



January 2009

Character Council Educator Quality of the Month Orderliness

Orderliness: Arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve greater efficiency.

I will:

- pick up after myself
- keep my work and play areas clean and neat
- put things back where they belong
- use things only for their intended purposes
- return lost things to their rightful owners

You have all seen how orderly a fire station is. From each person's clothing and equipment to the vehicles themselves, all is highly organized so as to save time and guarantee that nothing required is left behind. This order takes planning and forethought. It just didn't happen. It had to be consciously planned, tested and adjusted. This month, plan your work – then work your plan!

☺ **Mix It Up** – Make some changes in the classroom that show disorganization. Ask students to get things from their normal place and be flustered when the item is not there. Do this for several items in a row until they get the idea that the misplaced items were on purpose. Ask them to look around and see what else is amiss. Have them help in setting the classroom back to the way it should be. Sometimes students will take your carefully ordered space for granted. This gives them a way to appreciate your orderliness. End the activity by having them clean out their desks/lockers. Hold a discussion on ways to best organize study spaces. If they have desks at home, are they organized?



☺ **Share Tips** – Make a class assignment for the students to talk to their parents and get tips on how to organize time and space. You can then have students share these tips with each other, either in a class discussion or by the students sharing one a day. You may wish to include questions about how order is important in the careers/jobs of the parents. Where are a surgeon's tools when they begin an operation? What about a repairman's tools? How are offices organized? – you can refer to the school office for examples. What about touring the school cafeteria and noting how food and equipment is organized, labeled, and stored. Discuss why this order is important for food safety and efficiency.

☺ **Resolution Time** – It is common to make a New Year's Resolution this time of year. Encourage the students to make a resolution to be more orderly. Be sure to give age appropriate suggestions. Many of these resolutions will require the creation of new habits. The psychological press reports that if you do the same thing for 20 days it will become a habit. Encourage the students to count these 20 days. Take frequent checkpoints to see if they are on target. For the benefit of those that may not be as on-target as they should, demonstrate the following story on the board. Draw 2



cities at either end of the board. Draw a solid line between the 2 cities. Draw an airplane leaving one of the cities. Use a dotted line to show the airplane's path. It will weave its way back and forth across the solid line between the two cities until it arrives at the destination. Point out that the airplane is constantly making corrections to stay on target. We need to evaluate our work in the same way in order to stay on target.

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