

Appendix

Appendix A1 Extent of evidence

Intervention name	Behavior			Knowledge, attitudes, and values			Academic achievement		
	Number of studies	Sample size (schools/students)	Extent of evidence	Number of studies	Sample size (schools/students)	Extent of evidence	Number of studies	Sample size (schools/students)	Extent of evidence
Building Decision Skills + Service Learning	0	0	na	1	1/283	Small	0	0	na
Caring School Community™	2	16/2,336	Medium to large	2	10/2,303	Medium to large	2	16/3,000+	Medium to large
Connect with Kids	1	12/800	Small	0	0	na	0	0	na
Facing History and Ourselves	1	5/346	Small	1	5/346	Small	0	0	na
Heartwood Ethics Curriculum	1	4/870	Small	1	4/858	Small	0	0	na
Lessons in Character	1	7/141	Small	2	22/433	Medium to large	1	7/141	Small
Positive Action	2	56/4,000+	Medium to large	0	0	na	2	56/4,000+	Medium to large
Skills for Action	0	0	na	1	25/1,800	Small	0	0	na
Skills for Adolescence	1	34/7,426	Small	0	0	na	0	0	na
Too Good for Drugs™	1	6/1,051	Small	2	12/1,995	Medium to large	0	0	na
Too Good for Drugs & Violence	0	0	na	2	27/504	Medium to large	0	0	na
Too Good for Violence	1	10/999	Small	1	10/999	Small	0	0	na
Voices Literature and Character Education	0	0	na	1	5/98	Small	0	0	na

na = not studied

Note: All the programs that received a rating of medium to large had at least four schools in each of the studies reviewed. A rating of “medium to large” requires at least two studies and two schools across studies in one domain and a total sample size across studies of at least 350 students or 14 classrooms. Otherwise, the rating is “small.”

Appendix A2 Targeted population

Program name	Targeted students (grades)	Students in studies reviewed (grades)
Building Decision Skills + Service Learning	7–12	12
Caring School Community™	K–6	K–6
Connect with Kids	3–12	3–12
Facing History and Ourselves	6–12	8
Heartwood Ethics Curriculum	K–6	1–6
Lessons in Character	K–8	4–5
Positive Action	K–12	1–6
Skills for Action	9–12	9–12
Skills for Adolescence	6–8	6–8
Too Good for Drugs™	K–8	3, 4, 6
Too Good for Violence	K–8	3
Too Good for Drugs and Violence	9–12	9–12
Voices Literature and Character Education Program	K–12	6–7

Note: This table presents a comparison of targeted grade levels and the grade levels in the studies reviewed by the WWC. Grade levels are related to student age and may affect outcomes due to differences in the students' developmental stages as well as differences in school size and organization.

Appendix A3 Summary of statistically significant¹ or substantively important² positive findings

	Behavior ³		Knowledge, attitudes, and values ³		Academic achievement ³	
	Statistically significant positive findings	Behavior across outcomes	Statistically significant positive findings	Knowledge across outcomes	Statistically significant positive findings	Academic achievement across outcomes
Building Decision Skills + Service Learning						
Leming 2001 (quasi-experimental design)	na	na	Ethical perspective	ns, nsi	na	na
Caring School Community						
San Ramon Study (randomized controlled trial with confounding problems)	Spontaneous prosocial behavior Supportive, friendly, & helpful behavior	ns, Substantively important	ns	ns, nsi	ns	ns, nsi
The Six-District Study (quasi-experimental design)	ns	ns, nsi	ns	ns, nsi	ns	ns, nsi
Connect with Kids						
Page & D'Agostino 2005 (quasi-experimental design)	Interpersonal behavior survey	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	na	na	na
Facing History and Ourselves						
Schultz, Barr, & Selman 2001 (quasi-experimental design)	ns	ns, nsi	ns	ns, nsi	na	na
Heartwood Ethics Curriculum						
Leming 2000 (quasi-experimental design)	ns	ns, nsi	ns	ns, nsi	na	na

na = not studied

ns = not statistically significant

nsi = not substantively important

(continued)

