



# 4-H Clover Connection

Extension Educator: Todd Branson  
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## **Caddo County 4-H Foundation Maintains Strong Support**

The Caddo County 4-H program has always been a strong part of several families in Caddo County and around the state. 4-H today is becoming nothing like it once was. Today, new projects have been added to enhance a child's learning.

Computer Science, Visual Arts, Aerospace, Autos, and Energy are just a few of the over 60 different projects a 4-H'er can focus on in their 4-H career. The Caddo County 4-H Foundation has always been an active player with these projects and the trips you can win in 4-H.

Our 4-H Foundation has started a new campaign with promotions and donor programs. Call the Extension Office today and find out how you can help the 4-H Foundation.

## **Character Education Program Receives High Marks**

By Trisha Gedon

Character Critters is a program designed to enable parents and other adults help children learn about positive character development, including lessons on trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Character Critters is part of the CHARACTER COUNTS!<sup>sm</sup> program. These character traits also are known as the six pillars of character.

Oklahoma reported 11,224 confirmed cases of child neglect in the fiscal year 2000. This neglect of children's needs, especially the need for character education, can be attributed to the breakdown of family support systems. This can be caused by economics, mobility, isolation, television replacing family time, substance addiction and inappropriate role models.

In the Character Critters program, the aspects of character are taught through animal stories, learning experiences in classroom interest centers, parent events and take home activities.

"County Extension educators have been teaching the program throughout various parts of the state during the past year," said Elaine Wilson, OSU Cooperative Extension parenting specialist. "However, the program has been so successful; the Extension educators will be holding in-service training sessions so teachers will be able to present the program themselves."

There are currently 14 counties across the state that are active in presenting the Character Critters program.

Caddo County is one of those counties. Approximately 4,000 children and 2,000 parents have been involved in the program so far.

After participating in the program, parents have been reported as giving very high marks to the program. They said they would practice the six pillars of character themselves, talk to and spend time with their child and choose activities that would help the child's development in these six areas.

Teachers said the program helped them to practice the six pillars themselves and to teach the concepts to children. Many of the teachers who have used the program in the classroom reported a notable increase in the use of the pillar words by the children. Positive changes in the children's behavior and a marked decrease in hitting also were noted by teachers.

"The program was taught to a kindergarten class and the puppets were a major part of the appeal to the children," said one teacher who was involved in the program. "After the character lessons were taught, my students were much more aware of these character traits and they recognized the good behavior."

More information about the Character Critters program is available at the Caddo County 4-H Extension Office. Contact Todd Branson or Tara Taylor at (405) 247-3376.

# WE ARE ROLE MODELS

(W.A.R.M.)



**RESPECT**

*Character Education News for Parents*

*By: Todd Branson*

## SHOWING RESPECT

Respect means showing regard for every person, including myself!

- Follow the Golden Rule: Treat others as you hope they will treat you.
- Tolerate differences.
- Use good manners, not bad language.
- Never threaten, hit, or hurt anyone.
- Manage anger, insults, and disagreements in peaceful ways.

Children need our respect – even when they are being disrespectful!



### Teaching Children to Respect You

1. You are the most important teacher your child will ever have.
2. Treat your child with respect, and treat others with respect, to help your child learn to do the same.
3. Treating your child with respect can start by recognizing your child's good behavior, especially respectful behavior such as saying please and thank you, not hitting, or saying kind words to a friend or family member.
4. You don't need to make a huge deal out of every time a child does something good, but acknowledging it in a simple statement will mean a lot to the child. "I like the way..." is a good phrase to use. "I liked the way you pushed in your chair" or "I like the way you said thank you." Use the word respect. "When you called my friend Sara, Mrs. Sanchez, you showed respect."
5. Simple statements such as these let children know that you are paying attention to them and let them know that you like how they behaved. Such statements will encourage the behavior in a positive manner.

### Is It Respect? Yes or No

Young children enjoy this yes or no game.

- You treat others as just as important as you.
- You call your brother a "jerk".
- You get in the car quickly so no one has to wait for you.
- You wait to ask a question if someone is busy.
- You run around and do not pay attention when someone is talking to you.
- You play quietly when someone is reading or sleeping.

The truth is all of us--both adults and children--have difficulty solving conflict peacefully. We are more likely to threaten, shove, shout, cry, sulk, hit, blame, call names, and throw things. That is why character education is important. Parents have the most difficult and important role in character education.

