

# Positive reinforcement is key to good behavior

*Cedar Valley has gone above and beyond in building a foundation of good character. For the past seven years the Community Education Committee has met monthly to help implement different character initiatives into schools, businesses, and the community.*

Positive reinforcement for behaviors that demonstrate the Six Pillars of Character has been a priority to teachers at Cedar Valley schools. So, instead of punishing students for bad behavior, the focus is more directed towards encouraging good behavior. Through this encouragement, teachers hope to see students develop strong character traits and good behavior that is a foundation to the person they are and grow up to be.

What are some examples of positive reinforcement?

- Praising and admiring someone who rarely engages in group conversations
- Thanking a young child for doing a task that was not asked of them
- Providing incentives for good work, such as coupons or a free lunch
- Recognizing someone who took initiative on a challenging task

Cedar Valley has been a huge advocate for Character Counts In Iowa. Pillars are hung downtown, essay contests are held for fifth graders displaying character, articles are written for the Waterloo Courier, and events are held in the community. Is your community taking initiative to build good character in the citizens?

“CHARACTER COUNTS is a great way for a member of the community to become involved in providing a good model and positive

reinforcement for our young people. As a side benefit, it keeps the Six Pillars of Character in our minds as we make decisions in the business world," said Bruce Clark, a member of the Community Education Committee.

As communities take character seriously, we continue to see positive changes and individuals who are willing to making good decisions no matter the cost.