1. According to WWC criteria, if a program finds a statistically significant effect, then there is less than a 5% chance that this difference is due to chance. The level of statistical significance was calculated by the WWC and, where necessary, corrects for clustering within classrooms or schools, and for multiple comparisons. For an explanation about the clustering correction, see the [WWC Tutorial on Mismatch](#). For the formulas the WWC used to calculate the statistical significance, see the [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#).
2. For rating purposes, the WWC considered the statistical significance of the findings and the magnitude of the effect, also called the effect size. An average effect size is the sum of all the effect sizes of the student outcomes in a study in a single domain divided by the number of those outcomes. The WWC considers an average effect size across all student outcomes in one study in a given domain to be substantively important if it is equal to or greater than 0.25.
3. No studies showed statistically significant or substantively important negative findings in the domain. For a detailed description of the outcome measures, see Appendix A2 in the WWC intervention reports at www.whatworks.ed.gov.

Appendix A3 Summary of statistically significant¹ or substantively important² positive findings (continued)

	Behavior³		Knowledge, attitudes, and values³		Academic achievement³	
	Statistically significant positive findings	Behavior across outcomes	Statistically significant positive findings	Knowledge across outcomes	Statistically significant positive findings	Academic achievement across outcomes
Lessons in Character						
Dietsch, Bayha, & Zheng 2005 (randomized controlled trial)	ns	ns, nsi	ns	ns, nsi	Mathematics grades Attendance	Statistically significant, Substantively important
Lions Quest—Skills for Action						
Laird, Bradley, & Black 1998 (quasi-experimental design)	na	na	ns	ns, nsi	na	na
Lions Quest—Skills for Adolescence						
Eisen, Zellman, & Murray 2003 (randomized controlled trial)	Binge drinking	ns, nsi	na	na	na	na
Positive Action						
Flay et al. 2006 (randomized controlled trial)	Suspensions Tobacco use Alcohol use Being drunk Illegal drug use Serious violence (boys)	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	na	Grade retention	Statistically significant, Substantively important
Flay & Allred 2003 (quasi-experimental design)	Violence rates Suspension rates	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	na	The Florida Comprehensive Aptitude Test (FCAT)	Statistically significant, Substantively important
Too Good for Drugs™						
Bacon 2000 (randomized controlled trial)	na	na	na	ns, nsi	na	na
Bacon 2003 (randomized controlled trial)	ns	Statistically significant, Substantively important	na	ns, nsi	na	na

na = not applicable
 ns = not statistically significant
 nsi = not substantively important

(continued)

Appendix A3 Summary of statistically significant¹ or substantively important² positive findings (continued)

	Behavior ³		Knowledge, attitudes, and values ³		Academic achievement ³	
	Statistically significant positive findings	Behavior across outcomes	Statistically significant positive findings	Knowledge across outcomes	Statistically significant positive findings	Academic achievement across outcomes
Too Good for Drugs and Violence						
Bacon 2001a (randomized controlled trial)	na	na	Perceptions of social and resistance skills Perceptions of emotional competence	ns, Substantively important	na	na
Bacon 2001b (quasi-experimental design)	na	na	Perceptions of social and resistance skills Perceptions of emotional competence Positive attitudes towards non-violence Perceptions of assertiveness/efficacy skills	ns, Substantively important	na	na
Too Good for Violence						
Hall & Bacon 2005 (randomized controlled trial)	Teacher checklist of student behaviors (20 week follow-up)—total score	Statistically significant, Substantively important	ns	ns, Substantively important	na	na
Voices Literature and Character Education						
Demetriades-Guyette 2002 (quasi-experimental design)	na	na	na	ns, nsi	na	na

na = not applicable

ns = not statistically significant

nsi = not substantively important

Appendix A4 Methodology

Ninety-three studies provided data on 41 character education programs and were classified for the strength of their design. To be fully reviewed, a study had to be a randomized controlled trial or a quasi-experimental design.

