How do children learn values and caring at school?

Young children learn to be caring people by interacting with and observing caring adults.

Caring adults treat children – as well as other adults – fairly and with sensitivity, kindness, and empathy. Many opportunities for children to learn values and caring are created in a warm and welcoming school with these characteristics:

- Children are treated with respect.
- Caregivers provide good role models.
- Parents are invited to participate in their child's learning.

School activities that encourage children to learn values and caring

- When a child plays with dolls and plush animals in the housekeeping center, he is learning to be responsible and caring toward others.

- When a child is asked to be a classroom helper, he is learning to be responsible. Through setting the table, cleaning up after art, caring for and putting away toys, a child is mastering some basic life skills.

- When a child picks up litter in the play yard, she is learning to be a responsible caretaker of the environment.

- When a child follows clearly stated, fair, and age-appropriate classroom rules, she is learning self-discipline. This character trait is needed for a child to become a good citizen and to have respect for authority.

- By interacting with other children throughout the day, a child is learning to be a good, loyal friend. He is practicing skills of problem solving and conflict resolution in a fair manner without violence.

- The classroom offers children many opportunities for choices. When a child is allowed to make choices, she learns to be a responsible decision maker.

- When sharing snacks and mealtimes with other children, a child learns to be polite and considerate of others.
• By interacting with children from differing backgrounds and varying abilities, a child learns to be accepting and respectful of others.

• Access to value-oriented books gives children exposure to topics that are important in the process of learning about values and caring. Books should feature characters with good values, depict the rewards of good decisions, and show the negative consequences of bad decisions.