

**Title of Session:** School Counselors - Character Education

**Moderator:** Barbara Muller-Ackerman

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Room: On Tap Cafe

**BJ:** terrific, Lynn. Barbara, let's start with introductions, please

**BarbaraMu:** I'm Barbara Muller-Ackerman. I am an elementary counselor in New Jersey.

**BJ:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania.

**LynnGi:** I am a First Grade teacher at an American School in Mexico City

**LynnGi:** I am from Montana originally

**GloriaLD:** I am in methods hoping to graduate in May

**BarbaraMu:** That's wonderful! I was just part of a site evaluation team for an American school in Amsterdam. It's a challenging position working in such a transitory environment.

**BarbaraMu:** Last month we were talking about the Kindness and Justice Challenge and began getting into lots of character education sites. I don't want to be redundant since the transcript for those sites is in the archive.

**BarbaraMu:** Gloria- have the schools you have been in had a character education program in them?

**GloriaLD:** No

**BJ:** I think it's an important issue...and a controversial one

**GloriaLD:** Well, I should first ask what do you mean

**BarbaraMu:** I was hoping to be really practical about lesson plans and how schools are using character education as well as some of the larger more general sites. BJ, do you have anything special in mind that you are interested in?

**BJ:** I like the practical approach

**BJ:** I'm also wondering whether parents object to schools doing character ed?

**BarbaraMu:** It depends on the part of the country more than anything.

**BJ:** o O ( maybe you should explain character ed to Gloria, Barbara )

**GloriaLD:** What does character ed consist off

**BarbaraMu:** There are some states where there has been legislation specific to parental rights where character education, or most specifically, values clarification of any kind, becomes an issue.

**BarbaraMu:** Character Education can encompass values clarification but, in the broadest sense, it is back to civics - the teaching of how to be a good citizen; to be ethical and moral.

**GloriaLD:** Thanks for the clarification

**BarbaraMu:** Different programs choose different traits to work with.

**BarbaraMu:** For example, Character Counts deals with 6; Caring, Citizenship, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness and Trustworthiness. Have you heard of that program?

**GloriaLD:** The good citizen education would be taught in social education (studies) here in Texas

**BarbaraMu:** Right- there is a lot in social studies but you will find character in science when they talk about all about me kinds of things for little ones...and a lot through the literacy block

**BarbaraMu:** Many books at the lower levels explore themes of friendship, cooperation, getting along.

**GloriaLD:** okay

**BarbaraMu:** Conflict resolution and violence and drug prevention can be social studies or health.

**BarbaraMu:** Character Education is definitely interdisciplinary.

**GloriaLD:** So you are saying parents have the right to tell the school not to teach their child character education

**BJ** agrees.

**BarbaraMu:** Parents can become defensive about who has the right to teach values or morality to their children.

**BJ** . o O ( about the interdisciplinary part )

**BarbaraMu:** Others are grateful that the schools are helping to develop character in children who may be challenging to even the parents themselves.

**GloriaLD:** Does the character education follow specific guidelines

**BarbaraMu:** Character Education has been part of the national education priorities under both Clinton and Bush.

**BarbaraMu:** There have been major funding streams available to infuse character education initiatives into schools.

**BarbaraMu:** Last month, we showed one of the states department of ed web sites. This one, Utah, does a very good job in their Kids Who Care section.

[http://www.uen.org/utahlink/activities/view\\_activity.cgi?activity\\_id=5399](http://www.uen.org/utahlink/activities/view_activity.cgi?activity_id=5399)

**GloriaLD:** At the school I am at now there is something called Tribes

**BarbaraMu:** Tribes is one of the programs school counselors use to integrate social skills.

**GloriaLD:** The site has some great lesson plans

**BarbaraMu:** That's what I wanted to do tonight- share lesson plans and where to find them. and other things different schools have done to advance or integrate character education into their program.

**GloriaLD:** I will not be able to contribute very much but I would like to hear what you have to share

**BJ:** Barbara always has some great resources, Gloria!

**BarbaraMu:** Are you ready for another web site? This one belongs to Dr. Thomas Lickona, a major resource in the field. He has the Center for the 4th and 5th R's. I specifically highlighted how he sees a comprehensive program in the schools - a visual model which shows how to really make it comprehensive.

**BarbaraMu:** [http://www.cortland.edu/c4n5rs/12pnt\\_iv.asp](http://www.cortland.edu/c4n5rs/12pnt_iv.asp)

**BJ** . o O ( I thought the 4th R was aRt?! )

**BarbaraMu:** Cute!

**BarbaraMu:** Think tonight it's Respect and Responsibility

**GloriaLD:** Thank you Barbara, I will be able to share these websites with my fellow students

**BarbaraMu:** There is a wonderful school site from North Carolina which really pulls together the traits they are working on at their site. You can click on any of the traits and get lesson plans, books to correlate with the trait, etc. <http://www.ccss.k12.nc.us/>

