



## March's Key to Character

### Definition

Elementary: Tolerance is the willingness to accept others who are different and have different beliefs and customs.

Secondary: Tolerance is the ability to accept the race, religion, customs or opinions of others without negative prejudice.

### Related Words

charity	sensitivity	humanity	justice
peace	consideration	permission	benevolence

### WHAT TOLERANCE LOOKS LIKE!

*People who are tolerant, accepting and appreciative of others:*

- *keep an open mind*
- *realize that people are more alike than they are different*
- *work to eliminate stereotypes*
- *learn about the cultures of others*
- *challenge bias*
- *realize that people of all groups have a contribution to make*
- *allow freedom of choice*

### Mix It Up at Lunch



**Mix It Up at Lunch Day** is a simple call to action for students to take a new seat in the cafeteria. This allows them to cross the lines of division, meet new people and make new friends. This can be done at any time of the year although a special day in November is targeted for the event. A Mix it Up planner, posters and flyers, Mix It Up in the classroom, and Mix it Up dialogues can be found on the Teaching Tolerance website: ([http://www.tolerance.org/teach/mix\\_it\\_up/index.jsp](http://www.tolerance.org/teach/mix_it_up/index.jsp)).

### BULLY BLASTING

*Being Tolerant does not mean that you accept mistreatment of yourself or others.*

***If you are being bullied.....***

#### ***Reach Out - Tell an Adult***

*Sometimes you may have to tell more than one trusted adult. Ask your friends to help you. There is safety in numbers. Practice what to say the next time you are being bullied with your parents, teachers or friends.*

#### ***Be cool in the moment!***

*Stay calm and confident. Don't show the bully that you're sad or mad. Ignore the bully and walk away. Remember: fighting back can make it worse.*

#### ***Change the School Community***

*Work with others to stop bully behavior; your whole school will benefit. Remember: a lot of kids have to cope with bullying. You are not alone. No one deserves to be bullied.*

#### ***If you witness bullying.....Interrupt it!***

*Stand next to, or speak up for the person being bullied. Ask the bully to stop. Comfort the person being bullied and offer friendship. **GET HELP:** Find an adult who can intervene.*

#### ***If you are the bully...Make a Commitment to Change Your Behavior***

*Resist peer pressure to bully. If you start to bully, walk away and find something else to do. Remember: you don't have to like everyone around you, but you have to treat everyone with respect.*

*Source: [www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org) -Stop Bullying Now*



"Tolerance is giving to every human being every right that you claim for yourself." Robert Green Ingersoll

# Suggested Reading List



## **Great Reading for Elementary Students:**

Black is Brown is Tan, by Arnold Adoff  
The Rough Faced Girl, by Rage Martin  
Teammates, by Peter Golenbock  
Silent Lotus, by Jeanne Lee  
An Angel for Solomon Singer, by Cynthia Rylant  
Bicycle Man, by Allen Say  
Heroes, by Ken Mochizuki  
Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky, by Faith Ringold  
Diego, by Jonah Winter  
Over the Deep Blue Sea, by Daisaku Ikeda  
Dumpling Soup, by Jama Kim Rattigan  
The Castle on Hester Street, by Linda Heller  
Angel Child, Dragon Child, by Michele Maria Surat  
How My Family Lives in America, by Susan Kuklin  
Everybody Cooks, by Norah Dooley  
Amazing Grace, by Mary Hoffman  
All the Colors We Are, by Katie Kissinger  
Margaret and Margarita, by Lynn Reiser

## **Great Reading for Middle and Secondary Students:**

Mania Magee, by Jerry Spinelli  
Knots on a Counting Rope, by Bill Martin Jr.  
The Lion Who Had Asthma, by Jonathon London  
Helping Hands, by Suzanne Haldane  
It's Your Turn at Bat, by Barbara Aiello  
The Friendship, by Mildred Taylor  
People, by Peter Spier  
Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry, by Mildred Taylor  
Mrs. Katz and Tush, by Patricia Polacco  
The Girl Without a Name, by Jose" Luis Garcia Sanchez  
I Hate English, by Ellen Levine  
Journey of the Sparrows, by Fran Buss  
Be Good to Eddie Lee, by Virginia Fleming  
All I Am, by Eileen Roe  
The Black Snowman, by Phil Mendez  
The Tree Astronauts, by Unberto Eco  
Mean Soup, by Betsy Everitt  
Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry  
How to Lose All Your Friends, by Nancy Carlson

