Emozi® High School

What is Character Development? The Basics
Building Strong Foundations for High School Success

Defining Character Development
Character development is the intentional effort to help students understand, care about, and act on core values. It goes beyond academics by shaping ethical, responsible, and prosocial behavior. In high school, this work builds lifelong skills for sound judgment, responsibility, and purposeful decision-making.

Why Focus on High School?
High school is a critical period for identity and character formation. Academic, social, and digital pressures intensify, while peer influence grows. Decisions in this stage carry higher real-world consequences. Strong character skills support resilience, graduation, and post-secondary success.

Core Competencies of Character Development
Habituation through Practice – Building habits of honesty, kindness, and responsibility

Reflection on Personal Experience – Learning from successes and mistakes

Engagement with Virtue Concepts – Discussing fairness, respect, courage, gratitude

Dialogue and Reasoning – Talking through dilemmas with peers and adults

Awareness of Exemplars – Learning from stories and role models (teachers, characters)

Friendships of Mutual Accountability – Practicing respect, empathy, and responsibility with peers

Community and Culture – Reinforcing virtues through school routines, visuals, and celebrations

Anchor Routine — SCOPE-IT

Emozi® High School uses SCOPE-IT as its anchor self-regulation and problem-solving strategy:

- Stop – Pause before reacting; breathe and create space
- Consider – Notice feelings, facts, values, and context
- Options – Generate multiple responses; include doing nothing or asking for help
- Plan – Choose a values-aligned option and next steps
- Evaluate – Reflect on the outcome and unintended effects
- Insights – Identify what you learned about yourself and others
- Transform – Apply this learning to how you want to show up in the world

Benefits for Students
- Greater resilience and stress management
- Improved decision-making in academics, work, and relationships
- Stronger sense of purpose and post-secondary readiness
- Healthier digital citizenship and peer dynamics

Benefits for Teachers & the School
- Common language (SCOPE-IT) for guiding decisions
- Improved school climate and student–teacher relationships
- Fewer disruptions; better collaboration
- Alignment with graduation competencies and work-readiness skills

Benefits for Families & Community
- Consistent values reinforced at school and home
- Students apply SCOPE-IT to work, volunteering, and community issues
- Prepares responsible, empathic citizens
- Encourages stronger family–school partnerships

Evidence of Impact

Research shows that character development programs reduce negative behaviors and increase prosocial actions. Students demonstrate improved resilience, self-worth, and life satisfaction. When integrated into curriculum, character development strengthens academic outcomes and school climate.

Implementation Essentials

• Launch SCOPE-IT in your classroom

• Schedule lessons regularly (e.g., weekly advisory)

• Use fidelity tools (checklists, observations, teacher reflection)

• Recognize and celebrate student growth

Call to Action

Make character development a strategic priority in your classroom. Adopt Emozi® High School and launch SCOPE-IT in your classroom. Ensure completion of training and implement curriculum with fidelity in your classroom. Track growth and celebrate student stories of transformation. Together, we can prepare purposeful, resilient graduates ready for life beyond school.