**BarbaraMu:** Also graphically pleasing, just for you BJ!

**BJ:** thanks, Barbara!

**BarbaraMu:** Gloria, are you ready for another?

**GloriaLD:** Yes, I am

**BarbaraMu:** We had also mentioned Heartwood Ethics last time around for their great booklists. They also have free resources in the form of lesson plans and downloadable worksheets and cards to go with them at

<http://www.heartwoodethics.org/resources/index.asp>

**GloriaLD:** As I am scrolling, I can see some lesson plans that I can use

**BarbaraMu:** Gloria, sometimes there are just great sites from educators who have amassed great collections of links. This one is called Jerries Curriculum Hotlist

<http://webtech.kennesaw.edu/jcheek3/curriculum.htm>

**BarbaraMu:** Has character education as well as other areas of interest.

**BarbaraMu:** You may want to investigate the others later, but for now, you can see a lot under character education

**BJ:** Gloria, don't forget that all the urls will be included in your transcript that is emailed to you when you log out

**BJ:** Barbara mentioned the 4th R and that reminded me of a site that isn't related to character ed, but is relevant to technology <http://uashome.alaska.edu/~jfjbo/fourthr/>

**GloriaLD:** I am so glad because I want to go back and look at them further. Like I mentioned earlier, I have to teach a few lesson this semester and there are some great lessons

**BarbaraMu:** Another great tech site is Eduscapes. This excellent resource has vocabulary, discussion starters, webquests, lessons, and links to the theme.

**BarbaraMu:** <http://eduscapes.com/42explore/character.htm>

**GloriaLD:** This morning our class had a demonstration of using a Smart Board and I thought of some great ways to use it for a lesson

**BarbaraMu:** If you want to learn more about character ed, the character ed partnership is a great place to start. This area of the web site allows you to program in specific traits and age levels and get lessons or articles or whatever you might need. Character Education Partnership Resource Center

**BarbaraMu:** <http://www.character.org/resources/search/>

**BarbaraMu:** The Indiana Department of Education's Resource Guide has grade by grade lesson plans for implementing character education. This is a pdf file you might want to go back and download later on!

**BarbaraMu:** [http://doe.state.in.us/publications/pdf\\_citizenship/citizenguide.pdf](http://doe.state.in.us/publications/pdf_citizenship/citizenguide.pdf)

**GloriaLD:** Okay

**BarbaraMu:** Was there anything else you might like to know about or that I could answer about character education in a classroom or a school?

**GloriaLD:** No, you have given me very helpful information and websites. I will definitely pass them along to my peers

**BarbaraMu:** What we have done at our campus is to have a committee for character ed with parents, myself, the principal, DARE officer and teachers at each grade level.

**BarbaraMu:** We switch traits each 2 months according to the pillars of character from [www.charactercounts.org](http://www.charactercounts.org)

**GloriaLD:** I know the schools around here have DARE programs

**BarbaraMu:** We highlight the traits and have developed a common language that everyone uses- from the bus to the classroom, the lunchroom and the specials.

**LynnGi:** It is so important to have that consistency throughout the school.

**BarbaraMu:** The teachers do morning class meetings where they reinforce the concepts but also integrate into the different areas we mentioned in the beginning- ss, health, literacy, etc.

**BarbaraMu:** YES! We also articulate from campus to campus so that the littlest ones, on the early childhood campus, use the same language as the elementary and the middle school. We are developmentally appropriate but there are common prompts and cues throughout.

**BarbaraMu:** Lynn, I am so happy you made it back and I would like to be able to answer any questions you might have before we end.

**BarbaraMu:** The urls are all in the transcript from tonight.

**BarbaraMu:** Gloria, is there anything else I can offer this evening?

**GloriaLD:** No, you have done great

**BarbaraMu:** Lynn, did you want to share what you are doing at your school?

**BarbaraMu:** Thanks Gloria!

**LynnGi:** I am a first and second grade teacher. I have half day with each group. They each spend a half day with me in English and the other half day in Spanish.

**LynnGi:** Its difficult at times because I teach two full grade level curricula but I have to do it in a half day. It is a fun job though.

**BarbaraMu:** I am sure that your character ed messages are integrated all day long at the level you teach,

**BarbaraMu:** I included lots of sites where lesson plans are already prepared so you can use them right away.

**LynnGi:** I was interested in Character Ed because so many of the kids are from the richest families here and they lack in manners.

**LynnGi:** Thank you. I'll check out the transcript right away.

**GloriaLD:** Goodnight

**LynnGi:** goodnight

**BarbaraMu:** There are great books on manners to use for your literacy block which will help you get the message across

**BarbaraMu:** Good night. Thanks for coming

**BarbaraMu:** There is a new Madeline book on Manners. And Proper Pigs is cute.

**BJ:** Thanks, Barbara. Once again, great links

**BJ:** . o O ( and some good discussion )

**BarbaraMu:** You are welcome. See you next month.

**BarbaraMu:** I think I am doing counseling web sites?

**BJ:** oh...I picked the websites..yes

**BarbaraMu:** There are some terrific ones out there that school counselors are doing.

**BarbaraMu:** Have a great night,

**BJ:** cool

**BarbaraMu:** Bye!

