

PCK Character Coaching Connection

By PCK Character Coach, Dianne Daniels

Second Quarter, 2018-19

Honesty Wins At PCK



As the second quarter of the year draws to a close, it is amazing to look back and see all we have covered and how much our students have learned in the first half of the year. In November we had our Veteran's Day event and learned about the trait of dependability. We certainly depend on those who serve, and those who *have served*, to keep us safe and free. Our military has proven time and again that we can count on it to do a fabulous job protecting our country.

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Dependability is a valuable trait to discuss as a family. Are your children dependable? Do they do what you ask the first time you ask, or do they dawdle or argue when asked to contribute to the family? Do they take good care of their siblings or do they pester and annoy each other?



Parents need to be dependable as well. When you tell your child you will do something do you complete the task well and on time? When you warn of a potential consequence do you follow through and correct your child in a predictable way? Does your “yes” *always* mean yes, and your “no” *always* mean no? If not, how can you become more dependable in your parenting?

This month our focus is on the trait of honesty. Students are learning the value of telling the truth, even when it is scary, and even when there might be a consequence. We’ve talked about how making a mistake can get one in trouble, but lying about it will bring an even more significant consequence.

You can help reinforce what your child learned by discussing and practicing honesty at home. Modeling honesty is vitally important. For example, if you don’t want to go to a particular holiday party this week, don’t lie about the reason you won’t be there. Show your child how to politely and truthfully decline an invitation by simply saying, “I’m so sorry I won’t be there but thank you for inviting me.”

If your child tells you a lie (even a little “white lie”) be prepared to address it. If you let it slide then kids learn they can get away with it, encouraging them to lie again in the future. For younger children, always use the same form of discipline, such as time out, for every correction. With older children it is often helpful to tie the consequence to the offense. If, for example, your child lied by saying his homework was done so he could play a video game, an appropriate consequence would be to put away the video games until the child earns your trust again.

Trust is a key component of a healthy family. Ask your family members how they know they can trust each other. The answers you hear (or lack of answers, in some cases) will give you a wealth of information that you can use to strengthen your relationships.

For more information on building trust in your family, see this article:
<http://extension.udel.edu/factsheets/building-strong-family-relationships/>

What's Happening In Class

In addition to our monthly character traits of focus, our students also learn about additional traits and the value of a strong character. Each grade level focuses on a different aspect of the trait so be sure to ask your students about what we do in Character Coaching.

Our **full-day kindergarten** students are continuing to learn about empathy. They are working on identifying the emotions of other people and responding appropriately. You can help at home by talking to your child about emotions you see displayed in others. For example, when watching a movie together you can hit the pause button and ask your kindergartener to describe how a character might be feeling and why. How would he respond if he saw someone showing that emotion in real life?

First and second grade students learned about active listening. They learned different strategies for focusing on a speaker (such as a teacher) and blocking out other distractions. Some of the techniques include looking at the speaker, sitting up straight or leaning forward slightly, and giving an occasional nod of the head to confirm understanding. You can remind your child to practice these strategies when you are talking!

Third grade learned about being a dependable friend. They played a fun game to practice being a dependable teammate (ask them about crossing the “toxic swamp”) and they read different friendship scenarios and determined positive ways to handle them.

We are excited to announce that Mrs. Waltz has joined the character education team! Earlier this month she transitioned to a full-time position at the school, so in addition to teaching music, she is now also the Character Coach for **fifth grade** and two of the **fourth grade** classes. She is a fantastic addition and is already off to a great start with the program. Fourth grade recently had a lesson on gossip and the problems it causes in both friendships and in the classroom community. Fifth grade experienced the trait of patience when they learned how to sew on a button (and thread a needle).

Our **sixth graders** have been thinking about the kind of people they are becoming. They identified personal goals and what skills, assistance, and character traits they need to achieve their dreams. We have spent several class periods reflecting on how strong character helps us succeed. Ask your students about their goals and what they need to attain them.

Character In Action

Here are some questions to discuss with your student at home. When you see your child demonstrating outstanding character, feel free to tell me about it at ddaniels@ckcs.net. I love hearing about character in action!

What do *you personally* do to show you are dependable? What are some additional ways you could demonstrate dependability?

How do you feel when someone lets you down? How do you feel when you let someone else down?

Tell about a time when you were honest, even though it was hard or scary. How did your honesty make the situation better?

How are honesty and good sportsmanship related? Why is honesty an important part of competition?

Think about a role model or someone you look up to. Is that person honest? How would you feel if you found out that person lied?

If you ever have questions about what we do in Character Coaching, or about any aspect of our character education program, please contact me at ddaniels@ckcs.net. I would love to talk about the great things your students are doing.

Up next month: Respect
Treating others with honor and dignity.