**Positive Role Models**

The leaves are changing and the breeze is getting cooler -- November is upon us! November is National Inspirational Role Models Month. This is a great time to reflect on how you can take advantage of opportunities to become the color in someone’s dreary and cold world. We all know that teens and children are constantly being negatively influenced about body image, morals, and attitude by celebrities and the media, so it is our job to intercept that influence with positive role modeling.

One way to do so is to reflect on the role models that have affected your own life. What were some qualities they possessed that made their influence stick? Was it their patience or non-judgemental attitude? Remind yourself to be this way with the kids and young adults that you interact with. The writers of livestrong.com also had a few ideas of what makes a quality role model. Here are some tips from journalist Freddie Silver:

**Have a high moral standard.** Developmental psychologists concluded that kids are more likely to respect adults who “practice what they preach.”

**Be confident.** The more you respect yourself, the more others will respect you also. Having a little confidence goes a long way -- especially when interacting with young girls who are especially vulnerable to body image disorders.

**Work hard.** Persevering through obstacles and overcoming difficulties to reach your goals will in turn motivate those around you. You can live the lesson they learn without saying a thing.

**Respect others.** It’s hard to respect someone who is constantly degrading and putting down others. Being patient and understanding will show those around you that you are in it for the good of everyone.

**Be optimistic.** Don’t complain or nag, but be encouraging, uplifting, and positive. Work on creating a healthy and happy outlook on life in yourself so that others may follow.

No matter what, remember that you are making a difference. Whatever your position may be, you have the power to positively or negatively influence someone’s life, though some days it may not feel like it. The influence-able are watching, and they need to see something life-changing.