1743-1826)*

Books to Teach CITIZENSHIP

K-3rd grade

- ❖ “Hawk, I’m Your Brother”, by B. Baylor (A Caldecott book)
- ❖ “Old Henry”, by J. Blos
- ❖ “Summer Business”, by C. Martin

4th-5th grade

- ❖ “Present Takers”, by A. Chambers
 - ❖ “House of Sixty Fathers” by M. DeJong
 - ❖ “King Wacky”, by D. Gackenbach
 - ❖ “The Trumpet of the Swan”, by E. B. White
 - ❖ “My Side of the Mountain”, by J. George
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Exercises for Parents and Kids

- Review “Demonstrating CITIZENSHIP” with your children.
 - Develop a family mission and values statement that includes commitment to the Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Citizenship).
 - Encourage cooperation, teamwork and service to others.
 - Model citizenship by respecting authority, obeying the rules and looking for opportunities to make a contribution.
 - Control the behavior of your children to assure they do not disturb others in public places.
 - Keep in mind that a healthy community starts with your family.
 - Name a good cause that you would be willing to volunteer for or donate some of your money to this month.
 - Describe a time you voted even when you knew it would not make a difference in the outcome.
 - Describe one thing you have recently done that helped the environment.
 - Name three things you appreciate about the country you live in.
 - Describe something you could do this week or this summer to be a better citizen. Consider doing this together with some classmates, and be sure to tell us about it so we can share your work in this newsletter next year!
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We wish you and your family a safe and wonderful Summer!

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