Eligibility for review

Quasi-experiments eligible for review include those equating through matching or statistical adjustment, regression discontinuity designs, and single-case designs. No studies based on the latter two types of designs were identified for the character education review. We are currently developing evidence standards for regression discontinuity designs and single-case designs.

The review considered the properties of measurement instruments, the percentage of students, classrooms, or schools in the study sample that were not included in the reported results, and any sample characteristics or events that might serve as alternative explanations for the observed effect. For details please see the [WWC Evidence Standards](#). Long-term outcomes were preferred over immediate outcomes for inclusion in our analysis of program effects.

The research evidence for programs that have at least one study meeting WWC evidence standards with or without reservations is summarized in individual intervention reports posted on the WWC website. See <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov>. So far, 18 studies of 13 character education programs have met evidence standards with or without reservations. The lack of evidence for the remaining programs does not mean that those programs are ineffective; some programs have not yet been studied using a study design that permits the WWC to draw any conclusions about their effectiveness. And for some studies, not enough data were reported (such as descriptive statistics of the findings) to enable us to confirm statistical findings.

Rating of effectiveness

Each character education program that had at least one study meeting WWC standards with or without reservations received a rating of effectiveness in at least one outcome domain. The

rating of effectiveness aims to characterize the existing evidence base in a given domain. The intervention's effects based on the research evidence can be rated as positive, potentially positive, mixed, no discernible effects, potentially negative, or negative.

The rating of effectiveness takes into account four factors: the quality of the research design; the statistical significance of the findings; the size of the difference between participants in the intervention and the comparison conditions; and the consistency in findings across studies (see the [WWC Intervention Rating Scheme](#)).

The level of statistical significance was reported by the study authors or, where necessary, calculated by the WWC to correct for clustering within classrooms or schools and for multiple comparisons. Because of these corrections, the level of statistical significance as calculated by the WWC may differ from the one originally reported by the study authors. For an explanation, see the [WWC Tutorial on Mismatch](#). For the formulas that we used to calculate statistical significance, see [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#). If the average effect size across all outcomes in one study in a single domain is at least 0.25, it is considered substantively important, contributing toward the rating of effectiveness. See the technical appendices of the character education intervention report for further details.

Extent of evidence

The evidence base rating represents the size and number of independent samples that were assessed for the purposes of analysis of the program effects. A “medium to large” evidence base requires at least two studies and two schools across studies within one domain, and a total sample size across studies of at least 350 students or 14 classrooms. Otherwise, the evidence base is considered to be “small.” The WWC is currently working to define a “large” evidence base. This term should not be confused with external validity, as other facets of external validity—such as variations in settings, important subgroups of students, implementation, and outcome measures—were not taken into account for the purposes of this rating.

Appendix A4 Improvement index

Methodology *(continued)*

The WWC computes an improvement index for each individual finding. In addition, within each outcome domain, the WWC computes an average improvement index for each domain and each study as well as a domain average improvement index across studies of the same intervention (see the [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#)). The improvement index represents the difference between the percentile rank of

the average student in the intervention condition and the percentile rank of the average student in the comparison condition. The improvement index can take on values between -50 and +50, with positive numbers denoting results favorable to the intervention group. Unlike the rating of effectiveness, the improvement index is based only on the size of the difference between the intervention and the comparison conditions.

Appendix A5 References

Studies that met WWC standards

Lessons in Character

Dietsch, B., Bayha, J. L., & Zheng, H. (2005, April). *Short-term effects of a character education program among fourth grade students*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.

Additional citation for this study:

Dietsch, B., & Bayha, J. L. (2005). *Short term effects of a literature-based character education program among fourth grade students: Report to the Young People's Press, Inc.* Los Alamitos, CA: WestEd.

Lion's Quest—Skills for Adolescence

Eisen, M., Zellman, G. L., & Murray, D. M. (2003). Evaluating the Lions-Quest "Skills for Adolescence" drug education program: Second-year behavior outcomes. *Addictive Behaviors*, 28, 883–897.

