

Family Viewing Guide

Character and Life Skills: **Citizenship**

Grade Level: **3-5**

The Facts

The World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation, an in-depth research study conducted by The World Bank, provides findings about young people and citizenship around the world:

1. When community members practice “active citizenship,” i.e., working with social groups within a community, caring for family members and community members, keeping the environment clean, voting, etc., opportunities for higher living standards improve.
2. Young people tend to participate as active citizens around issues involving equal opportunity, fairness, tolerance, and the environment.
3. Young people associate their schools, their community centers, and their places of worship with their identity as citizens.
4. Community service and volunteer programs promote civic engagement that extends into adult life.

Start a Conversation with Your Kids

1. What does it mean to be a good citizen?
2. How have you been a good citizen?
3. How can we be active members in the community together?
4. Why is it important to be good citizens?

Advice from the Experts

Parents.com gives the following advice to parents on raising a good citizen:

1. **Be a model citizen.** The best way to teach kids about our government is to demonstrate your devotion to what the entire system represents. That means voting regularly, obeying laws, and working for change.
2. **Start with the basics.** Help your kids develop the ability to talk about an issue that they care about and to listen respectfully to the perspective of people with whom they might disagree.
3. **Boost civic pride.** Take your kids to the polls with you. Explain how an election works and whom you’re voting for and why. Getting them exposed to this will help them in the long run.
4. **Discuss current events.** Let them see you checking out news sites and channels and invite them to join you in a discussion about an issue that concerns you both.
5. **Talk to older family members.** Hearing your folks chat about the political events that shaped their lives can get your children psyched about democracy in a way that history books can’t.