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To: <CHARACTER_EDUCATION_NETWORK@EMAIL.RUTGERS.EDU>
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**CHARACTER_EDUCATION_NETWORK Online Mail List
Vol. #9 (September 2004)**

Welcome to the **CHARACTER_EDUCATION_NETWORK** online mail list. Your name has been added to this list as a result of your completing the New Jersey Department of Education Character Education Network Online Listserv Form or because you have indicated an interest in receiving updates on character education efforts in New Jersey.

The purpose of **The Network** is to encourage the adoption of character education programs and strategies by providing a forum for sharing information, research and promising practices. Through the New Jersey Center for Character Education (NJCCE), **The Network** will offer educators access to national and state character education experts and programs through conferences, workshops, and e-mails.

The Network will be bringing you **news** from the national, state and local levels; **best practices**, including updates from our New Jersey Local Education Area (LEA) Partner demonstration sites; announcements of **events, conferences, workshops**; and **professional development opportunities** throughout the state and at the national level; grant and **funding opportunities**; **program and assessment resources** and links to other character education **websites**.

A link to the NJ Center for Character Education website (www.nj-charactered.net) will lead you to current **articles** and **research** from the field as well as materials and large documents which you can download for use in your classroom.

MESSAGE FROM THE NJCCE DIRECTOR

As we start the new school year, we must remind ourselves of our hopes for our students. Throughout New Jersey, parents and teachers want children to learn and grow into healthy, capable people who will lead meaningful, fulfilling lives while contributing in positive ways to the growth of our society, our country and to the betterment of the world we share with others who are less fortunate.

The climate of concern over high stakes academic testing has unfortunately distracted attention from the highest stake we have in the educational process, the development of children of sound character and social/emotional fitness who are prepared to assume the roles and responsibilities of productive citizenship, caring family life, and responsible vocational accomplishment. Increasingly, educators and parents are realizing what research is also demonstrating: A deliberate, comprehensive approach to teaching children social and emotional skills in the context of a caring, disciplined school environment can raise their grades and enhance their enthusiasm for learning while enabling them to form positive relationships with their teachers, peers and family.

The New Jersey Center for Character Education wishes you well in your work this year in whatever role you serve to help educate our children.

-- Philip Brown

CHARACTER EDUCATION NEWS

Important Decision Handed Down in Hostile School Environment Case (Student-on-Student Harassment)

The Director of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights recently concluded that a school district violated the NJ Law Against Discrimination (LAD) in permitting a bias-based hostile environment to deprive the harassed student of the same educational opportunities afforded to other students.

In effect, this case means that bullying and harassment based on bias (on a protected category under the LAD) can be filed with the Division of Civil Rights, as a hostile environment cases in a place of public accommodation.

On July 26, 2004, by J. Frank Vespa-Papaleo, Esq., Director of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights, ruled that bias-based student-on-student harassment is a violation of the Law Against Discrimination (LAD) where it is severe or pervasive enough to make a reasonable student of the victim's protected class find the school environment hostile or abusive. The Director further concluded that a school district will be liable for such harassment when the school administration or its agents or employees knew or should have known of the bias-based harassment and failed to take measures reasonably calculated, in light of the known circumstances, to stop it.

The following case summary is from the website of the Office of the Attorney General, Department of Law and Safety (<http://www.state.nj.us/lps/dcr/orders.html>)

Case summary of L.W. v. TOMS RIVER REGIONAL SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION,
DCR DOCKET NO. PQ07IE-02596,
OAL DOCKET NO. CRT 8535-01.