## Websites

[www.tolerance.org/teach/mix\\_it\\_up/index.jsp](http://www.tolerance.org/teach/mix_it_up/index.jsp)  
Posters, flyers and a mix it up planner for school-wide projects

[www.tolerance.org/teach/resources/index.jsp](http://www.tolerance.org/teach/resources/index.jsp)  
Free literacy kit to order centered around the book: Rhinos and Raspberries, Tolerance Tales for the Early Elementary Grades

[www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org)  
Anti-bullying interactive games kids can play

[www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/lesson/lesson294.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson294.shtml)  
Five lessons for teaching tolerance

[www.tolerance.org/101\\_tools/yourself.html](http://www.tolerance.org/101_tools/yourself.html)  
101 Tools for Tolerance



## Spotlight on Schools

Middle and High School students learned about tolerance from Judge Doyel Saturday, February 7, 2009. He was one of the dynamic speakers at the Healthy Woman's Summit—Teen Tracks held at the Lakeland Civic Center. For the first time, Polk County Schools, in partnership with the Watson Clinic Foundation, fulfilled a dream of Don Knitt, Physical Education Specialist for Polk County schools, by organizing the Summit in honor of Girl's Sports Month. A full day of activities were planned to focus girls on living a healthy lifestyle. The students had great fun learning tennis tricks from Paula McCardle who teaches P.E. at Daniel Jenkins Academy and Enlightenment Dancing (belly dancing) from Robin Rogers who teaches at Eagle Lake Elementary. Zumba dance exercises, taught by Eileen Ranno, healthy skin care, make-up and color ideas, taught by Lynda Jackson, Sr. National Sales Director for Mary Kay Cosmetics, and dress for success and organizing finances taught by Laura Townsend owner of Successful Image were other topics that topped off a great day. Those in attendance will never forget the pig lung demonstration showing the cancer and emphysema effects of smoking shared by Jennifer Temple of the Polk County Health Department. Thanks to everyone who came and everyone who had a part in promoting this exciting event.

## *SCHOOL TEACHER'S "TRUE" LESSON IN TOLERANCE*

### *TEACHER'S CORNER*

### Nappy Hair Controversy

If you're black, or if you have close friends who are black, you are familiar with the term "nappy hair". Many blacks have nappy hair, and they describe it that way! Even some white folks have nappy hair. The book, "Nappy Hair" is by a critically acclaimed black author. The book celebrates the differences and unique attributes of black people. Yet, when white teacher Ruth Sherman read this book to her third-graders she was pilloried by black and Hispanic community members who had not read the book.

**WHO:** Ms. Ruth Ann Sherman. Age 27, white, 3rd grade teacher.  
**WHERE:** Brooklyn's P.S. 75 in the Bushwick neighborhood, mostly black and Hispanic. Part of school district 32.  
**WHAT:** Taught her kids about accepting racial differences, as well as accepting their own unique racial traits. Used critically acclaimed children's book in her lesson plan.  
**WHEN:** In September 1998 Ms. Sherman commenced her well-planned lesson in racial tolerance and acceptance. Her 3rd graders loved it. By late November 1998 misinformed members of the community demanded her ouster by the school board.

**THE BOOK:** "Nappy Hair" - about a little girl with the "nappiest, the most screwed up, squeezed up, knotted up" hair. Critically acclaimed as an excellent children's book both for (a) black children for teaching about self-acceptance; and (b) all children (and adults!) for teaching acceptance of racial differences.

**THE AUTHOR:** Carolivia Herron, age 52, black. Associate professor of English at Chico State University in CA., holds a Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Herron thinks Ms. Sherman's use of the book was perfectly appropriate and consistent with her own goals for the book.

**In the Beginning:** Ms. Ruth Sherman wanted to teach her 3rd graders about self-acceptance and acceptance of racial differences. She used the widely acclaimed book "Nappy Hair", narrating it and acting it out in front of her class, to the delight of her young charges.

