

## Forest Charter School

### JANUARY CHARACTER TRAIT OF THE MONTH:



Respect is **a way of treating or thinking about something or someone**. ... People respect others who are important like a parent or impressive for any reason, such as being in authority — like a teacher or a doctor — or being older — like a grandparent. We show respect by being polite and kind.

Here is a great two minute video to introduce the concept of respect to elementary age students:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxnxObAyfSA>

Here is a great four minute video from Dad University that's fun for parents and full of good ideas, not unlike those below: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qihMyzgJaDk>

and finally here is an under two minute video for earning respect from teens

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zMA-gazW0o>

Below are seven basic tools for increasing respect in your child and within your family.

1. **Teach your child basic manners:** Using manners—just a simple “excuse me” or “thank you”—is also a form of empathy. It teaches your kids to respect others and acknowledge their impact on other people. When you think about it, disrespectful behavior is the opposite of being empathetic and having good manners. When your child deals with their teachers in school or gets a first job and has these skills to fall back on, it will go a long way.
2. **Model being respectful:** We cannot teach respect by being disrespectful. Respect your child as an individual with their own preferences. Allow them to make some decisions. It's good to confront disrespectful behavior early, if possible. If your child is rude or disrespectful, don't turn a blind eye. Intervene and say, *“We don't talk to each other that way in this family. What is another way you could express your feelings that is kind?”*
3. **Stay calm:** Try not to overreact or take the behavior personally. The child may not be paying attention or doesn't know the behavior is disrespectful. If your child is disrespectful or rude, talk about what happened once things are calm. A calm conversation is a chance for you to listen to your child and to understand their problem better. Try to stay objective. To get the child's perspective and help them see what happened, you can say: “Pretend a video camera recorded the whole thing. What would I see?” This is also a perfect time to have your child describe what they could have done differently.
4. **Use positive discipline:** Use a non-punitive model to teach, not to punish. Model how to be respectful even when others make mistakes. We all make mistakes and there is no need to be harsh which shuts people down. Use these incidents as teachable moments by pulling your child aside calmly, making your expectations firm and clear, and following through with appropriate consequences.
5. **Apologize for mistakes and take responsibility:** A mature, respectful grownup accepts responsibility and apologizes when they make mistakes. You'll also want to help your kids learn to apologize and take responsibility for their actions if they do something (even by accident) that hurts someone else. If they don't have the language for what they want to say, you can help by offering some. Also, if you want your child to come to you with the truth (or admit to it when asked), try to keep your cool when expressing your dissatisfaction about their poor behavior,
6. **Identify the cause for the child's lack of respect:** If a child's need is not being met and the lash out, teach them the skills and vocabulary to address their own needs instead of scolding them. Sure, we all allow some things

to slide on occasion. To be accountable, they need to learn to accept the consequences of words, actions, and decisions, and the only way they will do so is if you're consistent with rules and discipline.

7. **Resolve conflicts thoughtfully:** try sit-down family discussions which involve offering a responsive, democratic ear to your children's opinions. You want your kids to see that you are doing your best to listen respectfully, even if you disagree with them. As they grow up, the issues will only get bigger—quitting chorus, questioning faith, dating someone you don't like—and it's important to have the practice of mutual respect solidly in place. This doesn't mean kids always get what they want, and it doesn't mean there's no room for strong feelings. But instead of saying, "Don't be disrespectful," try to listen to the feelings behind what seems like disrespect.

Here are some great movies you can watch with your children that help kids learn about respect and also about kindness and inclusion. Get out the popcorn and enjoy!

1. **Finding Nemo** - An all time favorite of kids of all ages. Perhaps you may have overlooked too that Nemo has a physical disability - one of his fin is undersized and that always challenges his physical movement. Despite the challenged ability, Nemo comes across as a character loved and admired by all for his cheerful disposition, tenacity and perseverance. The main theme that parents and caregivers can reinforce is that being different in this world is rather quite normal. Physical disability does not have to be an impediment in achieving your dreams.
2. **Wonder** - Wonder is a relatively recent movie that can help nurture young minds with concepts such as empathy, compassion and respect for others. This movie is an adaptation of R.J. Palacio's award-winning novel "Wonder," It is about a fifth-grader who has a genetic facial difference, a child who wants to feel accepted for who he is from the inside. A feel good movie that shows how the protagonist lovingly and bravely accepts who he is and doesn't let things that he can't change about himself, alter his joy. Suitable for middle schoolers.
3. **Akeelah and the Bee**- Akeelah and the Bee powerfully conveys messages of age, race, privilege, and difference. The movie's protagonist Akeelah is an African-American girl from Los Angeles. The movie shows how Akeelah struggles to fit into school and is drawn into the world of spelling competitions where she finds she is the odd one out. Her tenacity, perseverance and the support of her community ensures she rises to the top at the National Spelling Bee Competition.
4. **Right Footed** - Right Footed is an inspirational movie that talks about the life of Jessica Cox, a girl who was born without arms as a result of birth defect. The movie shows how she overcame the so called limitations of leading a life without arms and went on to become a pilot. She is now a motivational speaker and an advocate for people who are differently abled. This movie will help show our youngsters how differently abled people are just people who are trying to find their joy and happiness in this world, much like the rest of us.
5. **Beauty and the Beast** - Beauty and Beast is yet another classic tale you can watch with the young viewers to impart the lesson that you cannot judge a book by its cover. Despite the beast's physical appearance, Belle had an innate kindness and compassion to draw out and see the goodness in Beast's heart. Also, Belle is often criticized by her town for always having her nose stuck in books. But the movie rewards this "different" quality of hers by showing how her intelligence pays off. She is shown as somebody who is not afraid to stand alone and is not influenced by the opinions of others in her town. Something a lot of teenagers can benefit from as this is the age where peer pressure tends to weigh them down the most.
6. **Zootopia** - Zootopia does a great job advocating for diversity and the inclusion of people from different walks of life. The movie is about a small-town rabbit Judy Hopps who dreams of becoming the first rabbit police officer. Hopps trains very hard to achieve this goal and she is awarded her badge and enlisted in the police force. Unfortunately, Hopps's small-minded boss undermines her by assigning her trivial and unimportant tasks. Judy's situation depicts the how all marginalized communities or differently abled people in our world feel and how we knowingly or unknowingly don't give them what they truly deserve.