A junior high school student (L.W.) and his mother filed a complaint alleging that the board of education failed to take appropriate corrective action when the student was repeatedly subjected to bias-based harassment, including physical assault, by other students who perceived him to be homosexual. The Division's investigation disclosed that the harassment and assaults continued after the complaint was filed, culminating in two separate assaults in the first weeks of L.W.'s freshman year in high school, after which he withdrew from school. Although the school administrators applied a progressive discipline approach to warn and discipline various students who were involved in the bias-based harassment, both new and repeat violators continued to harass L.W. based on perceived homosexuality. Following an administrative hearing, the administrative law judge dismissed the complaint, concluding that the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), N.J.S.A. 10:1-5 to -49, does not provide a cause of action for bias-based student-on-student harassment in New Jersey's schools. The ALJ further concluded that even if bias-based peer harassment were actionable under the LAD, a school district would not be liable for such harassment unless it failed to meet the minimal standards the federal Department of Education imposes on its funding recipients - - imposing liability only for deliberate indifference to known incidents of sexual harassment. The ALJ concluded that the school district's disciplinary actions in this case would meet those federal standards.

The Director rejected the ALJ's legal conclusions and instead relied on prior decisions of the New Jersey Supreme and Appellate Courts to conclude that bias-based student-on-student harassment will violate the LAD where it is severe or pervasive enough to make a reasonable student of the victim's protected class find the school environment hostile or abusive. The Director further concluded that a school district will be liable for such harassment when the school administration or its agents or employees knew or should have known of the bias-based harassment and failed to take measures reasonably calculated, in light of the known circumstances, to stop it. Applying those standards to the evidence presented at the hearing, the Director concluded that the school district violated the LAD in permitting a bias-based hostile environment to deprive L.W. of the same educational opportunities afforded to other students. To eradicate the bias-based hostile environment and prevent further discriminatory actions, the Director ordered the school district to undertake specific preventative and remedial actions, including revising its anti-discrimination policies and strengthening its training, complaint processing and information-dissemination procedures. The Director also awarded both L.W. and his mother damages for the emotional distress they suffered as a direct result of the bias-based harassment, and imposed a statutory penalty.

The entire decision is available on the NJ Division of Civil Rights website:
http://www.state.nj.us/lps/dcr/downloads/orders/LW-v-Toms_River.pdf

Growing to Greatness (G2G): Service-Learning Improves Achievement Levels in Students, Particularly in Low-Income School Districts

Growing to Greatness (G2G), an on-going project of The National Youth Leadership Council, released G2G survey

results in March 2004 at the *National Service-Learning Conference* in Orlando, Fla. The report documents the unfolding story of service-learning and provides useful information to improve implementation, inform public policy, and give a clear picture of the many ways young people contribute to society.

For a downloadable version of the report, visit the National Youth Leadership Council website at: <http://www.nylc.org> (Click on 'Programs')

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Al's Pals: Kids Making Healthy Choices

September 21-22, 2004

Millville, NJ

Early childhood curriculum and teacher training program that develops personal, social, and emotional skills in children 3 to 8 years old.

For more information, contact: Susan R. Geller, President – Wingspan, LLC, (804) 967-9002 or visit:

<http://www.wingspanworks.com>

Dr. Philip Fitch Vincent – Character Development Group

Best Practices in Character Education II

Character Education in the Classroom: Civility in the Community and Workplace

October 4, 2004

8:00 – 8:30 am Registration - 8:30 – 3:00pm Workshop

The National Conference Center - Ramada Inn - East Windsor, NJ

The one-day workshop is designed for teachers and administrators who have already begun a character education effort and want to continue to build and improve their school's efforts. The interactive workshop will be facilitated by Dr. Vincent and will offer Professional Development hours upon completion of workshop. Registration fee: \$150 – Includes books and other resource materials selected by Dr. Vincent specifically for workshop participants. (Receive one free registration when more than three team members register). For more workshop information, call 1-(888) 262-0572 or visit the CDG website at: www.charactereducation.com.

Educating the Heart and Mind

Committee for Children

Newark, NJ - 10/06/04 8:30–11:30

Hamilton (Trenton), NJ - 10/08/04 8:30–11:30

Free morning seminars exploring how social and emotional learning contributes to school success:

- The latest research on school violence and bullying and best practices for prevention.
- How to involve the whole school—including parents—in prevention efforts.
- Links between academic performance and prosocial skills.

