

## STANDARDS OF CHARACTER EDUCATION

Mannerly Manners® is part of the growing character education movement in the United States. Those who advocate character education believe that schools need to address students' social, moral and emotional growth, as well as their academic needs. The No Child Left Behind legislation, passed by Congress in 2001, names character education as a goal for public schools and authorizes spending by federal and state governments on character education programs. <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg69.html> Scholarly research on this fairly recent movement is beginning to suggest that character education enhances the academic performance of students.

The Character Education Partnership (CEP), which includes partners in business, education and school administration, defines character education as an "intentional, proactive effort by schools, districts, and states to instill in their students important core, ethical values that we all share such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for self and others." Mannerly Manners® teaches these values by helping students understand that respect and caring toward others are behind all of the manners that we practice.

Mannerly Manners® specifically addresses the following principles of character education as outlined by the CEP:

### **Promotes core ethical values as the basis of good character.**

"The #1 Rule" and the "Worst Manner™," taught in Mannerly Manners® first two lessons show students that ethical values, rather than memorized rules, are the basis of good behavior.

### **Defines "character" comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.**

Mannerly Manners® lessons go beyond teaching behaviors and promote students' self-awareness of their thoughts and feelings in various situations. Building students' self-confidence is an important goal of the Mannerly Manners® curriculum.

### **Strives to foster students' self-motivation.**

The lessons in Mannerly Manners® include discussions that show students how practicing Mannerly Manners® can help them meet their own goals.

### **Engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.**

The Mannerly Manners To Go™ section of each lesson requires students to ask for their family members' input and to share their new skills with family members. A complete explanation of the CEP's principles can be found at <http://www.character.org>

Several states, including Arizona, California, Florida, and Illinois, have outlined character education standards for students in their schools. The Mannerly Manners® curriculum gives teachers and schools a comprehensive way to meet many of these standards. Please visit your state education department's website to determine the character education standards that apply to you.