Character Education as Prevention
Summary of WYSAC Report No.
CHES-1348

December 22, 2014

Character Education refers to programs and curricula designed to promote positive decision-making through the development of the six pillar virtues (**respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship**).

The following sections present general results to survey items.

<u>Character Education</u>

A. **Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Character Education Programs:**

Yes   64.9%
No   32.4%
Not Sure   2.7%

Character Education Programs Reported to be used in Wyoming K-12 classrooms - they are listed in order, starting from the most frequently used:

Character Counts
8 Keys of Excellence
Positive Behavioral Intervention s and Support (PBIS)
The Six Pillars of Character
Second Step
Town Hall Programs
21 CCLC
Why Try Cowboy
Ethics Go For It
K-5 Best
ABC's of Behavior My
Blog Series
Olweus Bullying Prevention
Rachel s Challenge
Safe Schools Ambassadors Lion's
Quest
School Connect
The Leader in Me: 7 Habits for Kids
Guidance Classes
Internally Developed Course Work

Outcome Centered Programs to Prevent or Reduce Problem Behaviors

A. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Prevent or Reduce Tobacco Use:

Yes   68.4%
No   31.6%
Not Sure   0.0%

B. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Prevent or Reduce Alcohol Use:

Yes   78.9%
No   21.1%
Not Sure   0.0%

C. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Prevent or Reduce Aggressiveness:

Yes   73.7%
No   23.7%
Not Sure   2.6%

D. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Prevent or Reduce Bullying:

Yes   89.5%
No   10.5%
Not Sure   0.0%

Soft Skills Programs

A. Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Teach Soft Skills in Place:

Yes   55.3%
No   34.2%
Not Sure   10.5%

B. Future Plans to Implement Programs that Teach Soft Skills:

Yes   23.5%
No   35.3%
Not Sure   41.2%

Social and Emotional Learning Programs

A.   Respondents Indicating their Schools Currently Have Programs to Teach Social and Emotional Learning in Place:

Yes   64.9%
No   32.4%
Not Sure   2.7%

B.   Future Plans to Implement Programs that Teach Social and Emotional Learning:

Yes   23.1%
No   46.2%
Not Sure   30.8%

Service Learning

A.   Respondents Indicating that their Schools Currently Operate a Service Learning Program:

Yes   43.2%
No   48.6%
Not Sure   8.1%

B.   Future Plans to Implement Programs that Teach Service Learning:

Yes   9.5%
No   42.9%
Not Sure   47.6%

Successes and Challenges in Character Development

Challenges among school districts to implement a character education program were answered in the following ways:

   1. Staff/Community/Parent Buy-In
   2. Consistency in Implementation
   3. Time and Resources
   4. No Challenges

Several stakeholders expressed concerns over teacher, parental, and community buy-in. One respondent felt that buy-in was a continual challenge. Others mentioned that consistency of implementation was a challenge as well. The most commonly reported challenge was the demands on teacher time and resources. Best practice recommendations   indicate   that   character   education   programs   are   most   effective   at

the early elementary school level. Additional studies would shed more light on the effectiveness of some programs.

Successes among school districts largely fell into one of the following three categories:

1. Improvements to Student Behavior
2. Perceived Success with Specific Programs
3. Reinforcement of Positive Behaviors

Numerous respondents reported witnessing various improvements in student behavior such as reduction in bullying and referrals, and improvements in attitudes, language and conversation among students; many respondents attributed such improvements to the character education programs. A few respondents believed that integration of character education into the curriculum resulted in a positive shift in the district.

Questions and Comments

Questions and comments fell into four categories:

1. Training and Resources
2. Variability from School to School
3. Wyoming's Plans for Character Education
4. Enthusiasm about Character Education

Several respondents commented that their districts do not currently have the training, time, or resources available to them to implement character education in their schools. Several people asked if such resources were available. A few respondents expressed excitement about character education programs and requested the state move forward with any plans to implement such programs.

This summary is primarily focused the survey results. However, the literature review is also part of the full report (CHES-1348) and can be accessed at the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center's website. The survey can be found at http://bit.ly/char_ed_wysac1. The literature review can be found at http://bit.ly/char_ed_wysac2. Additionally, all open-ended responses are available in Appendix B of the survey results.

For additional questions, please contact:

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