"The entire exercise was intended to prepare the 3rd graders for a new group method of learning to read," said Sherman, "in order to do that successfully, the kids have to like each other and respect each other. That was the whole point of the lesson, for them to realize and appreciate the differences in each of us."

One of the children's parents happened upon several photocopied pages from "Nappy Hair" in her child's folder, and—without bothering to read the book itself—duplicated the pages, including a not-too-complimentary note about the "white teacher" who had been teaching presumably demeaning racist stereotypes to their black and Hispanic kids. The parent distributed this package of misinformation throughout the neighborhood to many families who did not even have children in Ms. Sherman's class.

The school board convened a public meeting on Monday, November 23, 1998 at which residents of the Bushwick neighborhood, mostly black and Hispanic, hurled racial epithets and profanities at Ms. Sherman as well as verbally and physically threatening her. Ruth Sherman was not allowed to speak by the angry mob. The principal was not allowed to speak. When the school librarian tried to show the crowd favorable reviews for the book she was shouted down.

The outraged parents had two things in common: (1) They had not read "Nappy Hair", and (2) They were not parents of Ms. Sherman's students. But they had read the flyer and the note about "the white teacher" that had been distributed throughout the neighborhood.

Ms. Sherman said: "The poor children must be so confused right now. Everything I tried to teach them about getting along and togetherness has been thrown right out the window."

Ms. Sherman has transferred to another school in Queens, where the parents welcomed her with open arms. Some of her former students wept and wanted her to stay.

Resource: [http://www.adversity.net/special/nappy\\_hair.htm](http://www.adversity.net/special/nappy_hair.htm)

### ***A Chinese Proverb***

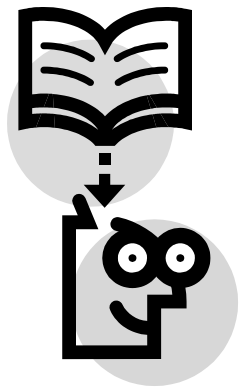
*If there is beauty in the soul,  
there will be beauty in the person;  
if there is beauty in the person,  
there will be harmony in the home;  
if there is harmony in the home;  
there will be peace in the world.*

### **School wide Project**

**Make a challenge to your school to "catch" each other using an affirmation showing appreciation for actions or comments of another student or staff member. Compile a list of things people say that make you feel good and discuss ways that a person can generate compliments (by being helpful, doing a good deed, being friendly, encouraging other, etc.). Create a form and a central location for collecting them. Recognize those who are "caught " on the school's T.V. network.**

### ***FCAT Power: Writing Prompts***

1. Have pairs of students draw and label a Venn diagram to illustrate their similarities and differences. The pairs of students need to discuss and list things they like, ways they are similar, and ways they are different. Students should think and write about the characteristics they share that are in the overlapping circle in the center.
2. Create a "web" or a "mind map" of the word "friend." Include descriptions of friendly actions and words the students associate with a friend. Does appearance, skin color, type of clothes, or other external factors impact who students choose as friends? Have students think about the characteristics most important in a friendship and write a description of the "perfect friend."
3. Think about the quote from Benito Juarez, " Respect for the rights of others leads you to peace." Have you ever observed, or do you recall a time in history that a conflict was resolved and peace restored because someone respected the differences of another person or group? Write a paragraph to convince a person or group that peace will result as they give respect.



### **Teach Tolerance and Bully Proof Your School**

Intolerant children will be judgmental of others. They may tease, berate, and attack others who are different. Sometimes this can be overly hostile and aggressive. Children who struggle with this problem help create an atmosphere of exclusion and intimidation for those people and groups they fear. This atmosphere promotes and facilitates violence and can be the first step in bullying. The intolerant child is, essentially, insecure about their status, skills, beliefs and values. Tolerance emerges when a child has security arising from the development of four core strengths of emotional health: attachment, self-regulation, affiliation, and awareness. Things we can do include:

- Make children feel special and safe through words of praise and encouragement. Valued children value others.
- Model tolerance. Children learn to reach out and be sensitive to others by your example.
- Create opportunities for children to learn about new places, people and cultures.
- Have class celebrations for holidays that honor the traditions of other cultures.
- Intervene immediately when you hear or see intolerant behaviors or words in children. Don't be punitive. Try to understand and help children learn healthier ways of interacting with others.

