ReachOut’s Approach to Character Development

At ReachOut we believe that academic skills and character strengths go hand in hand to help our young people to achieve positive outcomes and to go on to lead good, happy and successful lives. Support from a mentor can help to develop those key skills and strengths.

ReachOut’s Character Strengths
Those strengths that help us to know the best thing to do, and to do it.

Fairness
To treat others with respect and empathy, honouring rights and responsibilities, and being honest.

Good Judgement
The ability to consider consequences and make decisions that benefit both ourselves AND those affected by our choice.

Self-Control
The ability to keep emotions in check and choose to act (or not to act) in a certain way despite how we might feel.

Staying Power
Resilience, grit, the ability to stick to something, to honour commitments, to see tasks through to the end.

How does ReachOut’s approach lead to positive outcomes?

We recognise that there are other factors that influence our decisions and enable us to carry out actions.
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We believe character strengths can be both “caught” and “taught”. ReachOut’s mentors facilitate this by being positive role models to the young people and teaching them about character strengths by taking them on the ReachOut Character Journey.

ReachOut’s Character Journey

To achieve good character first takes practice, but eventually becomes habit. We help our young people to do this through four stages:

Know and Recognise
Learning about character strengths and recognising them in others, and ourselves. Understanding how exercising good character can lead to positive outcomes.

Choose
Focusing on the benefits of developing good character in order to make a choice to develop.

Take Action and Practise
Participation in character building activities such as sport, drama and studying to practise character strengths.

Reflect
Reflecting on the journey and our progress to inform future decisions.

Our Character Journey is based on Prochaska and Di Clemente’s theory of motivation and change and the various stages we pass through when making a change in our lives.

Know and Recognise
- What are the character strengths?
- Why do we need them?
- Who has good character and how does it help them?

Choose
- How can you develop character?
- What are the benefits?
- What sort of person do I want to be?
- Who can help me make a plan?

Take Action and Practise
- Stick to the plan.
- Don’t forget the benefits.
- Repeat things that are working.
- Practise makes progress.

Reflect
- What are my character strengths?
- What has changed?
- What else can I try?
- Has any progress been made?

Prochaska and Di Clemente’s theory of Motivation and Change

Pre-Contemplation
- No intention on changing behavior

Contemplation
- Aware a problem exists but with no commitment to action.

Preparation
- Intent on taking action to address the problem

Action
- Active modification of behavior

Maintenance
- Sustained change; new behavior replaces old

Relapse
- Fall back into old patterns of behavior

Upward Spiral
- Learn from each relapse

Relapse
- Fall back into old patterns of behavior

Preparation
- Intent on taking action to address the problem