The 8 Keys of Excellence character education program guides young people toward a positive future full of confidence, motivation, creativity, team work, leadership and valuable life principles.

**The Excellence Effect Movement – 50 million kids by 2015**

The Excellence Effect is a movement to build excellence in the lives of young people worldwide through the 8 Keys of Excellence family and school character programs. Many of today’s most distinguished and respected thought leaders are advocates of the 8 Keys of Excellence character-building principles. View their videos below.

Jacob Canfield
John Gray
Lisa Nichols
Stephen M R Covey
Lynne Twist

See more thought leaders speak about excellence
Join us today in making a difference for youth everywhere at no charge to families and schools.

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### 8 Keys of Excellence Character Education Program

The 8 Keys are:

- Integrity
- Failure Leads to Success
- Speak With Good Purpose
- This Is It!
- Commitment
- Ownership
- Flexibility
- Balance

Get definitions and descriptions for the 8 Keys

A major study by Dr. Victor Battistich, an expert in the field who devoted much of his adult life to the study of character education, found only two factors showed a significant direct link to improving good character and effectively preventing bad behavior: positive relationships with one’s family and a sense of connectedness to school. 8 Keys of Excellence address both areas with its school character education program and family character development program.

"As students grow in character, they grow in their capacity and commitment to do their best work, do the right thing and lead lives of purpose. Character education done early and well, puts students toward successful life outcomes." – Dr. Victor Battistich

For nearly 30 years in SuperCamp learning and life skills programs and Quantum Learning school training, the 8 Keys of Excellence have helped young people embody valuable life principles that lead to positive habitual behavior, added confidence and increased motivation.
8 Keys of Excellence School Program

The 8 Keys of Excellence school character education program provides K-12 teachers with a full year of character education lesson plans, online resources, training and support. Already over five million students have been positively influenced by the 8 Keys.

"The 8 Keys of Excellence have had a very positive impact on morale, behavior and character education efforts at the elementary schools. Many teachers and parents continue to let me know how the language of the Keys is evident, not only throughout the school, but throughout the community as well." – Dan St. Romain, Alamo Heights Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas.

Building character in students through the 8 Keys of Excellence helps young people realize their greatness and enables schools to achieve better results.

There is no cost to participate in this program. We simply ask schools to partner with us by providing annual data on student performance. To enroll your school or district in the 8 Keys character education program now, please complete the online registration form.

Learn more about our school character program or contact us by email or at 760-305-7317.

8 Keys of Excellence Family Program

The 8 Keys of Excellence family character development program gives parents a simple and engaging eight-week action plan for establishing core character principles in their kids, strengthening family relationships and deepening the feeling of belonging, safety and connectedness.

When you register for this free program, you gain login access to the family area of this website, which contains a wealth of 8 Keys resources, videos, a MyFamily page where you can keep notes throughout the program and a discussion board to interact with other families.

Each week for eight weeks, your family will receive an email that links to the Key-of-the-week’s web page. Each Key's page leads your family through a 20-30 minute conversation and activity designed to give meaning and insights into that Key. When the eight weeks are over, we'll continue to send you information periodically to reinforce and enhance your family’s learning and character development.

What's more important than your kids' future? Register for the 8 Keys of Excellence family program now! Want more information? Learn more about the eight-week program and the benefits to your family.

The 8 Keys of Excellence – Definitions and Descriptions

INTEGRITY – Match behavior with values
Demonstrate your positive personal values in all you do and say. Be sincere and real.
Living in integrity means that everything we say and everything we do are true reflections of what we value, what's important to us. Think about what your behavior says about you. Does it clearly show others what you value? Do you show up as honest and committed, or dishonest and indifferent? Are you spending your time with the people and activities you value, or is your focus elsewhere?

When we live in integrity we are sincere and true to ourselves—we don’t say or think one thing and do another. People trust and respect us, our relationships are solid, and we feel good about ourselves. Those positive feelings from others and within ourselves reinforce our values and build our reputation and self-esteem, leading us to greater success in all areas of our lives.

**FAILURE LEADS TO SUCCESS – Learn from mistakes**
*View failures as feedback that provides you with the information you need to learn, grow, and succeed.*

When we live the Key of Failure Leads to Success we see failures as feedback, we learn from them and make the changes needed to be more successful in the future.

