

# CHARACTER COUNTS AND THE SIX PILLARS

The CHARACTER COUNTS! approach to character education doesn't exclude anyone. That's why we base our programs and materials on six ethical values that everyone can agree on — values that are not political, religious, or culturally biased. Use the points below to help young people understand the Six Pillars, and use the mnemonic devices at right to help them remember.

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««CLOSE»»

**Read more:** Our book *Making Ethical Decisions*, reprinted in part [here](#), includes a more detailed discussion of the Six Pillars. In his blog [What Will Matter](#), Josephson Institute president Michael Josephson invokes the Six Pillars to answer the question, [What Is Character?](#)

## Trustworthiness

Be honest • Don't deceive, cheat, or steal • Be reliable — do what you say you'll do • Have the courage to do the right thing • Build a good reputation • Be loyal — stand by your family, friends, and country

## Respect

Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule • Be tolerant and accepting of differences • Use good manners, not bad language • Be considerate of the feelings of others • Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone • Deal peacefully with anger, insults, and disagreements

## Responsibility

Do what you are supposed to do • Plan ahead • Persevere: keep on trying! • Always do your best • Use self-control • Be self-disciplined • Think before you act — consider the consequences • Be accountable for your words, actions, and attitudes • Set a good example for others

## Fairness

Play by the rules • Take turns and share • Be open-minded; listen to others • Don't take advantage of others • Don't blame others carelessly • Treat all people fairly

## Caring

Be kind • Be compassionate and show you care • Express gratitude • Forgive others • Help people in need

## Citizenship

Do your share to make your school and community better • Cooperate • Get involved in community affairs • Stay informed; vote • Be a good neighbor • Obey laws and rules • Respect authority • Protect the environment • Volunteer

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