There will also be hands-on experience with the following school programs:

- *Second Step*®: A Violence Prevention Curriculum for Grades Pre/K–9 (third edition)
- *Steps to Respect*®: A Bullying Prevention Program for elementary schools

Committee for Children, a nonprofit organization seeking to improve children's lives by providing research-based violence prevention, anti-bullying, sexual abuse prevention, and emergent literacy programs for schools, families, and communities. For online registration visit: <http://www.cfchildren.org/about/eventf/seminarform>. For more information, call toll-free: 800-634-4449 ext. 6223

We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution

The New Jersey Center for Civic and Law-Related Education

Thursday, October 7, 2004

New Jersey Law Center

New Brunswick, NJ

This is a one-day statewide workshop for upper elementary, middle and high school teachers demonstrating materials from the *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* program. The workshops are designed to help teachers to prepare their students to meet social studies standards 6.1 and 6.3 as well as to become informed, active citizens. Participating teachers will receive curriculum materials and certificates for six hours of professional development. Interested teachers may obtain a free classroom set of the *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution*, which includes 30 student textbooks and teacher's guide, by completing a request form at the workshop.

Independent studies reported that students who use the *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* materials outperform other students on political knowledge and philosophy and are more politically tolerant than students who use traditional textbooks and teaching approaches.

For additional information about this or other programs offered by the New Jersey Center for Civic and Law-Related Education, call (732) 445-3413, fax (732) 445-3420 or visit the website at: <http://civiced.rutgers.edu>

Character Counts!

Character Development Seminars

October 26-28, 2004

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Princeton, NJ

- Character Development Seminars (CDS) are intensive, three-day courses for educators, youth-service professionals and community leaders. For online registration information, visit: http://www.charactercounts.org/cds-forms/cds-reg-form_102604-Princeton.htm

Advanced Character Development Seminars

October 26-27, 2004

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Princeton, NJ

- *Advanced* Character Development Seminars are intensive two-day workshops for CDS graduates who want to boost the sustainability and effectiveness of their character-building activities. For online registration information, visit: http://www.charactercounts.org/cds-forms/cds2-reg-form_102604-Princeton.htm

For more information, contact Character Counts at: tel: (800) 711-2670 or (310) 846-4800

fax: (310) 846-4858; e-mail: training@jethics.org or visit their website at <http://www.charactercounts.org/>

The Institute for Global Ethics

"TREC" – Taking Responsibility for Ethical Cultures

A Leadership Retreat for Those who Shape the School Culture

With Paula Mirk, Vice President, Education

October 27-29, 2004

Princeton, NJ

This three-day leadership retreat is designed to equip school teams with the tools and skills to build a more positive school climate through schoolwide appreciation and support for ethical literacy. Registration fee: \$650 per person. For more retreat details, go to: <http://www.globlethics.org/seminars/trec.html>. To register, or to arrange for a custom TREC, call 800.729.2615, email (pmirk@globlethics.org), or standard mail (P.O. Box 563; Camden, ME 04843). For information about the Institute, visit their website at: <http://www.globlethics.org/>.

Institute for Global Education and Service Learning

Atlantic Region Service-Learning Conference

October 28 - 29, 2004

The Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel

Philadelphia, PA

Conference theme: "Service-Learning as a Vehicle for Community Change."