To live this Key successfully we may need to change the way we think about failure. Rather than viewing failure in a negative way where we put ourselves down and think WE are a failure, think of failure as a valuable learning experience. When we look at our mistakes with a view to learning from them, rather than sending ourselves negative messages, we are on the path to success.

We may be reluctant to try different things because we're afraid of failing. Fear of failure does nothing but keep us in our comfort zone where we stick with the familiar, the “safe” choices where we don’t “risk” another failure. When we step out of our comfort zone—when we’re willing to try something new—that is when we take a step toward success.

The only real failure is not learning from our mistakes. The key to success is to look carefully at what went wrong, change what we did the first time, and try again by applying what we learned.

**SPEAK WITH GOOD PURPOSE – Speak honestly and kindly**
*Think before you speak. Make sure your intention is positive and your words are sincere.*

Words are powerful! They have the power to uplift and enlighten or put down and depress. A few cutting words spoken in a moment of anger can affect us for a long time, perhaps even a lifetime. On the other hand, a few kind words can make a very positive difference in how we feel about ourselves … sometimes for a lifetime.

What we say to others—and to ourselves—can have a huge impact. Speaking with good purpose is about always considering the intention of our words. It’s about communicating
directly, clearly, honestly, and with a positive purpose. The first step is awareness. If we always think before we speak instead of just blurting out whatever comes to mind, we can learn to consider the reason for our words and make sure we are speaking with good purpose … will our words build someone up or put them down? We all sometimes have negative thoughts, but we don’t have to say everything we think.

There will be times when we need to share critical thoughts. At these times, if our purpose and how we phrase our words is considered first, sharing honest and direct feedback can be very positive and powerful, and build trust.

Speaking with good purpose is the cornerstone of healthy relationships. This Key fosters a positive emotional environment where people are happier, more productive, and more likely to succeed.

THIS IS IT! – Make the most of every moment
*Focus your attention on the present moment. Keep a positive attitude.*

This Is It! is about focusing on NOW instead of later, or next week, or next month, or next year, or yesterday, etc., and making the most of it. A positive This Is It! attitude can make everything we do and every day productive, fulfilling, and fun!

Life is full of distractions and opportunities to do something else, something other than what we’re doing now. Many of us spend a lot of time thinking about those other things. Instead of making what we’re doing now “it” our focus is often elsewhere—on things we wanted to do, could have done, should have done, or want to do “sometime.” Whenever our thoughts are occupied with something other than what we’re doing, we miss what’s going on around us in the moment … while we’re waiting for the next moment to arrive the present moment slips away.

When we live in the NOW we have power! With a This Is It! attitude we make the present “it” and find joyful moments that we might otherwise have missed!

COMMITMENT – Make your dreams happen
*Take positive action. Follow your vision without wavering.*

Commitment is the breathtaking moment of making a compelling decision, jumping in, and going forward with gusto. Once a commitment is made, indecision is eliminated—there is no more “Should I or shouldn’t I?” … “Will I or won’t I?” A commitment is not made lightly—it’s about making a decision so strong that there is no going back … like a skydiver who has jumped from the plane!

The decisive act of making a commitment—when we decide to do “whatever it takes” to reach a goal—sets in motion an energy field that propels us forward on our path. At each step along the
way, our commitment inspires us to take positive action and overcome obstacles, and pushes us on until we “make it happen.”

**OWNERSHIP – Take responsibility for actions**

*Be responsible for your thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. “Own” the choices you make and the results that follow.*

Ownership is our willingness to take responsibility for the choices we make. When we take responsibility for our choices, others know they can count on us and we earn their respect.

If you tell a friend you’ll meet him at a certain time but you’re two hours late because you were hanging out with another friend, take responsibility for your choice. Don’t make up excuses like “I couldn’t help it … Billy just wouldn’t let me go.” Take ownership by saying, “I was wrong not to meet you as planned or call you when I realized I’d be late.”

When we take ownership of everything we do and say and stop blaming things outside ourselves for situations that occur in our lives, we have greater control. We may not be able to control everything that happens in our lives but we can control how we respond to what happens. By taking ownership of our actions we create a huge shift in our life.

Ownership is a whole-life concept. We can take ownership of our education, our relationships, our fitness, our fun—all areas of our life. And when we take ownership we take pride and feel confident and fulfilled.

