



Your Character Counts



“Seeking a Brighter Future
for Young Kenyans”

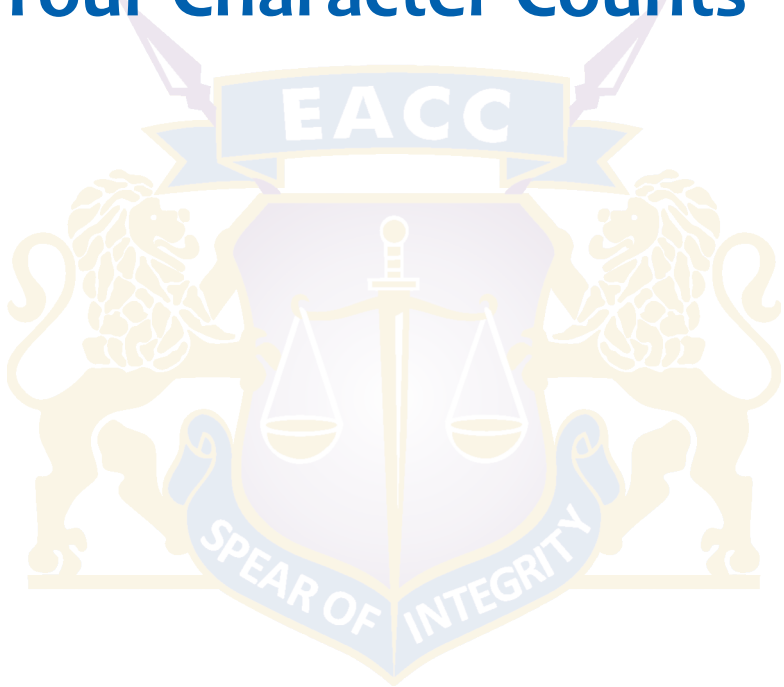
PREFACE

The Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission (EACC) is mandated to fight against corruption through law enforcement, prevention and public education. The Commission educates and sensitises members of the public on ethics, anti-corruption and integrity. Through the Department of Education, the Commission has initiated several programmes in the formal learning institutions in Kenya. These programmes include Adili/Integrity Clubs, integration of anti-corruption in the school curriculum and school outreach programmes aimed at giving integrity talks to students.

The Education sector is critical in the fight against corruption and therefore to the realization of Kenya Vision 2030. The moral focus of education is to train the youth to become leaders of integrity who will advocate for ethics, anti-corruption and character change in conformity with the Constitution of Kenya.



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Introduction

The future success of our nation depends on our children's ability to understand the difference between right and wrong and to have the strength of character to make the right choices. Unfortunately there has been increased emphasis on academic excellence at the expense of training in morals.

As a nation we need to focus on both what the young people can achieve and how they conduct themselves. This requires that our education system focus on character education in addition to academic pursuit.

The character and conduct of our young people reflect the character and conduct of our communities and our nation. A former president of United States of America, Theodore Roosevelt, once said “character, in the long run, is the decisive factor in the life of an individual and nations”. It is therefore important that as a nation we invest in character education.

This brochure on Character Counts defines what character is, discusses qualities of a person of good character, identifies those responsible for character formation and highlights the importance of good character.

The purpose of character education is to:

- Foster self worth
- Teach learners to know right from wrong
- Help learners to appreciate basic human values such as respect, kindness, courage, tolerance, compassion, and commitment to family and community
- Raise learners to become principled, self disciplined, responsible, caring and honest citizens

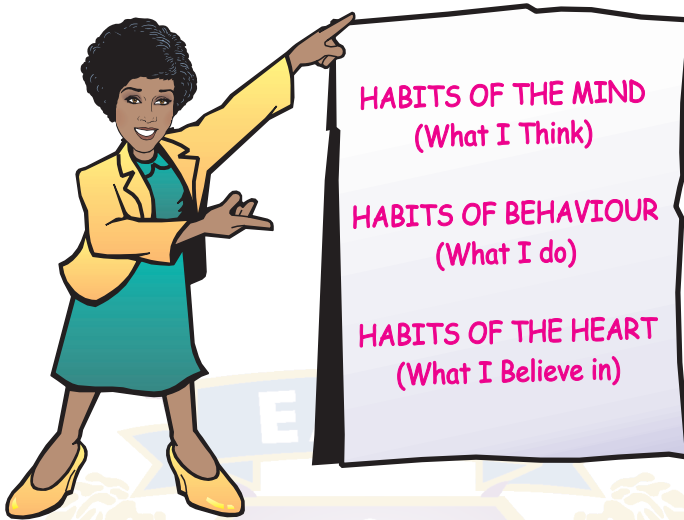
Meaning of character

- Character means having stable and distinctive qualities that make a person, nation or group different from others.
- Character is a set of behavior traits that define what sort of person an individual is.
- A person's character is determined by how a person conducts himself or herself over a period of time.
- Character relates to a person's attitudes and values.
- Character is who you are when no one is seeing you.

"My character is who I am when I think no one is looking"



My Character is what I believe in + What I Think + What I do



Descriptions of character

A person's character could be described as bad or good.

a) Good character

- A person of good character is honest, respectful, kind, courteous, loving, responsible, self disciplined, trustworthy, friendly and decisive.
- Good character requires knowing the right thing, desiring the right thing and doing the right thing, even when it is costly or risky.

b) Bad character

- A person of bad character can be described as being disobedient, dishonest, uncaring, selfish, greedy, lazy, unreliable, unfriendly, inconsistent, disrespectful, undisciplined, corrupt, arrogant, wasteful and inconsiderate.
- A person of bad character thinks, desires, and does what is wrong and unacceptable.

