

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 398 327

UD 031 139

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 TITLE Character Education in America.
 INSTITUTION Commonwealth Foundation for Public Policy
 Alternatives, Harrisburg, PA.
 PUB DATE Mar 96
 NOTE 14p.
 PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.)
 (120) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

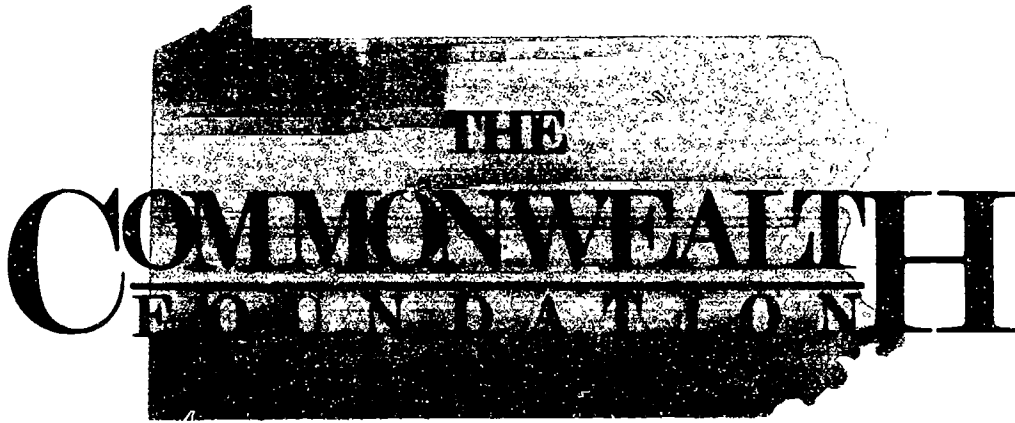
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Disadvantaged Youth; *Educational Change; Educational
 History; Elementary Secondary Education; Financial
 Support; *Government Role; *Inservice Teacher
 Education; *State Programs; Teaching Methods; Urban
 Youth; *Values Education; Youth Problems
 IDENTIFIERS *Character Education; Georgia; New Hampshire

ABSTRACT

A national consensus has been developing in recent years on the crisis of values faced by the United States. A measure that has recently reemerged and captured a measure of public attention is character education. This paper examines the degree to which state governments and their educational establishments have attempted to use character education in their schools. Character education in American schools dates from the foundations of public education. In 1993, a Gallup Poll found that 79% of Americans favored traditional character education in schools. Some states actually mandate character education. A good example of a statewide character education program is that of Georgia. How to provide value education is a local decision, but the state suggests program formats and values-promoting activities. The state provides no direct funding, but suggests some sources of funds. In New Hampshire, the approach to character education is indirect. The state has established a values education program for use by teachers in the classroom. Character education, as states are coming to recognize, can be part of the solution to the problems facing America's youth. (SLD)

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for Public Policy Alternatives

CHARACTER EDUCATION IN AMERICA

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March 1996

UD031139

Since ancient times, philosophers and scholars have known that values and education are indissolubly bound together. Their connection was so obvious and important that it was virtually impossible to imagine value-free education. Even if education did not transmit values explicitly and self-consciously, it did so implicitly and by example.

Denis P. Doyle¹

People are realizing that successful education without teaching values is impossible. We cannot have 250 million individual value systems operating in this country and survive as a nation.

Patrick McCarthy²

The truth of the real world is that without standards and judgments, there can be no progress....We shouldn't be reluctant to declare that some things—some lives, books, ideas, and value—are better than others. It is the responsibility of the schools to teach these better things.

William J. Bennett³

The task of the educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts. The right defense against false sentiments is to [teach] just sentiments.

C. S. Lewis⁴

Schools and educators can play a powerful role second only to the influence of parents in forming children's attitudes and values. Yet to a great extent our schools are failing us.

Benjamin M. Spock⁵

INTRODUCTION

A fundamental loss of values in America has fostered a calamitous epidemic of violence and has undermined the integrity and vibrancy of the family unit while coarsening our culture and generating a steady deterioration in our quality of life. This is the belief of Dr. Benjamin Spock and an increasing legion of other social observers and analysts.