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Positive Action

Flay, B. R., Acock, A., Vuchinich, S., & Beets, M. (2006, August). *Progress report of the randomized trial of Positive Action in Hawai'i: End of third year of intervention*. (Available from Positive Action, Inc., 264 4th Avenue, S., Twin Falls, ID 83301.)

Too Good for Drugs and Violence

Bacon, T. P. (2001). *Evaluation of the Too Good for Drugs and Violence—High school prevention program*. Tallahassee, FL:

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Too Good for Drugs™

Bacon, T. P. (2000). The effects of the Too Good for Drugs prevention program on students' substance use intentions and risk and protective factors. *Florida Educational Research Council, Inc., Research Bulletin*, 31(3 & 4), 1–25.

Bacon, T. P. (2003, August). *Technical report: Evaluation of the Too Good for Drugs—Elementary prevention program*. (Available from the Mendez Foundation, 601 S. Magnolia Avenue, Tampa, FL 33606.)

Too Good For Violence

Hall, B. W., & Bacon, T. P. (2005). Building a foundation against violence: Impact of a school-based prevention program on elementary students. *Journal of School Violence*, 4(4), 63–83.

Additional citation for this study:

Bacon, T. P. (2003, November). *Technical report: The effects of the Too Good for Violence prevention program on student behaviors and protective factors*. (Available from the Mendez Foundation, 601 S. Magnolia Avenue, Tampa, FL 33606.)

Studies that met WWC standards with reservations

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Leming, J. S. (2001). Integrating a structured ethical reflection curriculum into high school community service experiences: Impact on students' sociomoral development. *Adolescence*, 36(141), 33–45.

Connect with Kids

Page, B., & D'Agostino, A. (2005). *Connect with Kids 2004–2005 study results for Kansas and Missouri*. (Available from the Compass Consulting Group, LLC, 5726 Fayetteville Road, Suite 203, Durham, NC 27713.)

Appendix A5 **Caring School Community™**

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Six-District Study

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Lessons in Character

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Lion's Quest—Skills for Action

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Additional citation for this study:

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Flay, B. R., & Allred, C. G. (2003). Long-term effects of the Positive Action program. *American Journal of Healthy Behavior*, 27(1), 6–21.

Too Good for Drugs and Violence

Bacon, T. P. (2001). Impact on high school students' behaviors and protective factors: A pilot study of the Too Good for Drugs and Violence prevention program. *Florida Educational Research Council, Inc. Research Bulletin*, 32(3 & 4), 1–40.

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Voices Literature and Character Education

Demetriades-Guyette, A. (2002). Patterns of change in the social-cognitive development of middle school children following a school-based multicultural literature program. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 63(05), 2615B. (UMI No. 3052695)

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Weed, S. E. (1995). *Report to the Thrasher Foundation*. Salt Lake City: The Institute for Research & Evaluation.¹

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Building Esteem in Students Today (BEST)

Gooding, T. F. (2004). Character education: Perceptions of social skills acquisition in two elementary schools. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65(02), 364A. (UMI No. 3123558)²

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Changing Lives

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Heartwood Ethics Curriculum

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1. Complete data are not reported: the WWC could not compute effect sizes based on the data reported.
2. Does not use a strong causal design: this study, which used a quasi-experimental design, did not establish that the comparison group was equivalent to the intervention group at baseline.
3. Does not use a strong causal design: this study did not use a comparison group.
4. Does not use a strong causal design: this study administered the initial measurement (pretest) after the intervention began.
5. Does not use a strong causal design: this study did not use a quantitative design to assess student outcomes.
6. The outcome measures are not shown to be valid or reliable.
7. The outcome measures are not relevant to this review: The parameters for this WWC review specified student outcome measures but this study did not focus on students.
8. Does not use a strong causal design: there was only one intervention and one comparison unit, so the analysis could not separate the effects of the intervention from other factors.
9. The sample is not appropriate to this review
10. The outcome measures are not relevant to this review: The parameters for this WWC review specified student outcome measures but this study did not focus on students.
11. Does not use a strong causal design: this paper is a review and summary of other research.
12. Does not use a strong causal design: this study used a qualitative approach to report findings.