Source: "Keep The Cool in School: Tolerance—The Fifth Core Strength." by Bruce D. Perry, Scholastic, April 2002.

# Subject Level Lesson Plans

## **Music: Musical Chairs with a Difference**

Set out just enough chairs for each child. While the music plays, students walk around. Remove one chair in each round. When the music stops, the students must figure out a way for everyone to be included on the chairs that are left. (adapted from "Different and the Same," from Family Communications, Inc.)

## **The Orchestra**

Have a demonstration from an orchestra or examine a picture of an orchestra. Name various musical instruments and discuss their different sounds. Is the Orchestra only one instrument? Stress that the music is more interesting with different instruments, each playing different sounds, but working together. Relate how this is similar to groups of diverse people in the class, your city, your county or state, etc.

## **Art: Who Am I?**

Direct students to draw a self-portrait or provide them with a silhouette. On their artwork, they must complete the following statement:

I have \_\_\_hair, \_\_\_eyes, and my skin is \_\_\_\_\_. The teacher reads them one at a time and the students guess who is being represented.

## **P.E.: Can I Get In??????**

Direct students to form a circle holding hands; ask for a volunteer to stand outside the circle and try to break through and get in. Discuss how it felt to be on the outside; the strategies the outsider used to get in (squeeze in between others, push in, convince someone to let them in, etc.) and whether the people in the circle talked to each other.

## **Science: The Steering Wheel**

Divide the class into groups. Allow one group to come to the board and draw a vehicle. Direct a different group to label the following parts:

steering wheel, engine, mirrors, car keys, oil, windshield, brakes & tires. Each student should select a part to identify themselves with and divide into the following groups: Group A—The Steering Wheel, Group B—The Tires, Group C—The Engine, Group D—The Mirrors and Windshield, Group E—The Brakes. Discussion: Why do you think the above various parts are all important if the car is to function optimally? The car symbolizes America. The parts are its diverse people. When we all work together, we achieve a lot; but, when we work in isolation, we foster confusion and achieve very little. If we celebrate our differences and work together we have a maximum output.

## **Language Arts: The Known and the Unknown**

Display one common red apple. Direct students to name the object, describe it and categorize it as a fruit. Ask if this one example tells us all there is to know about apples. (No, there are other colors, sizes and flavors.) Knowing about one example does not mean that you know of all the possibilities. Direct students to write a paragraph.

## **Math:**

Illustrate how things can be "equal but not the same" by listing number sentences for "7" such as  $6 + 1$ ,  $10 - 3$ , and  $1 + 1 + 5$ , etc.

## **Social Science:**

Make a chart with headings "Looks Like....Sounds Like....Feels Like." The first chart is for "Intolerance." Have students suggest how intolerance in the school looks (behaviors), how it sounds (communication) and how it feels (affect). Make other charts for tolerance or other words such as appreciation, respect or friendship.

## Tolerant Student Activities

### Elementary Activities

- ⇒ Ask students how people might communicate without talking. Play a game of simple “charades,” acting out simple actions or animals without talking. Discuss factors that make it difficult to communicate without a common language. This would lead to a discussion of the possibilities of being friendly and communicating with newcomers, even when they do not speak English.
- ⇒ Discuss the old saying “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Do students agree with the saying? Students might tell how words can hurt.

### Middle School Activities

- ⇒ Have students look for and count instances of intolerance they see during one day on the playground, bus, in the cafeteria and on TV. Make a class graph.
- ⇒ Build an acrostic based on the word “Tolerance”. Each crossing word must relate in some way to tolerant behavior.

### High School Activity

- ⇒ Assign students to research how certain famous people overcame disabilities. Consider Beethoven, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Ray Charles, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Thomas Edison, Helen Keller, Louis Braille, Les Brown, Stevie Wonder, and Albert Einstein.