A national consensus has broadened during the past three years on the crisis of values that the United States is experiencing. Conservatives, liberals, moderates, neoconservatives, neoliberals, and communitarians all agree. Political leaders from President Bill Clinton and William Bennett to Jesse Jackson and Phyllis Schlafly have been sounding the warning to a national citizenry that is increasingly aware of the problem but increasingly despondent over what corrective measures should be embraced.

One measure that has only recently reemerged and captured a measure of public attention is character education. This report will examine the degree to which our laboratories of democracy—our state governments—and their educational establishments have attempted to utilize character education to reverse the trends outlined by Spock and others.

Throughout America's history, schools have had two fundamental goals: to help people become smart and good. Schools once assumed that students would learn to be better people as they developed their intellect. This no longer remains a valid assumption.

The Josephson Institute of Ethics released a study of nearly 7,000 American students that indicated that 61 percent of high schoolers had cheated on an exam during the past year, 33 percent had stolen something from a store, and 33 percent said they would lie on a resume.⁶ During 1993, members of Texas Southern University's marching band were apprehended during a trip to Tokyo for stealing \$22,000 worth of electronic merchandise. According to a National Retail Federation study, shoplifting cost U.S. businesses \$24 billion last year, while only three to five percent of shoplifters were apprehended. Employee theft costs businesses about \$9 billion per year. A 1993 National School Boards Association survey revealed that approximately 10 percent of all teachers and 25 percent of all students had been the victim of an assault. In response to these trends, 20 percent of all high school students now regularly carry a weapon to school.

In a report issued by the Princeton Religion Research Center, most Americans profess their conviction that there are few moral absolutes and that "right" or "wrong" depends on the situation. This belief in "situation ethics" rather than moral absolutes was held by 69 percent of American adults according to the center.⁷ The columnist William Raspberry believes that our society has suffered because of the forsaking of moral absolutes:

I think we've paid a very high price for our abandonment of clear-cut right/wrong pronouncements in favor of moral relativism. Our professors, our universities, and our high schools are discovering the dilemma we created for ourselves: You can't exercise moral authority while denying the authority of morality.⁸

This moral relativity has only reinforced the surge of juvenile violence that has overwhelmed our nation during the past seven years. Violence is devastating this generation; a *Newsweek* report on teen violence compared its lethal nature to the deadliness of the polio epidemic 40 years ago. Between 1987 and 1991, the number of teenagers arrested for murder increased at the rate of 85 percent. Not only are more teens committing crimes, but more teens are the victims of this contemporary crime wave. An average of more than six juveniles are killed every day, and the Justice Department estimates that about a million teens between the ages of 12 and 19 are assaulted, raped, or robbed by other youths annually.⁹

In 1993, persons under 18 years of age accounted for approximately 20 percent of all the violent crime in America. When burglary, theft, and car-theft are added to the violent crimes of murder, forcible rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults, persons under 18 account for 29 percent of all arrests.¹⁰

Indeed, the "age of innocence" has ended for contemporary youth. Certainly, declining standards of behavior are most astonishing when they are seen in our children. Even the most basic kind of moral knowledge seems to be disappearing from our common culture.

Many of today's youth have a difficult time seeing any moral dimension to their actions. There are many reasons why this is true, and perhaps none are more prominent than a collapsing family structure coupled with an educational system that often eschews teaching children the core civic values that bind Americans together as a society and culture.

The need for character education was well summarized by Theodore Roosevelt, "To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society." In fact, character education is as old as education itself.

HISTORY OF AMERICAN CHARACTER EDUCATION

In 1647 the first law mandating public education in the United States was adopted in Massachusetts. This law was entitled "Ye Old Deluder Satan Act," and it declared that Satan flourished on ignorance. Students were taught the alphabet from *The New England Primer* that began "In Adam's fall, we sinned all."¹¹ The purpose of education in puritan Massachusetts was to enable students to read the Bible. Indeed, the first education laws were enacted to enable the state to act as the agent of the church in requiring compulsory schooling for children. Patrick McCarthy, executive vice president of the Thomas Jefferson Research Center, observes that at that time, "Schooling was almost all values instructions, with a little reading and simple arithmetic thrown in."¹²

The colonies' leaders at the time of the American Revolution also believed that school had a responsibility to develop students' values. Thomas Jefferson's *Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge* supported the idea that public education should instill moral principles in students. Benjamin Franklin's *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania* outlined a curriculum that included the study of ethics.