http://www.igesl.org/Atlantic_SLConference.htm

NATIONAL CHARACTER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

- **Character Education Partnership (CEP) Announcements:**

- **National Schools of Character Program Seeks 2005 Applicants**

Applications for the 2005 **National Schools of Character (NSOC) awards program**, due **December 6, 2004**, are available from the **Character Education Partnership (CEP)**. Now in its 8th year, NSOC is an annual awards program recognizing K-12 schools and districts demonstrating outstanding character education initiatives that yield positive results in student behavior, school climate and academic performance. Although winners may differ in method, content, and scope, all emphasize core ethical values such as honesty, respect, responsibility, and caring. CEP encourages schools and districts involved in character education to look at the criteria "Character Education Quality Standards" to determine whether they might qualify. Selected schools and districts are honored at CEP's annual forum in October and featured in CEP's annual NSOC publication and on CEP's Web site (www.character.org). They receive a cash award of \$2,000 to use for outreach and to support their initiatives.

Applications for **Promising Practices citations** are also available and **due on March 15, 2005**. Schools or districts may submit specific and unique best practices for review. If selected, they receive an award citation and the practice is included in CEP's annual NSOC publication. They also receive a copy of the book.

Support for NSOC is made possible by the UAW-GM Center for Human Resources, The Boeing Company, The Anschutz Foundation, and the John Templeton Foundation. For more information, call CEP at 800-988-8081 or 202-296-7743, ext. 10. Applications can be downloaded from the CEP Web site at www.character.org.

- **CEP's 11th National Forum**

- **Exploring Pathways to Civic Character**

- **October 21-23, 2004**

- **Westin Galleria Hotel**

- **Houston, Texas**

- **Keynote speakers:**

- **Dr. Marilyn Watson** - Author of *Learning to Trust*

- **Dr. Thomas Lickona** - Author of *Educating for Character* and *Smart & Good* (Aug. 2004)

- **Dr. Rick Rigsby** - "Making an Impact"

- **The Forum will include:**

- **Eleven Principles of Effective Character**

- **Education™ Sourcebook Institute**

- **Wednesday, October 20, 2004**

- **Merle Schwartz & Kathy Beland**

- **Pre-Forum Workshops**

- **Thursday, October 21, 2004**

- **Over 60 Breakouts**

- **Optional School Site Visits**

- **Exhibits**

- **Registration:**

- **Deadline Dates: Early-Bird Registration: September 17, 2004**

- **For online registration, visit: <http://www.character.org/eventsawards/forum/>**

- **National Youth Leadership Council**

- **16th Annual National Service-Learning Conference: Educating for Change**

- **March 16-19, 2005**

- **Long Beach Convention Center and Hyatt Regency Long Beach**

- **Long Beach, California**

- **The conference connects participants with service-learning leaders through three days of Plenary Sessions, Featured Forums, and service projects. It also provides access to new ideas and networking opportunities, with more than 200 workshops and countless opportunities for informal meetings.**

- **For more information, visit: <https://programs.regweb.com/metro/nylc/?null=1093545390953>**

GRANTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

New Jersey Character Education Partnership (NJCEP) Initiative State Aid Funding – Fiscal Year 2005

The following is the process that would be used as in the previous years for utilization of state funds:

1. State aid funds are being sent early this fall to all school districts and charter schools along with other state aid funds from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJ DOE). Each district's allocation has been determined by a formula which has not changed from previous years.
2. The NJ DOE will transmit the application for use of the funds to all school district superintendents.
3. Character Education state aid funds in each district cannot be used until the application is received and approved by the NJDOE.
4. In its application, each district identifies a coordinator or point person for the initiative.
(You may wish to contact this person for additional information regarding your school district's planning and application process.)
5. For additional information, you may call the NJ DOE at 609.292.5935.

State aid funds may be used for the following: administration of the program (coordinator's stipend), character education curriculum materials and supplies; printing and mailings related to character education activities; refreshments for a character education related event; staff development and training (which may include paying staff to attend workshop trainings after school hours or paying for substitutes in order for district staff to attend trainings, etc.); general assembly programs for students; participation at local, state-sponsored and national character education conferences and workshops (to include registration fees, hotel, mileage, meals, etc.); invited presenters for staff, students, parents and community members; character education hats, pens, pads, posters, tee-shirts, etc. for students; appropriate materials for service learning projects; teacher guides and assessment surveys, etc. All expenditures must be used for the direct support of character education programs, materials, services, and activities related to the state initiative.