Source: Kids' World International Curriculum—Tulsa Global Alliance



## Tolerance Bulletin Boards

Trace the word, “**TOLERANCE**” and place on bulletin board; have students create cartoons depicting Tolerance; place cartoons along bulletin board or locate comic strips out of the Sunday newspaper to address the subject of tolerance; collage them on board..

Trace the words, “**WHAT IS TOLERANCE IN AMERICA**”; have students write a paper on what that statement means to them. After grading the papers, post them on the bulletin board under the topic.

Trace the words, “**TOLERANCE IN ACTION**”; make a collage of tolerant acts on the bulletin board (people respecting each other's differences); use magazines or newspaper stories/pictures/comic strips.

## Respect Differences

Of course you are different from the person next to you—sometimes because of physical, cultural and religious differences, but also because of your individuality. Yet, in many ways you are also the same. You share the same needs for food, shelter and love. You share the same hopes and dreams of wanting a good life for yourself and your family. Despite these similarities, many children and adults feel uncomfortable with people who seem to be different from them.

As children grow, they pick up cues from society that they use to define themselves and others. By introducing students to a variety of cultures and people, and by teaching that it is necessary to challenge stereotypes and to look for the similarities among all people, we can help develop an appreciation and acceptance of the ways in which people are similar and different.

If you were to ask students to identify Sojourner Truth, Harold Hughes, Jane Addams, Dr. Benjamin Carson, Julian Bonds, Rosa Parks, Ella Fitzgerald, Langston Hughes, or Barrack Obama, how many hands would go up? Students do not know these great peacemakers, but they do know all about the peace breakers. “We need to do a much better job of teaching about peacemakers and what they believe/believed in.”

Source: [www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org)

## Sunshine State Standards

### PreK-2

- HE.A.1.1 - The student comprehends concepts related to health promotion.
- HE.B.1.1 - The student knows health-enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.
- HE.B.3.1 - The student knows how to use effective interpersonal communication skills that enhance health.

### Grades 3-5

- HE.B.1.2 - The student knows health-enhancing behaviors.
- HE.B.3.2 - The student analyzes the influence of culture, media, technology and other factors on health.

### Grades 6-8

- HE.A.1.3 - The student comprehends concepts related to health promotion.
- HE.A.2.3 - The student knows how to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services.
- HE.B.3.3 - The student knows how to use effective interpersonal skills that enhance health.

### Grades 9-12

- HE.B.1.4 - The student knows health enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.
- HE.B.2.4 - The student analyzes the influence of culture, media, technology and other factors on health.
- HE.B.3.4 - The student knows how to use effective communication skills that enhance health.

# Mary Lou

By Lynne Zielinski

It was my first day as a newcomer to Miss Hargrove's seventh grade. Past "newcomer" experiences had been difficult, so I was very anxious to fit in. After being introduced to the class, I bravely put on a smile and took my seat, expecting to be shunned.

Lunchtime was a pleasant surprise when the girls all crowded around my table. Their chatter was friendly, so I began to relax. My new classmates filled me in on the school, the teachers and the other kids. It wasn't long before the class nerd was pointed out to me: Mary Lou English. Actually she called herself Mary Louise. A prim, prissy young girl with a stern visage and old-fashioned clothes, she wasn't ugly – not even funny looking. I thought she was quite pretty, but I had sense enough not to say so. Dark-eyed and olive-skinned, she had long, silky black hair, but – she had pipe curls! Practical shoes, long wool skirt and a starched, frilly blouse completed the image of a complete dork. The girls' whispers and giggles got louder and louder. Mary Lou made eye contact with no one as she strode past our table, chin held high with iron determination. She ate alone.

After school, the girls invited me to join them in front of the school. I was thrilled to be a member of the club, however tentative. We waited. For what, I didn't yet know. Oh, how I wish I had gone home, but I had a lesson to learn.

Arms wrapped around her backpack, Mary Lou came down the school steps. The taunting began – rude, biting comments and jeering from the girls. I paused, and then joined right in. My momentum began to pick up as I approached her. Nasty, mean remarks fell unabated from my lips. No one could tell I'd never done this before. The other girls stepped back and became my cheerleaders. Emboldened, I yanked the strap of her backpack and then pushed her. The strap broke, Mary Lou fell and I backed off. Everyone was laughing and patting me. I fit in. I was a leader.