These Revolutionary leaders harbored the belief that public education would create the kinds of citizens required in a democracy. For example, Jefferson noted:

I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion...the remedy is not to take it from

them, but to inform their discretion.¹³

The new country's first legislators soon embarked upon a course of action that revealed the value they placed on education and its connection to character development. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 is illustrative of the actions. It set forth a mechanism for financing public education, and its intent was clear: "religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools, and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."¹⁴ After the first few years of "common school," students were instructed either in academies, which were private secondary schools; in English-style colleges; in apprenticeships; or in other forms of professional training.

In the nineteenth century, public schools fully embraced character education through discipline, the teacher's example, and the daily school curriculum. This type of instruction is clearly seen in the *McGuffey's Readers* that were introduced in 1836 and proceeded to sell more than 100 million copies. William McGuffey used religious stories, inspirational poems, stirring exhortations, and heroic tales in his *Readers*. As children practiced their school lessons, they also learned the importance of honesty, hard work, self-discipline, responsibility, respect, caring, and citizenship.

Later in the nineteenth century, the secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, Horace Mann, required all public school teachers in that state to begin each school day by reading ten verses from the King James Version of the Bible "without comment." This practice, which was widely employed across the United States, was a way to assist students in developing "reason and conscience."¹⁵

The form of character education delivered in the public schools during the nineteenth century was firmly grounded in Protestant Christianity. As time passed, increasing numbers of Roman Catholics pressed for revisions to the type of character education in use. In Cincinnati, for example, a conflict over which version of the Bible would be read in the public schools broke into a violent conflict known as the Rifle War.

Mann and other educators who supported Bible reading, however, did so in the belief that the moral values taught in this way were universal and nonsectarian. "There is a secular morality which is not opposed to religious morality...but is the result of human experiences, is recognized by all civilized people, is taught by the philosophers of all nations, and is sanctioned by all enlightened creeds," affirmed an 1880s article in the *Wisconsin Journal of Education*.¹⁶

During the latter portion of the nineteenth century, numerous changes began in American society that would gradually but decisively alter the nature of U.S. schools. A few of these notable trends were increasing urbanization of society, increasing affluence of American society, and increasing religious heterogeneity. Children could spend longer periods of economically unproductive time attending school; hence, by the turn of the century, schools had enrolled significantly larger percentages of all children between the ages of 15 and 18. As religious heterogeneity escalated, schools went from basing their character education on nonsectarian Christianity to deism and later to purely secular principles. Nevertheless, up until the 1930s, character education remained a significant goal of elementary and secondary education.

In the mid-1920s, the Institute of Social and Religious Research launched a comprehensive effort to evaluate the impact of schools upon character formation. This research was led by Hugh Hartschorne and Mark A. May. Their three-volume, 1,700-page report, "The Character Education Inquiry," concluded that the relationship between good pupil conduct and the application of a formal character education approach was slight. This research effort marked a turning point in the relationship between American public education and traditional character education.¹⁷

Before Hartschorne and May's research, schools were totally committed to conducting a vigorous character education program, and the nation's intellectual forces were sympathetic to this endeavor. As the study's conclusions circulated, a gradual disjunction arose and slowly spread over what educators and parents desired in the schools' values curricula and efforts. Edward Wynne tells us that this study, however, was unrealistic and was conducted from a "semi-utopian" perspective.¹⁸

While this study and its conclusions were fading into the mists of time, the momentum of the character education movement carried it forward through the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Even though character education served our culture well over a long period of time, a number of forces, which arose after Hartschorne and May's research, surfaced and dismantled traditional character education or what Wynne refers to as "the great tradition." William K. Kilpatrick and Thomas Lickona identified these forces—logical positivism, personalism, relativism, rapidly intensifying pluralism, and increasing secularization.

These forces, their development, and their effect on character education are fully examined in other reports. Nonetheless, the rapidly intensifying pluralism of American society and the increasing secularization of the public arena forced many schools away from their once central role as moral and character educators.¹⁹ Many schools accepted the ideas that they should not impose any one set of values on their students, and these institutions began to profess the conviction that all values were equal and distinctions could not be made among them. Character education, if not actively discouraged, became at best unplanned and unreflective, part of the unexamined curriculum. It was abandoned to the discretion of individual teachers.