If you want assistance in planning for the use of NJCEP funds for evidence-based or comprehensive character education programming, contact the NJCCE at 732.445.7504.

WEBSITE NEWS, RESOURCES AND RESEARCH

Back-To-School: Create the caring school climate

As educators head back to school throughout New Jersey, the resources listed below will provide insight in building the caring, engaging classrooms where all their new students will grow and thrive.

10 Tips for Creating a Caring School

Diane Curtis

Diane Curtis notes in her article *10 Tips for Creating a Caring School* (Edutopia™ online), "There is growing evidence that students do better not only socially but academically when they feel safe and regarded as important members of a learning community." For the complete article, visit:

http://www.glef.org/php/article.php?id=Art_1025&key=020

Edutopia™ online – The George Lucas Educational Foundation website

<http://www.glef.org/>

The Educator Section offers a collection of up to 70 video segments and hundreds of articles, covering a variety of topics including emotional intelligence and project-based learning. The Big List on Emotional Intelligence is a comprehensive online library of articles, interviews, people, organizations and other related resources.

Guidelines for Social and Emotional Learning

(includes 10 characteristics of effective SEL programming)

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

<http://www.casel.org/downloads/GuidelinesAug02.pdf>

Become a Social and Emotional Learning Advocate

Tips to share with Parents from the website of Committee for Children
<http://www.cfchildren.org/parents/parentindex/>

Additional Resources:***Stop Bullying Now!*****U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

What We Know About Bullying – a new Resource Kit covering topics such as What is Bullying? Bullying and Gender; Prevalence of Bullying; Consequences of Bullying; Adult Response to Bullying and other materials are available online at: <http://www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov/>

The Bill of Rights Institute

The Bill of Rights Institute will resume the publication of their free online newsletters. To sign up, go to their website, www.billofrightsinstitute.org. Of the three newsletters, two of them will be new:

- *Bill of Rights In the News*: Produced two times a month, the newsletter provides the latest news and information that directly affect the Bill of Rights – a tool to tie current events to our Founding Documents.
- *American Lives*: Features an American hero once a month – a supplement to U.S. History courses.
- *Landmark Supreme Court Cases*: Offers historic background on both old and upcoming Supreme Court cases – can be used to mark case anniversaries and prep students for new court decisions.

The Giving Book: Open the Door to a Lifetime of Giving

The Giving Book: Open the Door to a Lifetime of Giving is a new book for young readers ages 6 to 11. Supporting the teaching of philanthropy, respect, community and compassion, *The Giving Book* helps children explore their wishes and dreams for the world and their power to take actions to help make those dreams come true.

The Giving Book is currently being offered at a discounted price for those ordering now. To learn more about the book, view sample pages, see the Teacher's Guide or place a book order, go to www.wateringcanpress.com. To contact the Publisher Directly, email ellen@wateringcanpress.com.

Raising Courageous Kids: Eight Steps to Practical Heroism

Charles A. Smith, Ph.D., Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas

<http://www.raisingcourageouskids.com>

Raising Courageous Kids: Eight Steps to Practical Heroism asks the question, “What are the origins of courage and heroism?” The book examines how courage flourishes in eight steps, beginning in infancy and continuing in the years before adolescence. A supporting website, <http://www.raisingcourageouskids.com> includes information on the book; several reading group guides; a short on-line course on courage, a workshop guide for use by educators and information on joining a Yahoo Discussion Group on courage.

The National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) website

<http://www.nylc.org/>

(See **Growing to Greatness (G2G)** article in CHARACTER EDUCATION NEWS above)

The NYLC website and E-newsletter provide opportunities to stay on top of the latest service-learning news, programs and initiatives.