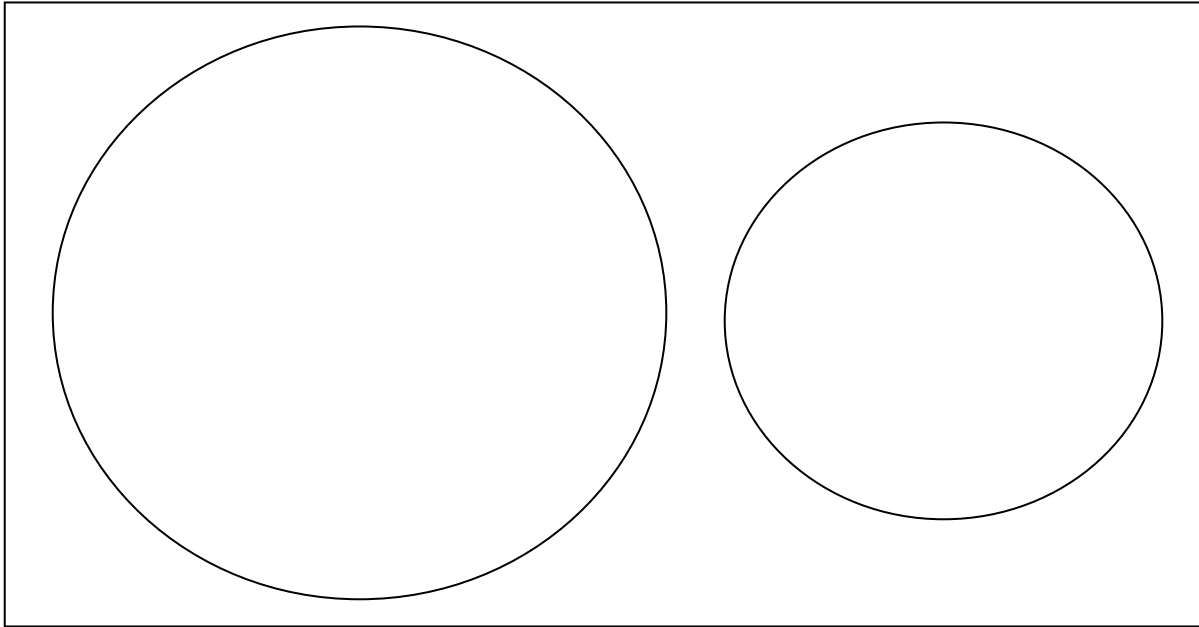
Do we want our homes, schools communities, and world to be violent or peaceful? Of course we want peace! We want to manage our anger and solve our problems safely. Is teaching respect at home easy? NO! Is it important! You bet!

Wrong is wrong even when everyone is doing it.  
Right is right when no one is doing it.

Show your kids the right way!

Dear Parents,

These activities were distributed through the Character Education Program at Oklahoma State Univeristy. For more information about the Character Education Program or how these character tools have been used in a scholastic atmosphere, please contact Todd Branson at the Caddo County 4-H Extension Office at: (405) 247-3376.



*Draw a picture of yourself or paste a photograph of yourself in the large circle. Have your child draw or paste a picture of himself or herself in the small circle above. If you draw the pictures, try to make the features as accurate as you can so you can talk about similarities and differences. A mirror is also helpful. **Write down your child's answers to the following questions.***

This is a picture of me and my \_\_\_\_\_.

This is how we are the same:

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This is how we are different:

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I am special because I ...

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# Letter from the Educator:

Dear Caddo Co. 4-H Family,

I am sure everyone is excited to be back in school! Fairs are in full swing and if you are not aware, the Caddo County Fair is scheduled for September 4-7. 4-H Project Check-In is between 1:00pm and 6:00pm Thursday, September 4<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to exhibit a non-judged working display, showing off your area of interest, 4-H, or your hobbies, please notify the Extension Office by September 1, 2002. This is critical because we will need to set aside tables and room for your display. If you are interested in having a working display, keep these things in mind: you must be with your display the entire time it is set up and you must have some sort of handout showing 4-H or your 4-H hobbies.

August is when 4-H Clubs start back with their monthly meetings. If there is anything the Extension Office can do to help make your meetings run smoothly, do not hesitate to call. We also have plenty of green cards with more on the way, so do not be afraid to ask for a big stack for all the new and current 4-H'ers! Our next Teen Leader meeting will be August 21<sup>st</sup> at the Ft. Cobb Cafeteria at 4:30pm. The next Volunteer Leader meeting will be at the Caddo-Kiowa Technology Center at 4:30 on August 28<sup>th</sup>. At both meetings there will be plenty to discuss and it will be great to see everyone again!

Sincerely,

Todd Branson  
Extension Educator, 4-H & Youth Development

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<http://countyext.okstate.edu/caddo/youth>



## News & Views

- Welcome to all our new readers. If there is something you would like to see in here, feel free to tell us!
- Caddo County Techies Met for the first time on July 24<sup>th</sup>. If you did not sign up and would like to, contact the Extension Office or check the website for updates.
- Preliminary sign-up for the ski trip in January is now available. Call the Extension Office to get your name on the list. Price per person will be around \$350 for the trip.
- 4-H Radio Day is in full swing. Attend the Teen Leader meeting to find out about advertising salesmanship!
- Look on the website and in your mailbox for questions and answers regarding a new County 4-H Ambassadors Program!

## August – September 2002

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Time</u>
Aug 15	Livestock Deadline for State Fairs	Postmark Day
Aug 21	Teen Leader's Ft. Cobb	4:30pm
Aug 28	Volunteer Leaders	4:30pm
Sept 2	Holiday	--
Sept 3	Teen Leader's Fairgrounds Clean-up	TBA Fairgrounds
<b>Sept 4-7</b>	<b>Caddo County Fair</b>	--
Sept 6-14	American Character Week	--
Sept 13-29	OKC State Fair	--
Sept 18	Teen Leader Meeting	TBA
Sept 27 – Oct 6	Tulsa State Fair	--

### **Please Read:**

Other events may arise and scheduling may alter. For the most accurate information, please refer to: <http://countyext.okstate.edu/caddo/youth>