During the 1970s character education rebounded in a different guise. The forms it assumed were values clarification and moral reasoning. "Values clarification" tells children to decide for themselves under most circumstances what is right and wrong. This new approach to character education sprang from the publication of *Values and Teaching* by Columbia University professor Louis Rath in 1966. Values clarification contained no requirement to evaluate one's values against a standard, no suggestion that some values might be better or worse than others.

An alternative to values clarification, "moral reasoning," soon arose and was spearheaded by Lawrence Kohlberg. Moral reasoning tried to assist students to develop ethically valid ways of reasoning about moral issues. Nonetheless, its focus was on "process" rather than the moral content of those thoughts.

These two new approaches to character education that left students with the impression that all morality is problematic and all questions of right and wrong are in dispute have generally failed. The naive assumption behind values clarification is that students will arrive at good moral conclusions if they are given the opportunity. The actual result of these two approaches has been moral confusion.

Many schools have gone astray recently, not in the instruction of values, but in the instruction that all values are equal. Though deeply held differences exist, not all values are equal. Values are the basis of actions, and actions have consequences. Since all civilizations are embodiments of some set of values and since all values are alleged to be equal by some, all civilizations should possess the same levels of prosperity and stability. Of course, they do not.

Traditional character education provides a much more effective and realistic approach to addressing the "moral illiteracy" than do these recent curricula. In the past few years an increasing number of states have attempted to restore character education programs. The United States, however, is not alone among countries of the world in grappling with this state of "moral illiteracy" within the ranks of the young.

CHARACTER EDUCATION—INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

Countries across the globe are turning to their educational systems for assistance with the increasing levels of moral illiteracy among their youth. Lickona notes this trend, "The paralyzing concern of a few years ago that teaching values might...upset some people is giving way to what now seems like a self-evident truth: *Not* to equip the young with a moral sense is a grave ethical failure on the part of any society."²⁰

The new international focus on character education has been highlighted recently in *The Economist*. The publication reported that the idea of character education is not new in Asia. It can be dated back beyond the time of Confucius. During the transformation of Japan from feudalism in the nineteenth century, moral education was used to protect "Asian values." At a recent conference sponsored by UNESCO, the final report noted that interest

in moral education "resounded throughout." The newly industrialized countries of Asia desire the benefits of Western prosperity without what they see as the attendant evils of Western morality. Lee Kwan Yew, the former prime minister of Singapore, has warned that "If western values are adopted, cohesion will be threatened and the country will go downhill."²¹

Students in Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore all receive schooling in moral education. For example, children in Korea spend two hours each week in character education and how the virtues affect the individual, the family, and the nation. Many Asians are now worried about the decay in order, discipline, family life, basic education, and personal safety that seems to have infected the United States during the past 40 years. They passionately desire to avoid these trends.²²

Over the past decade, divorce rates in the Asian countries noted above have climbed and teenagers are increasingly seen as unruly vagabonds. It is no coincidence that the revived interest in character education has grown as traditional virtues are thought to have declined. "There's increasing concern among educators that the next generation is going to hell," observed a World Bank economist.²³

Consequently, the South Korean Ministry of Education has been frustrated with many parents of the country's brightest students because the Ministry believes that character education is shortchanged by these families as they focus on preparing their children for the competition to obtain entry to the best universities.

A Singapore textbook, *Confucian Ethics*, offers this advice to its students in order to retain a proper perspective as affluence increases: "Despite increasing competition in the work place, and life becoming more and more mechanical, we may still follow the Confucian path of spiritual self-cultivation and live meaningful lives with one another."²⁴

PUBLIC CLIMATE AND CHARACTER EDUCATION

In 1993, the public policy research organization, Public Agenda, conducted a national public opinion study that was entitled *First Things First: What Americans Expect from the Public Schools*. In this study, Public Agenda discovered that more than two-thirds of Americans—71 percent—believe that it is more important for the schools to teach values than to teach academic subjects.²⁵

