

HISTORY

The **Eight Building Blocks of Character Education** was the subject of a master's thesis written by Dean L. Shively Middle School Principal Lynn Bulgin (pictured below). Her study concluded that the teaching of character has a significant impact on the positive behavior of students and can provide a safe and caring learning environment.



FILLING A VOID

With government mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act, California Content Standards, and STAR testing program, the majority of the students' day focused on cognitive learning.

Implementation of the character education program brings balance to the curriculum by teaching to the affective domain.

As educational research scientist C. Bulach wrote, "Preparing the students for the tests of life is equally important as preparing for a life of tests."

EIGHT BUILDING BLOCKS OF CHARACTER EDUCATION



Teachers meet in focus groups to design lessons.

The Valle Lindo School District built its character education program on the foundation of the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets model that identified eight building blocks of healthy development to help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. The "**eight building blocks**" include:

- 1** Support
- 2** Empowerment
- 3** Boundaries & Expectations
- 4** Constructive Use of Time
- 5** Commitment to Learning
- 6** Positive Values
- 7** Social Competencies
- 8** Positive Identity

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM

The Valle Lindo School District implements its program with three main activities:

1 Classroom lessons are embedded in core curriculum classes, for example themes on such characteristics as honesty, integrity, kindness, etc., are taught through literature and writing in language arts classes

2 A second component is **service learning** by doing acts that benefit the classroom, school, and community. Such activities include recycling, making quilt blankets for the homeless, and assembling toys for the Mayor's Toy Drive.

3 A third component is **reinforcing and rewarding** positive student behavior with weekly, monthly and yearly award ceremonies.



Principal John Gannon rewards student for poster, captioned "How I Can Make the World a Better Place"