**FLEXIBILITY – Be willing to do things differently**

*Recognize what’s not working and be willing to change what you’re doing to achieve your goal.*

Flexibility is the willingness to try something different when we realize that what we’re doing isn’t working. Many times a day we are faced with situations that are different from what we had originally planned. One way to deal with these situations is to be rigid and continue to do things in the same way over and over—another is to handle them with flexibility. Being flexible is responding to changing or new situations in ways that move us forward.

Flexibility is about not getting locked in to one way of doing something. If we’re trying to achieve something (like getting up on time in the morning) and it’s just not working, we try another way (like moving the alarm clock to the other side of the room so we have to get up to shut it off). Flexibility is about recognizing all kinds of habits or patterns or activities in our life that aren’t working and changing them, and even changing them again until we find the one that works!
School Character Education Program

Since 1982, tens of thousands of Quantum Learning-trained teachers have used the 8 Keys of Excellence as their preferred method of character education. Now, with the 8 Keys of Excellence school character education program, your school or district can get access to a comprehensive yearlong character development curriculum at no cost.

We provide teachers with a yearlong curriculum and a wealth of resources through the school program portal of this website.

Get a preview of the 8 Keys of Excellence School Program

Teachers begin the year by presenting an overview lesson of the 8 Keys of Excellence to their students. They focus on one Key per month, starting with a Key lesson early in the month and integrating the Key into the curriculum in a number of ways, including: student journaling, writing assignments and test preparation tips. May is review and celebration month.

If the school year already is underway, your school can implement 8 Keys of Excellence at any point simply by shortening the time spent on each Key.

“Our message was clear to students and their families about the characteristics we value as staff. Our school counselor noticed that students often talked about the importance of striving for
excellence and the values of the Keys while they worked out conflicts. We look forward to continuing with the program next year.” –Wendi Cocita, Assistant Principal, Jefferson Middle School

Register your school or class now!

The 8 Keys = Excellence

Research with 8 Keys schools has shown the positive effects of using the 8 Keys of Excellence as the school’s character education program. One study revealed that after implementing the 8 Keys of Excellence school-wide for one year, teachers increased their ability to engage all students in learning, effectively manage classroom behavior, make meaningful connections to content, improve student socialization, cultivate positive attitudes in their classroom and encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.

Teachers also reported higher levels of joy and satisfaction from teaching at the end of the year than at the beginning, and an increased school spirit. Suspensions and expulsions went down approximately 30% and average student GPA increased a half letter grade.

The 8 Keys not only develop student’s character, but they bring students and faculty together. Schools have selected their students of the year based on who best demonstrated the ability to live the 8 Keys throughout the school year. Other schools have chosen the 8 Keys as their theme for yearbooks and school plays.

“Coastal Academy loves the 8 Keys. Parents love the character education.”
– Lori Perez, Principal, Coastal Academy

“The program has given the school a common language.”
– Debbie Dickson, Teacher, Reynolds Elementary

A Partnership Between You and Us

We hope you will partner with us in providing unmatched character education to your students. In making the yearlong character content available to you at no cost, all we ask is that you send us annual data.

School Character Program Preview

K-12 teachers who participate in the 8 Keys of Excellence school character education program receive step-by-step direction on how to implement the program throughout the school year. On the “How to Implement” web page, they get an overview of the program and links to a number of videos and PDFs that give them the background they need on the 8 Keys.

These resources include:

Documents:
• Definitions, affirmations, descriptions and body motions for all Keys
• Teaching the 8 Keys in the Classroom
• Monthly Quotations for all Keys
• How to Write your own Key Lesson Guide
• How to Write your own Key Story Guide
• Test Prep using the 8 Keys
• Defining Excellence

Videos:

• Teaching the 8 Keys in the Classroom (1hr, 45 min)
• Learn the 8 Keys Body Motions

Additionally, teachers are able to share their experiences at the Teacher Forum.

School and district administrators also are shown ways to integrate the 8 Keys into the school culture, including holding 8 Keys assemblies and inviting guest presenters to give “Key Talks.”

**Introductory 8 Keys Lesson**

To get an idea of the specific content we provide in our school program portal, take a look at the teacher resource page and links for the 8 Keys of Excellence introductory lesson.

