



# The Six Pillars of Character

**T**hese six core ethical values form the foundation of [the CHARACTER COUNTS! youth-ethics initiative](#). More detailed discussion of the Six Pillars is included in *Making Ethical Decisions*, a Josephson Institute booklet available online [here](#).

## 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 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 • 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 choices

## 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

## 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

### Six Pillar Mnemonics

To help young people remember the Pillars, some educators employ these creative devices.

#### Color Scheme

Each of the Six Pillars is associated with a certain color.

- **Trustworthiness: Blue** — like "True Blue"
- **Respect: Yellow or Gold** — like the Golden Rule
- **Responsibility: Green** — as in being responsible for a garden or finances; or as in being solid and reliable like an oak
- **Fairness: Orange** — like dividing an orange into equal sections to share fairly with friends
- **Caring: Red** — like a heart
- **Citizenship: Purple** — as in the regal purple representing the state

#### TRRFCC

Use this acronym to help you remember that people with good character are terrific:

**T**rustworthiness  
**R**espect  
**R**esponsibility  
**F**airness  
**C**aring  
**C**itizenship