When the Public Agenda researchers focused on the area of character education, they discovered that 95 percent of Americans are convinced that schools should teach honesty and the importance of telling the truth. In addition, the study uncovered that 95 percent of the populace believe that schools should teach respect for others regardless of their racial or ethnic background and 93 percent said that schools should teach students to solve problems without violence.²⁶

A 1989 Gallup Poll found that 79 percent of Americans favored traditional character education in the schools. Parents with children in public schools approved of these schools conducting a traditional character education curriculum at the rate of 89 percent.²⁷

In 1990 a commission of business, educational, medical, and political leaders met to examine the problems of American children. This commission issued a report called *Code Blue*, and the contents of this report were sobering. The report argued that "Never before has one generation of American teenagers been less healthy, less cared for, or less prepared for life, than their parents were at the same age."²⁸ The commission believed that America's youth were facing a crisis of character.

STATE CONSTITUTIONS AND CHARACTER EDUCATION

In addition to public approval of character education in the schools, state governments had traditionally placed a high value on the importance of character education. This assertion can be illustrated in a number of ways.

The first proof of this assertion is seen in the fact that all 50 state constitutions are based on higher-law assumptions. Second, the preambles of 44 states constitutions specifically refer to a deity. Finally, the constitutions of 25 states mandate character or moral education based on a confirmed knowledge of right and wrong.²⁹

Despite the existence of these mandates, there appears to be no correlation between whether a state constitution mandates moral education and whether the state government actually implements a character education program. Twenty-five state constitutions mandate character education in their public schools. Surprisingly, 16 of the states that mandate character education through their constitutions have not yet officially implemented specific moral education programs. However, seven states conduct character education programs without any mandate.

Table 1 presents a comparison of those states whose constitutions mandate character education and those states that report the implementation of a character education program. Table 2 shows a classification of the states based on the type of character education program that is in effect.

TABLE 1
STATE MANDATES FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

State	Mandates	Have Objectives	State	Mandates	Have Objectives
Alabama	No	Yes	Montana	No	*
Alaska	No	*	Nebraska	Yes	No
Arizona	No	Yes	Nevada	Yes	No
Arkansas	Yes	No	New Hamp.	No	No
California	Yes	Yes	New Jersey	No	Yes
Colorado	No	No	New Mexico	No	No
Connecticut	No	Yes	New York	Yes	No
Delaware	No	No	No. Carolina	Yes	No
Florida	No	No	No. Dakota	Yes	No
Georgia	No	Yes	Oklahoma	No	Yes
Hawaii	No	No	Ohio	Yes	Yes
Idaho	No	No	Oregon	Yes	No
Illinois	Yes	No	Pennsylvania	No	No
Indiana	Yes	No	Rhode Island	Yes	*
Iowa	Yes	No	So. Carolina	Yes	No
Kansas	No	No	So. Dakota	Yes	No
Kentucky	Yes	Yes	Tennessee	No	No
Louisiana	No	No	Texas	No	No
Maine	Yes	No	Utah	Yes	Yes
Maryland	No	Yes	Vermont	Yes	*
Mass.	Yes	Yes	Virginia	Yes	No
Michigan	Yes	*	Washington	No	No
Minnesota	Yes	Yes	W. Virginia	Yes	No
Mississippi	No	No	Wisconsin	Yes	No
Missouri	No	No	Wyoming	No	No

*Did not reply

Source: Jensen and Passey, p. 31.

TABLE 2
CLASSIFICATION OF STATE CHARACTER EDUCATION CURRICULA

Has specific objectives in moral education	No specific moral education objectives	Objectives in social studies curriculum materials	Moral education objectives are determined by district
Alabama	Arkansas	California	Florida
Arizona	Colorado	Idaho	Indiana
Connecticut	Delaware	Illinois	Maine
Georgia	Hawaii	Iowa	Pennsylvania
Kentucky	Kansas	Louisiana	South Carolina
Maryland	Mississippi	Nevada	South Dakota
Massachusetts	Missouri	North Carolina	
Minnesota	Nebraska	Texas	
New Jersey	New Hamp.	Virginia	
Ohio	New Mexico	Washington	
Oklahoma	New York	West Virginia	
Utah	North Dakota	Wisconsin	
	Oregon		
	Tennessee		
	Wyoming		

Source: Jensen and Passey, p. 30.