The 8 Keys school program portal contains specific content, similar in layout to the Introductory Lesson, for each month’s Key (two versions: K-8 and 9-12) and the Summation & Celebration month.

**8 KEYS OF EXCELLENCE CURRICULUM**

The 8 Keys of Excellence have become the common language of student character development in many Quantum Learning schools and districts, connecting students, teachers, parents, administrators, and the community in a shared focus on student character.

Take advantage of Quantum Learning’s new 8 Keys curriculum program to strengthen implementation of the 8 Keys of Excellence in your classrooms and school.

Schools and districts that create a culture of character based on the 8 Keys of Excellence achieve:

• More time on task
• Fewer discipline referrals
• More positive student behavior
• More motivated students

“If you address all 8 Keys, and the kids buy into all 8 Keys, then you have a foundation of character that you can build on. ... I couldn’t be an administrator on a campus without the 8 Keys and Quantum Learning. If it wasn’t allowed, I’d just have to go do something else.”

— Danny Potter, Principal, Dumas Junior High School, Dumas, TX
8 Keys of Excellence Curriculum Overview

The 8 Keys of Excellence curriculum program is a comprehensive year-long character education program for elementary (3-5), middle school and high school students focused on Quantum Learning’s 8 Keys of Excellence. Each level provides age-appropriate activities and lessons that strengthen the implementation of the 8 Keys in the classroom and school.

- **Scope:** Each curriculum package includes four 15- to 30-minute lessons for each Key for a total of 32 lessons. The program is designed to support a full-year character program with one Key for each month of school.
- **Design:** Each age-appropriate, interactive lesson is designed and scripted to be easily delivered by teachers of all skill levels and experience. A DVD for each level models many of the lessons to help teachers prepare for their delivery. The workbooks support the lessons both within the class and as a link to parents and family.
- **Training:** Quantum Learning provides one- to two-day on-site training programs for teachers as well as train-the-trainer programs for lead teachers with Quantum Learning training.

**What makes the 8 Keys program different from other character programs?**

- **Applicability to the classroom:** The 8 Keys are unique among character programs in that the 8 Keys become a foundational “language” and classroom culture that improves student behavior, reduces behavior problems, and increases students’ commitment to learning.
- **Student self-assessment:** Students track their progress as they develop the 8 Keys as character traits, learning the value of good character in achieving their goals.
- **Active student engagement:** The 8 Keys workbooks are not “keep busy” workbooks that stand alone as the core of the student’s learning experience. Students are actively engaged with the teacher and each other in exploring the impact of the 8 Keys on their education and their life.
- **Dynamic, pre-designed lessons:** All 8 Keys lessons have been developed and scripted by Quantum Learning’s top curriculum designers. The lessons are easy to deliver and offer flexibility with time or scheduling limitations.

**“The 8 Keys and Quantum Learning provide the foundation for our students to be successful, academically and as productive citizens.”**

—Mark Stroebel, Superintendent, Dumas ISD, Dumas TX

**Program Components**

Each level includes a variety of student and teacher support including student workbooks and a comprehensive teacher’s guide and implementation DVD.

- **Student Workbook:** A 100-page spiral-bound workbook that guides students through lessons, activities and journaling.
- **Teacher Guide:** A 200-page spiral-bound book that supports teachers with lessons, activities and stories about each Key. Other features include quotes, affirmations and test tips for each Key.
- **Teacher Support DVD:** These videos model lessons, activities and stories and assist teachers in preparing to deliver the 8 Keys curriculum.
- **8 Keys of Excellence Book:** Includes inspiring true stories from students and adults about how the Keys have influenced their lives.
- **8 Keys Wall Set:** Visual reminders for the classroom and throughout the school.
• **On-Site Training and Certification**: A one- to two-day training with a dynamic Quantum Learning facilitator modeling the delivery of this curriculum in the classroom for your teachers.

**Curriculum Package Pricing**
• Elementary Workbooks: $15.95
• Middle School and High School Workbooks: $12.95
• Teacher Guide and Implementation DVD Package: $99.95

“The 8 Keys make sense for kids and are what they need developmentally—concepts like responsibility, ownership and speak with good purpose are important for all students.”

—Jeff Allmon, Counselor, McPherson Middle School, McPherso