Factors that influence the formation of one's character

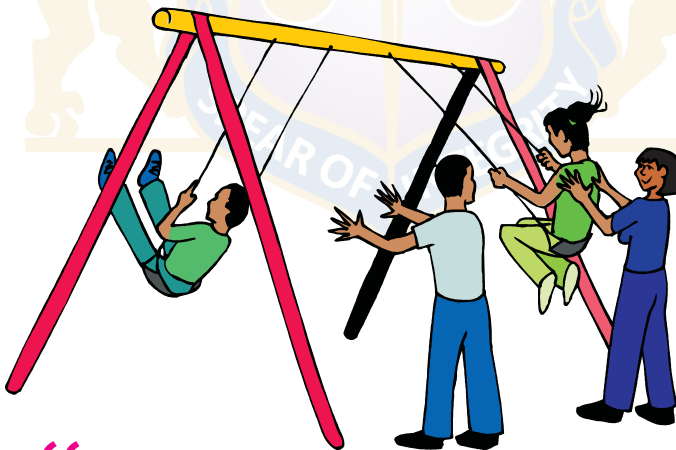
1. Genetics
2. Early childhood experiences
3. Modeling by adults and older youth
4. Peer influence
5. Environment
6. Media
7. What is taught and learnt in schools, churches, mosques and temples

Who influences character formation

The formation of one's character is influenced by parents, teachers, peers and community.

1. Parents

The primary responsibility in character building starts at home with parents. Parents influence character formation by role modeling. Children learn more from what they see their parents do than from what parents tell them to do. Parents should therefore strive to be positive role models to their children in both word and deed.



“Parents who are afraid to put their foot down usually have children who step on their toes.”

2. Teachers

Teachers influence the formation of positive character in learners by:

- Treating them with love and respect.
- Setting a good example.
- Correcting hurtful actions.
- Helping them feel valued.
- Teaching values such as hard work, courtesy, fairness, honesty and responsibility.
- Guiding them to respect, tolerate and care for each other.
- Enforcing school rules and regulations.



“ A teacher affects eternity. You can never tell where his or her influence stops. ”
- Henry Adams

3. Peers

Friends and age mates influence one's character formation. Their influence can be positive or negative. For example a young person who associates with friends that are reliable is likely to be reliable when dealing with other people.



“ Show me your friend and I will tell you what kind of person you are. ”
Alan Higgins

4. Community

The community in which a young person is brought up influences the way he or she thinks and behaves. For example, a friendly, caring and respectful community will teach a young person to care and respect others. Similarly a clean and orderly community will teach a young person to be clean and orderly. While a dirty and chaotic community will teach that chaos and disorder are okay.



**Remember the African adage:
It takes a whole village to raise a child**

Note

Ultimately, each young person has a responsibility for his or her own character. One's attitudes, values and choices will determine one's character. Take charge of your life. Your life is your ship. Be a captain, not a passenger.

**“ No matter how tall your uncle is you must do
your own growing.”**
- African Proverb

How to become a person of good character

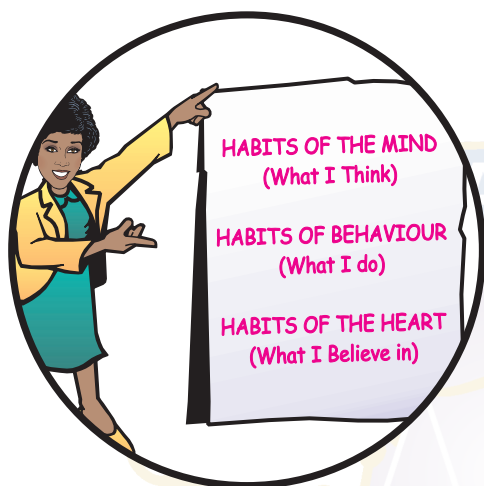
- Identify good character qualities that you wish to build in your life
- Keep your goal in mind and act accordingly
- Keep company of friends who have good character
- Avoid compromising situations
- Let your words and actions agree
- Emulate positive role models
- Recognize the importance of good character to the success of your life, country and world
- Demonstrate good character in school and in your community

Why character counts

- Character is who we are.
- Character determines our relationship with other people.
- People of good character can be trusted and relied upon.
- Character is essential for lasting success.
- People of good character influence the world that they live in.
- A noble character is the greatest of all possessions for man and nation.
- The destiny of a nation depends on the character of its citizen
- People of strong character will help put an end to corruption.

Points to Remember

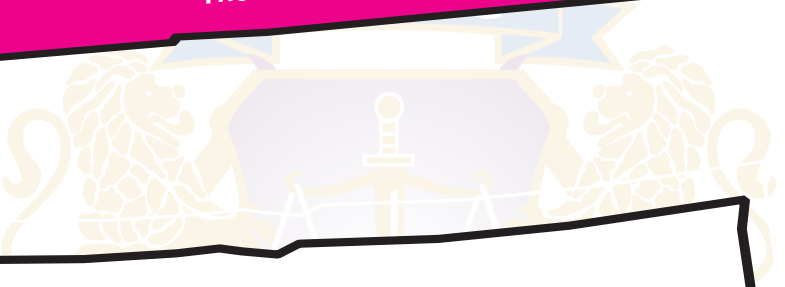
1. Young people need a firm moral centre from an early age.
2. We all have a responsibility of upholding right values that will build good character and promote integrity.
3. Academic excellence + Character = Success.



QUOTE

The measure of a person's character is what a person would do if they knew that they would not be found out.

Thomas Babington Macaulay



Sow a thought, reap an action
Sow an action, reap a habit
Sow a habit, reap a character
Sow a character, reap a destiny

Quote from: Charles Rich



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