I was not proud. Something inside me hurt. If you've ever picked a wing off a butterfly, you know how I felt.

Mary Lou got up, gathered her books and – without a tear shed or retort given – off she went. She held her head high as a small trickle of blood ran down from her bruised knee. I watched her limp away down the street.

I turned to leave with my laughing friends and noticed a man standing beside his car. His olive skin, dark hair and handsome features told me this was her father. Respectful of Mary Lou's proud spirit, he remained still and watched the lonely girl walk toward him. Only his eyes – shining with both grief and pride – followed. As I passed, he looked at me in silence with burning tears that spoke to my shame and scalded my heart. He didn't speak a word.

No scolding from a teacher or preaching from a parent could linger as much as that hurt in my heart from the day a father's eyes taught me kindness and strength and dignity. I never again joined the cruel herds. I never again hurt someone for my own gain.

Source: Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul III

Questions you might ask; use details and descriptions from your own experiences to support your answers:

1. What is persecution?
2. How does tolerance fit into this story?
3. Why do people persecute others and how can it be remedied?
4. How can a person put aside their differences and resolve to touch someone's life?
5. Are you tolerant of other people that you don't know or do you only tolerate those that you feel are tolerate of you?



# Tolerance Quotes

## Week 1

"We all have to live together.... I want you to respect one another, see the best in each other, share each other's pain and joy." Colin Powell

"Tolerance is good for all or it is good for none." Edmund Burke

"Tolerance and human rights require each other." Simon Wiesentha

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." Helen Keller

"There are no problems we cannot solve together, and very few that we can solve by ourselves." Lyndon B. Johnson

## Week 2

"Hatred is the most destructive force on earth. It does the most damage to those who harbor it." Nido Qubein

"Yesterday is not ours to recover, but tomorrow is ours to win or lose." Lyndon B. Johnson

"The highest result of education is tolerance." Helen Keller

"The best way of avenging thyself is not to become like the wrong-doer." Marcus Aurelius Antoninus

"The only race on the planet is the human race." Anonymous

## Week 3

"Tolerance is the eager and glad acceptance of the way along which others seek the truth." Sir Walter Besant

"If we accept and acquiesce in the face of discrimination, we accept the responsibility ourselves. We should, therefore, protest openly everything... that smacks of discrimination or slander." Mary McLeod Bethune

"A free man is he who does not fear to go to the end of his thought." Leon Blum

"We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope." Martin Luther King Jr.

"Let no man pull you low enough to hate him." Martin Luther King Jr.

## Week 4

"If we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it at all." Noam Chomsky

"Deal with the faults of others as gently as with your own." Chinese Proverb

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." M.L.King, Jr.

"The time is always right to do what is right." M.L.King, Jr.

"Without free speech no search for truth is possible. No discovery of truth is use. Better a thousand fold abuse of free speech than denial of free speech. The abuse dies in a day, but the denial slays the life of the people." Charles Bradlaugh

## Parent Connection: WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP ELIMINATE BULLYING

Whether or not you suspect bullying behavior is occurring at your child's school, you may want to consider getting involved in establishing an anti-bullying prevention plan at the school if the school does not already have such a policy. Additionally, you may want to consider talking with school officials about the school's current policy for responding to bullying behavior.

Many states (including Florida) have policies in place that explain your child's rights with regard to bullying behaviors and what should be done when those behaviors occur in schools. It is important to teach your child that bullying of any sort is not acceptable behavior even if you do not believe that your child is in danger of being victimized or committing such acts. Encourage your child to report all incidents of bullying to you or school officials.

Getting involved in your child's life both inside and outside of school is important, both for your own sake and for your child's. You will see how your child interacts with other children and will be able to take steps if you see any potentially troublesome behaviors that are taking place. Talking with your child about how to engage in non-violent interactions and how to respond to those who bully will prepare your child for such situations in school and elsewhere.

(Polk County is implementing an anti-bullying procedure in all schools due to the Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up for All Children legislation. This act was passed on April 30, 2008.)

Source: National Association of School Psychologists; [center@naspsweb.org](mailto:center@naspsweb.org)