Table 2 reveals the extent of current usage of character education curricula among the states. While 12 states have specific objectives in character education, another 12 states address character education by incorporating it as part of their social studies curricula. A study conducted by G. R. Johnson and a subsequent study by Larry Jansen and Holly Passey demonstrate that state mandates for character education have frequently been ignored. In states that conduct moral education, it frequently appears to be dictated by the "secular scholarship of the academic community...(who) have ignored the content or context of state constitutional or statutory law and followed the directives of national organizations."³⁰

During the past few years, a number of states have gathered information and conducted hearings on the possibility of implementing statewide character education programs. Examples of such states are Arizona and Kentucky. In fact, Kentucky's state government is in the process of gathering community opinion about how to proceed with the revamping of its efforts.

Meanwhile, two states, Florida and Nebraska, recently had their state legislatures vote down proposed statewide character education programs. These two states will reconsider these programs after additional refinement and amendment.

GEORGIA'S CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAM

In order to better understand statewide character education programs, it is useful to scrutinize one of these programs and how it functions. A good example can be found in Georgia.

In March 1991 the Georgia State Board of Education adopted Rule 160-4-2-.33. This rule required all local school districts in Georgia to provide educational opportunities in certain value concepts to all students, grades K-12. The rule was intended to extend existing values-oriented activities in Georgia while concurrently

implementing the board's new program.

Georgia's requirements presented in the rule are as follows:

1. The local school board shall provide instruction, grades K-12, which addresses the core values concept adopted by the State Board of Education.
2. The local school system shall provide opportunities for practicing these values.
3. The local school system shall develop a plan for implementing values education, including materials and strategies to be used.

Three years of work were invested in developing the core values list. This research ranged from an extensive data search to community input gained at seven regional public hearings. Georgia's list of core values for its statewide character education program was adopted in March 1991. This list appears in Table 3.

TABLE 3
GEORGIA'S LIST OF CORE VALUES

Citizenship

Democracy: government of, by, and for the people, exercised through the voting process.

- Respect for and acceptance of authority: the need for and the primacy of authority, including the law, in given circumstances.
- Equality: the right and opportunity to develop one's potential as a human being.
- Freedom of conscience and expression: the right to hold beliefs, whether religious, ethical, or political, and to express one's views.
- Justice: equal and impartial treatment under the law.
- Liberty: freedom from oppression, tyranny, or the domination of government.
- Tolerance: recognition of the diversity of others, their opinions, practices, and culture.

Patriotism: support of and love for the United States of America with zealous guarding of its welfare.

- Courage: willingness to face obstacles and danger with determination.
- Loyalty: steadfastness or faithfulness to a person, institution, custom, or ideas to which one is tied by duty, pledge or a promise.

Respect for the Natural Environment: care for and conservation of land, trees, clean air, and pure water and of all living inhabitants of the earth.

- Conservation: avoiding waste and pollution of natural resources.

Respect for Others

Altruism: concern for and motivation to act for the welfare of others.

- Civility: courtesy and politeness in action or speech.
- Compassion: concern for suffering or distress of others and response to their feelings and needs.
- Courtesy: recognition of mutual interdependence with others resulting in polite treatment and respect for others.

Integrity: confirmed virtue and uprightness of character; freedom from hypocrisy.

- Honesty: truthfulness and sincerity.
- Truth: freedom from deceit or falseness: based on fact or reality.
- Trustworthiness: worthy of confidence.

Respect for Self

Acceptability: responsibility for one's actions and their consequences.

- Commitment: being emotionally, physically or intellectually bound to something.
- Perseverance: adherence to action, belief, or purpose without giving way.
- Self control: exercising authority over one's emotions and actions.
- Frugality: effective use of resources; thrift.

Self-Esteem: pride and belief in oneself and in achievement of one's potential.

- Knowledge: learning, understanding, awareness.
- Moderation: avoidance of extreme views or measures.
- Respect for physical, mental, and fiscal health: awareness of the importance and of conscious activity toward maintaining fitness in these areas.

Work-Ethic: belief that work is good and that everyone who can, should work.

