**Character Traits**

* At Guilford County Schools, we recognize that high-quality teachers, rigorous curriculum, and even the most advanced technology are not enough to prepare our students for college, career, and life. It also takes developing students' social and emotional learning which includes specific character traits within classroom instruction and extra-curricular activities. While details of this essential component have evidence-based research that highlights the importance of this work, every teacher, at every grade level, in every school reinforces these efforts.

The benefit of strong character can't be measured by any test. Rather, it's demonstrated during those common instances when our students are given the opportunity to think for themselves. Simply put, character is about making the right choices. And if we can emphasize it from the moment a child begins school, social and emotional learning skills and positive character can equip students with the tools and motivation necessary to be the change they wish to see in the world.

We also welcome parents to reinforce social and emotional learning at home. Below are the character development traits our schools emphasize in the classroom. Please feel free to use these at home as well. Some ideas for you:

* + Each month, print the character development trait handout and put it on the refrigerator.
	+ At dinnertime, talk to your child about the trait of the month, the social and emotional learning competency, and how your family can incorporate it into your daily lives.
	+ Copy some of the quotes listed on each handout and sporadically place them in your child’s lunchbox or book bag. Engage in conversations about the quote before or after school.
	+ Review the key events listed on each handout and find ways to participate as a family.

For more tips on how to build strong character, contact [*Guilford Parent Academy*](https://www.gcsnc.com/Domain/2419) to request a character development training for your school community.

**August/September**

**Responsibility**

* + Being dependable in carrying out obligations and duties.
	+ Showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct.
	+ Being accountable for your own actions.
	+ Being committed to active involvement in your school and community.

**October**

**Respect**

* + Showing high regard for other people, self, property, and country.
	+ Understanding that all people have value as human beings.

**November/December**

**Kindness**

* + Being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding of others.
	+ Showing care, compassion, friendship, and generosity.
	+ Treating others as you would like to be treated.

**January/February**

**Courage**

* + Having the determination to do the right thing even when others don't.
	+ Having the strength to follow your conscience rather than the crowd.
	+ Attempting difficult things that are worthwhile.

**March**

**Integrity**

* + Having the inner strength to be truthful, trustworthy, and honest in all things.
	+ Acting justly and honorably.

**April**

**Self-Discipline**

* + Demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose.
	+ Regulating yourself for improvement and restraining from inappropriate behaviors.
	+ Being in proper control of your words, actions, impulses, and desires.
	+ Doing your best in all situations.

**May/June**

**Perseverance**

* + Being persistent in the pursuit of worthy objectives in spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement.
	+ Exhibiting patience and having the determination and strength to try again when confronted with delays, mistakes, and failures.