



March 2008

Character Council Educator Quality of the Month Compassion

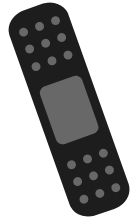
Compassion: Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others

I will:

- stop to help
- listen when others want to talk
- give of my resources to help those in need
- look for lasting solutions
- comfort others without regard to race, gender, faith, age, or nationality

We have all heard the story of the Good Samaritan who stopped to help an injured man who had been robbed and beaten and left along the side of the road. The Samaritan demonstrated compassion. In this case, the Samaritan had to look beyond the fact that the man was of a different race – one that hated his own race. He did not let religious or racial prejudice stop him from showing compassion to one who needed it. The word Samaritan today is synonymous with voluntarily providing sympathy and aid to someone in need without hesitation. This month, let's look for ways we can be the Good Samaritan to those in need around us.

☺ **Where Does It Hurt?** The concept of compassion is a focus on healing others' hurts. This activity will simply show the ways that individuals can be hurting and the ways that we can help. You will need band-aids and either flower or smiley stickers. Begin a discussion of the definition of Compassion. Discuss the two ways that people can be hurting – physically and emotionally. Physical hurts include bodily injuries as well as those who suffer without food or clean water. Emotional hurts are those we feel in our heart. Be sure to focus the discussion on the types of hurts that students can cause each other such as being excluded or bullied. Divide the class into two groups. Each person in one group will receive a band-aid. Each person in the other group gets a sticker. (If you use flower stickers, you may want to give these to the girls and the band-aids to the boys.) Each group needs to wear the sticker or band-aid prominently so that all are reminded of the types of hurts there are. End the discussion with ways that these types of hurts can be healed.



☺ **Broken Heart** To prepare for this activity, find or create a simple picture of large heart. Cut the heart into small pieces so that there is one piece for each student. You may get as creative in cutting apart the heart as you wish; just make sure that the students will be able to re-assemble the heart. As you begin this activity, remind the students of the discussion about the types of hurts. Distribute a piece of the heart to each student. Have each student write their name on the piece they receive. Now challenge the students to heal this broken heart by re-constructing the pieces. To make it easier, you may want to have the outline of the actual heart, drawn on a piece of cardboard or on a bulletin board. If a student is missing, save them a piece. Once the heart is together (even if it is missing a piece from an absentee), explain that as a group, the class has a heart. When any one of its members is hurting, the whole class hurts. That's why it doesn't make sense for students to hurt each other. When an absentee returns, be sure to let them add their piece to the heart. Leave this heart displayed in the classroom the rest of the month.



☺ **Stone Soup** If your students are not familiar with the fable of the Stone Soup then read them the story or let them research it on the Internet. Your class will now make its own version of Stone Soup. Give each student a piece of paper to draw on. If you use a variety of paper colors, your soup will be more interesting. Have each student draw a picture of their favorite food. These do not need to be masterpiece pictures as the papers will be crumbled. Once their food is drawn, each student will write on their paper one of their personal attributes of which they are proud. Be sure to make some age appropriate suggestions so they know what type of thing to write. When everyone is finished, have each person crumble up their paper into a wad and put it into a stock pot, bucket or large bowl. Stir all the paper wads together like you are stirring soup. Talk about how the different personalities of the students mix to give the class its distinct flavor and how each person adds something important to the class soup.



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