

How do you measure integrity?

We must all work together to make our communities stronger and build character. Alan Heisterkamp, from Sioux City, serves as an education consultant and researcher with the Waitt Institute for Violence Prevention. He focuses on understanding attitudes and behaviors of students in order to prevent violence and bullying. Here are some of his thoughts...

What we think and believe about those who are different from ourselves, how we act and behave towards others in times of triumph or defeat, and what we say or do to lift up or tear down others, speaks directly about the quality of our character and the measure of our integrity.

I support the mission and focus of Character Counts In Iowa because I believe in the importance of investing in the moral and ethical development of Iowa's youth and citizenry. Individuals, young and old alike, are constantly faced with the challenge of practicing and exercising good judgment, positive expressions and words of kindness, acts of fairness, responsible citizenship, and respect for all. Yet, we recognize the undeniable truth that we are all capable of falling short in reaching and maintaining these expectations with peers, family members, strangers, and co-workers.

While none of us are "finished products" and remain vulnerable to committing mistakes along the way, we all have the responsibility of working together to make relationships, families, schools, and communities safe, healthy, and respectful. CHARACTER COUNTS! reminds all of us that living up to the expectations as defined by the Six Pillars of Character is a choice we make – everyday, with everyone, in every situation.