

## **What is Character Development?**

Character development equips students with the skills they need to manage emotions, build positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and create a supportive, inclusive community.

## **Benefits of Character Development in the Classroom**

### **1. Improves Academic Performance**

- Evidence: A meta-analysis of 213 studies involving over 270,000 students found that character development programs improved students' academic performance by an average of 11 percentile points (Durlak et al., 2011).
- Why It Works: Character development strengthens skills like focus, perseverance, and problem-solving, which translate into better academic outcomes.

### **2. Enhances Emotional Regulation**

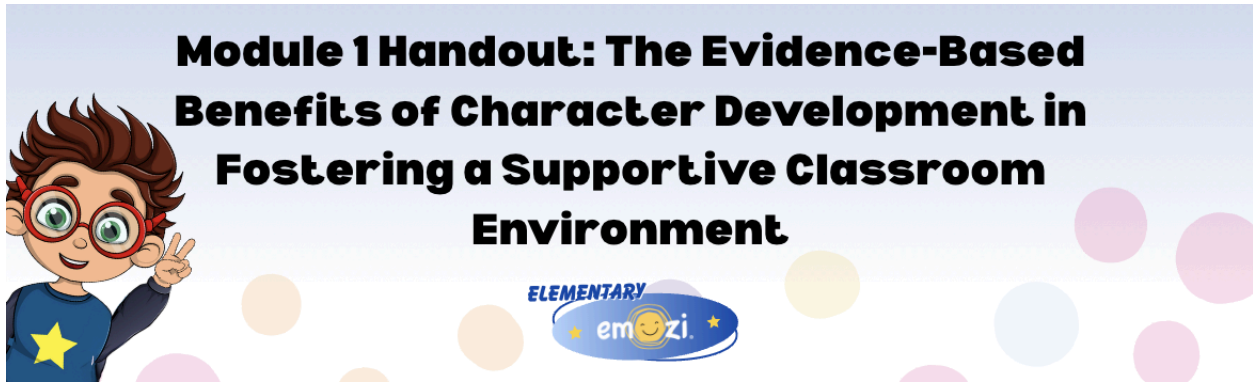
- Evidence: Students who participate in character development programs demonstrate greater self-awareness and emotional regulation (Taylor et al., 2017).
- Why It Works: Understanding and managing emotions reduces classroom disruptions and helps students focus on learning.

### **3. Builds Positive Relationships**

- Evidence: Character development fosters empathy and social skills, leading to improved relationships among peers and between students and teachers (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2023).
- Why It Works: Students learn to resolve conflicts constructively, support their classmates, and collaborate effectively.

### **4. Reduces Behavioral Issues**

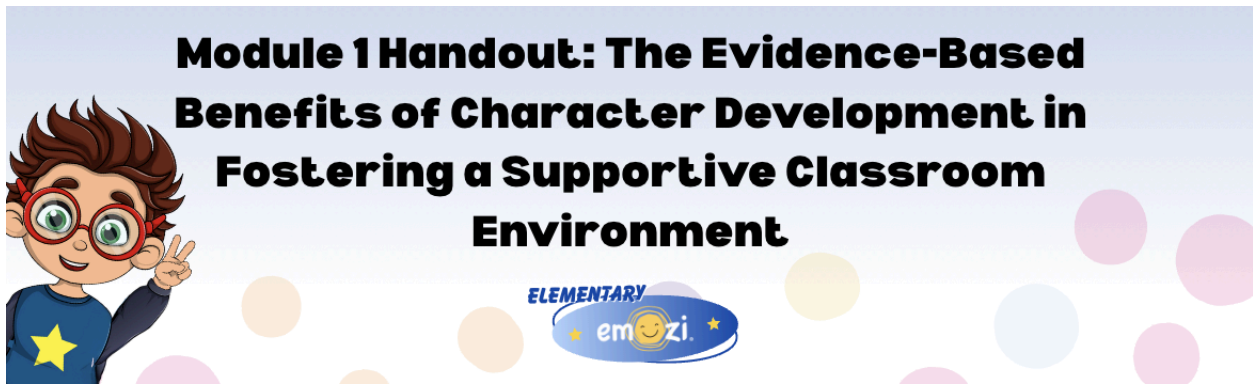
- Evidence: Schools that implement character development programs report fewer incidents of bullying, aggression, and disciplinary actions (Jones et al., 2015).



- Why It Works: Character development teaches students to handle challenges constructively, reducing the likelihood of acting out.
- 5. **Promotes a Positive Classroom Climate**
  - Evidence: Classrooms with character development programs are reported to have higher levels of trust, respect, and inclusivity (CASEL, 2023).
  - Why It Works: Character development encourages students to recognize and value diverse perspectives, fostering a safe and supportive environment.
- 6. **Supports Mental Health and Well-Being**
  - Evidence: Character development programs are associated with reduced anxiety and depression in students (Taylor et al., 2017).
  - Why It Works: By teaching coping strategies and self-care, character development helps students manage stress and build resilience.
- 7. **Prepares Students for Future Success**
  - Evidence: Character development programs cultivate skills like communication, critical thinking, and adaptability—key competencies for future workplaces (World Economic Forum, 2020).
  - Why It Works: These skills not only support academic success but also prepare students for life outside the classroom.

## **How Character Development Fosters a Supportive Classroom Environment**

1. **Encourages Respect for Diversity:**
  - Character development teaches students to empathize with others, understand different perspectives, and value diversity.
  - Students learn to create an inclusive space where everyone feels valued.
2. **Strengthens Teacher-Student Connections:**
  - Teachers who incorporate character development report stronger bonds with students, leading to better engagement and trust.
  - A positive relationship between teachers and students enhances motivation and participation.



### 3. Promotes a Growth Mindset:

- Character development encourages students to see challenges as opportunities for growth, creating a culture of perseverance and support.
- Students are more willing to take risks and learn from mistakes in a safe environment.

### 4. Creates a Foundation for Collaboration:

- Students learn to work together constructively, resolving conflicts and building solutions as a team.
- Collaborative skills improve group projects and cooperative learning activities.

## Key Research Insights

- Long-Term Benefits: Character development programs have been shown to provide benefits that last well into adulthood, including better mental health, career success, and social relationships (Jones et al., 2015).
- Cost-Effectiveness: Every dollar invested in character development programs yields an average return of \$11, due to reduced behavioral issues and improved academic performance (Belfield et al., 2015).

## Why Invest in Character Development?

Implementing character development in your classroom isn't just a tool for managing behavior—it's a transformative approach that builds the foundation for academic success, emotional resilience, and a supportive learning environment. By fostering these skills, you empower students to thrive both in and out of the classroom.

## Learn More About Emozi® Character Development

# **Module 1 Handout: The Evidence-Based Benefits of Character Development in Fostering a Supportive Classroom Environment**



For more resources and strategies to incorporate character development into your classroom, visit <https://pathsprogram.com/>