



The AEGIS Character Education program is designed to help children in grades K-6 develop a stronger sense of personal responsibility, a greater respect for themselves and others, and more resistance to negative peer influence and unhealthy social norms. It is based on the premise that character flaws have a strong and direct causal relationship to risky and self-destructive behavior. Positive and constructive behavior comes from what young people value, how they see their future, and their determination to adhere to those values and goals when under pressure from peers or others. The program fosters personal growth and development and encourages students to strive for their best. It assumes that people are moral agents capable of positive choices and actions, not simply products of external influences.

There are many components of character that are worth teaching. The **AEGIS** curriculum concentrates on seven universal concepts: *Worth and Potential, Rights and Responsibilities, Fairness and Justice, Care and Consideration, Effort and Excellence, Social Responsibility, and Personal Integrity*. It also emphasizes development of eight skills which enable students to apply these principles in real life: *self-control, delay of gratification, persistence, critical thinking, coping with peer pressure, conflict resolution, and goal setting*.

AEGIS uses a systematic approach to teach these concepts and skills which creates the understanding of, value for, and commitment to positive principles and standards. The concepts and skills are woven into the lessons and are explained, modeled, practiced, and applied to real-life situations. Significant effort has been made to assure that the presentation of the concepts and skills are age appropriate at each grade level. The thirty-five lessons are taught throughout the year using a unique teaching model developed by **AEGIS**. The S.M.I.L.E. method is used to teach each of the concepts. The steps used are Stimulating Interest, Modeling the Concept, Integrating the Concept, Learning Link with Parents, and Extending into Real Life.

Data collected from approximately 3,000 elementary and seventh grade students showed a 250% lower level of discipline and behavior problems in the classroom when compared with the non-program schools. When problems did occur among children, they were less serious and more likely to be resolved among themselves. Program effects lasted beyond the intervention: students who had been involved in the program for four years prior to seventh grade scored higher on the personal standards scale, lower on rebelliousness, higher on personal efficacy, higher on ethical behavior, and higher on the concept of ethical behavior having a positive effect on their future. These students also showed a dramatic reduction in alcohol, tobacco and drug experimentation - even though these topics are not directly addressed in the curriculum.

The concepts taught in the **AEGIS** program are universal principals of ethical behavior applicable to all cultures and societies. In addition, **AEGIS International** is willing to partner with educators and business leaders in other countries to adapt these materials to fit their own culture. The website [www.aegis-character.com](http://www.aegis-character.com) will provide additional details and information for your review.

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