

CharacterStrong

BUILDING CONNECTIONS AT SCHOOL, HOME, AND COMMUNITY

One of the strengths of the CharacterStrong curriculum is the relationships it builds between student to peers, students and school staff, students and family, and students and the greater community. This is done through intentional relationship building activities that put a daily and weekly focus on what is most important to making this happen. We need to be reminded more than we need to be taught.

STUDENT TO STUDENT

The CharacterStrong curriculum intentionally starts out each year with community building. The purpose of these initial lessons is to help students form relationships with one another in the classroom setting. In the advisory curriculum students spend the first three lessons engaging in activities that help students get to know their classmates and learn about each other.

Compliments Galore

Give genuine compliments to five people you notice throughout the day.

This should be a mixture of friends and strangers. Look for people picking up trash or holding the door open and thank them for their thoughtfulness. Look for some unique style or clothing. Observe how your lunch server or bus driver interacts with you.

Kindness, Day 82

Icons: a person with a plus sign, a bell, a heart, and a speech bubble.

The CharacterDare process challenges students to strengthen their character muscle daily and weekly, often times by doing acts of kindness for other students, staff, family members or the community. Whether the dare is to hold the door open for their classmates, or one like Dare 82 "Give five genuine compliments to people you notice throughout the day", CharacterStrong wants students engaging with one another in order to build more meaningful relationships.

In the Leadership curriculum students eventually fill out Character Cards each week that have students set a goal as to how they will improve their character at school, at home and an overall goal they are working on the remainder of the year, after they have gone through an intentional 40 Day Character Challenge process where they are given many examples of what strong character looks like in action. This character card process has been one of the most transformational pieces of many schools and once again, helps students focus on their actions and relationships with other students at their school.



OVERALL

SCHOOL

HOME

NAME: _____

CONTACT: _____

DATE & TIME _____

CharacterStrong

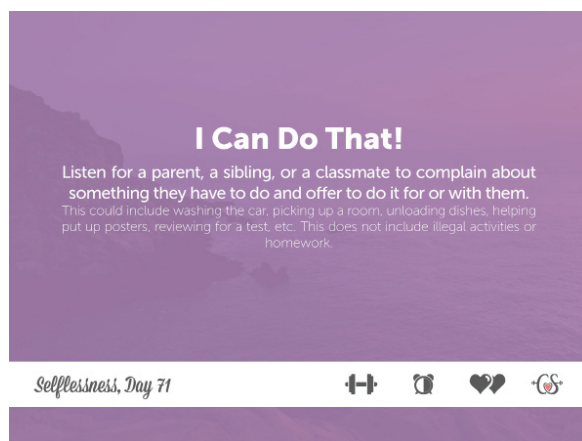
STUDENT TO STAFF

The nature of the content is very relational and relevant. Teachers have loved being able to step aside from the content they teach like math or science and talk about issues revolving around life. The advisory model provides lessons that are typically 20-30 minutes in length (can be modified for your building's needs) and focus on topics like how serving others can build influence with people, how gratitude can impact happiness, and why forgiving someone can be tough but is necessary for growth in relationships. The weekly process provides a safe space for teachers to check in with students on how their character challenges are going as well as what students think of the challenges. This leads to great discussion where teachers can share appropriate examples of how these challenges connect to them and how they impact the greater school and community at large.

Teachers often find that through teaching this curriculum their own character is developed as well as positive relationships formed with students that has a real impact on the school's positive climate and culture.

STUDENT TO FAMILY

One of the most rewarding conversations we have heard over the years of teaching this curriculum comes from the parents or guardians of the students going through it. Parents will come to conference night raving about the conversations their students are having at home with them about what they are learning in their leadership or advisory classroom. This is due to the fact that students see this curriculum as relevant to their lives right now because it is all about relationships.



I Can Do That!

Listen for a parent, a sibling, or a classmate to complain about something they have to do and offer to do it for or with them. This could include washing the car, picking up a room, unloading dishes, helping put up posters, reviewing for a test, etc. This does not include illegal activities or homework.

Selflessness, Day 71

Icons: Home, Alarm, Heart, Share

Students can take the conversations and lessons they are learning through CharacterStrong and instantly apply them at home. A number of character dares focus on activities they could do at home to improve their character like "Do the dishes tonight without being asked". This then leads to more difficult challenges that ask students to be more present and intentional around their family, including putting electronic devices away, engaging in conversation that they lead and showing appreciation for what they have been given.

STUDENT TO COMMUNITY

One of the problems that school's face is how to teach students to be civic and service minded. Because schools struggle with how to do this, they usually tend to tackle this task by assigning community service hours. CharacterStrong's focus is to get beneath that and teach students why serving their friends, school, family, and community is important for themselves and others. When students understand the "why" through first hand experiences, they are more likely to participate in civic and community activities that help the greater good. We can teach the heart as well as the mind.