- Accomplishment: appreciation for completing a task.
- Cooperation: working with others for mutual benefit.
- Dependence: reliability; trustworthiness.
- Diligence: attentiveness; persistence; perseverance.
- Pride: dignity; self-respect; doing one's best.
- Productivity: supporting one's self; contributing to society.
- Creativity: exhibiting an entrepreneurial spirit; inventiveness; originality; not bound by the norm.

Source: *Georgia Values Education Implementation Guide*

How to provide value education in Georgia is a local decision. This includes the decision as to whether value education will be infused into the curriculum or be a stand-alone activity.

The state, however, has not left the school districts without any resources to implement the programs. Various program formats were suggested by the state, not only for instruction values, but also how to practice values through various activities. These activities can range from role-playing to community service.

The state also provided a list of commercially available resources on character education. These resources dealt with specific topics in the area of character education as well as staff development.

Although Georgia's state government provided no direct funding for its character education program, it gave local school districts a list of strategies to locate funds. These strategies included suggested arrangements with private industry and civic organizations that would fund various portions of the character education program. Georgia also proceeded to allocate additional state and federal grant funds to the school districts for different facets of the character education effort, such as staff development and sex and drug education.

Finally, a major advantage of Georgia's program is the provision for an evaluation of its progress. The Georgia Department of Education stresses that for a character education program to succeed, evaluation at the local level—the school district level—must be continuous and comprehensive.

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S APPROACH

The state of New Hampshire has recently initiated an indirect approach to character education for its students. Rather than implementing a statewide program in state classrooms for its students, New Hampshire has established a values program for its teachers.

This indirect approach was the result of the adoption of a new state rule, which became effective on 1 July 1993, that required educators who desire recertification to complete five clock hours of instruction in character and citizenship education. These clock hours are included in the total 50 hours of professional development that must be accumulated every three years to maintain certification.

In 1992 the New Hampshire Department of Education convened an advisory group to provide technical assistance in meeting this rule. Members of this group were not only drawn from the department, but they were also drawn from the ranks of staff development chairpersons from rural, urban, and suburban school districts; the teacher unions (AFT and NEA); the New Hampshire Principals Association; the New Hampshire School Administrators Association; as well as the New Hampshire Teachers' Academy for Character and Citizenship

Education. This group proceeded to develop guidelines and a program to assist school districts in monitoring the new rule. The program developed by the advisory group now includes 67 separate staff development committees that exchange ideas, 32 regional workshop centers, and liaisons with national character education organizations.

Even though New Hampshire has not established a statewide character education program for its students, the state has recognized the paramount importance of ensuring that the state's teachers should be knowledgeable about and well grounded in character education before the state could conduct an effective program. At this time, it is uncertain whether New Hampshire will proceed to the next steps in developing a statewide character education program for its students. Not only would a detailed program with goals and timetables need to be developed, but the state would also need to obtain input from the general public. Such a step might provide additional information or perspective to improve the program as well as building public support for it.

CONCLUSION

Some states, such as Georgia, have comprehensive character education programs operational. Other states, such as New York, have only a policy statement of support. The range of programs does show that character education is being revived in America.

It is too early to report what effect character education programs will have on the morals of the students. What is known is that if a character education program is to be successful, certain program characteristics must be present:

1. Development of ongoing in-service training for all personnel in the district, from administrators to teachers.
2. Reliable information on what the community really wants and expects from the program.
3. An alliance between the community, the school, and the state.
4. Use of a public forum to educate the public about policies and procedures.
5. Sensitivity to differing opinions within the community, ensuring that a balance of all views are taken into account on every decision.
6. Development of clearly written policies supporting programs and curricula, for selecting material, and providing guidance for the implementation of the program.

Many state leaders have assumed that character education is of fundamental importance. It can be expected that as social pathologies increase among our youth other states will implement similar programs. Communities and local school boards can help in the effort to initiate plans at the state level by implementing programs of their own as examples for state authorities.

The problems confronting the youth of America need to be addressed. Character education can be a part of the solution. Jeremiah's admonition on character development remains a valuable lesson today, "Ask for the old paths and see where is the good way, and walk in it and find rest for your souls."³¹

ENDNOTES

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2. Kristen J. Amundson, *Teaching Values and Ethics*, (Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1991), 31.
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