

# CHARACTER: BE ABOUT IT!

Fall 2016 Pre-Survey Results

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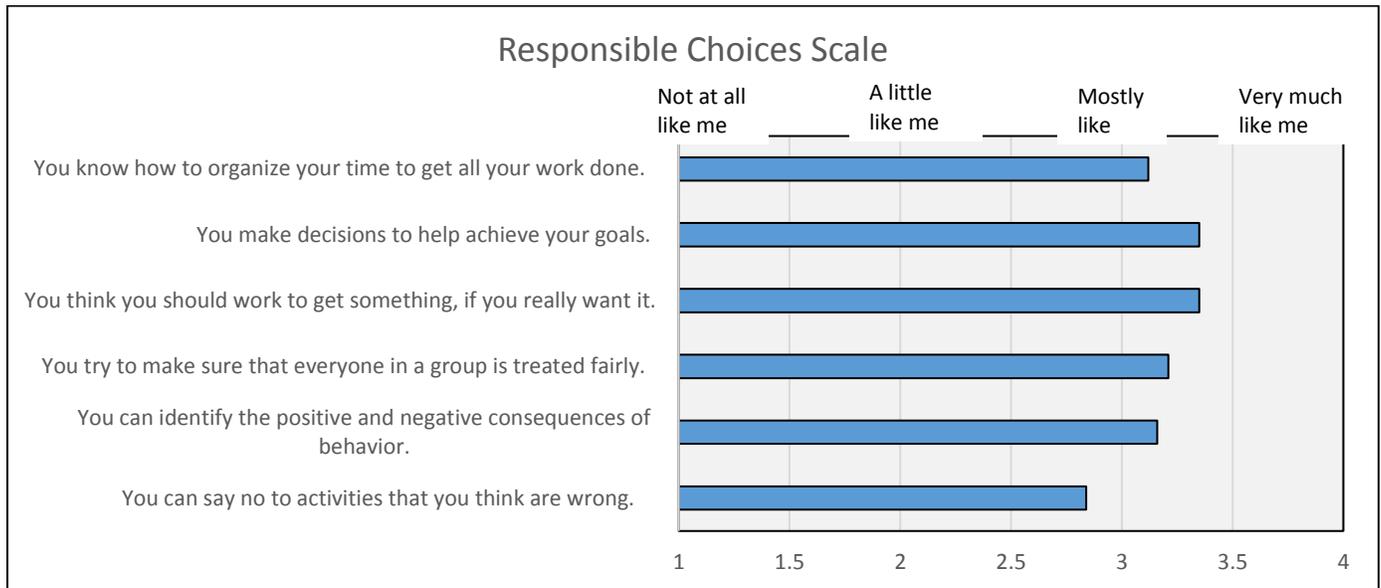
Susan Hirt Hagen

**C O R E**

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The pre-survey for the Character: Be About It! program was administered to 265 (140 male, 123 female) students from Harding, Edison, Wayne, and Lincoln schools by their classroom teachers at the end of September 2016. The survey was designed to measure responsible choices, self-esteem, conflict resolution, and perception of police officers.

On the responsible choices scale, many students indicated that they make decisions to help achieve their goals and that they should work hard to get something if they really wanted it. Students were less likely to report that they can say no to activities that they think are wrong.



Students indicated varying levels of self-esteem. While many students reported feeling that they were satisfied with themselves, many also reported that at times, they felt useless or thought they were no good at all. Helping students develop an increased sense of self-worth throughout the lessons should be an area of focus.

On the conflict resolution scale, most students reported that they did not hit people, break things on purpose, or do whatever they feel like doing. However, many students indicated that they get mad easily and sometimes yell at people when they are mad. Lessons focusing on identifying emotions and emotional regulation would be helpful to these youth.

Students displayed varying perceptions of police officers. Most students agreed that police officers helped keep their neighborhoods safe and play an important role in stopping crime. Some students indicated that their interactions with police were not generally positive and did not think officers showed concern when asked questions.

Students were asked if they had a trooper come into their class last year to teach the character traits. Eighty-six responded that they did (172 did not). When analyzing the responses we found that students receiving the Character: Be About It! curriculum last year had many more positive responses than those who did not receive the curriculum. This was especially noticeable on questions about police perception. This is extremely encouraging, and hopefully, by the end of the year, all students will have responses that are more positive. The following table shows which questions elicited responses that had statistically significant differences.

Question	Mean- No Trooper	Mean – Trooper Last Year	Significance
You know how to organize your time to get all your work done.	3.02	3.28	.024
I certainly feel useless at times.	2.51	3.01	.000
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	3.13	3.4	.025
When I am mad, I yell at people.	2.23	2.62	.007
It is possible for youth and police officers to get along.	3.79	4.14	.032
Police officers and youth in my community can work together	3.69	4.14	.002
I expect that the police I see on the street will bother my friends or me.	2.27	1.76	.005
Police officers are respectful of people like me.	3.82	4.14	.05
Police officers don't communicate very well.	2.69	1.95	.000
I think the police are scary.	2.14	1.65	.002
I am scared to ask the police for help.	2.33	1.77	.004

\*Some items were reverse coded. The youth who received the character education last year scored significantly more positive for all items on the table.