

October is **RESPONSIBILITY** Month for Character Counts

MODEL IT

The most powerful way to teach responsibility is to model responsibility for our children. If you make a promise to someone, keep it. If you make a commitment, stick to it until the end (even if you don't feel like it). Verbalize these situations for your children. You could say, "I'd really like to stay home today, but I promised our neighbors I would help them with their garden."

CHORES

Giving children age-appropriate chores is a good way to learn responsibility. Model the task so they completely understand what is expected from them. You should start small and gradually add to the task as they get older. Making a visual list or chart will help your child to see what needs to be done each day.

LET THEM HELP

Young children want nothing more than to help you (cook, clean, fold laundry, wash the dishes). We know it may take 3 times as long, but letting them help builds their confidence and self-worth. They also will be learning how to do chores. Don't be too critical of how well they do the job, always be positive, they are learning.

UNDERSTANDING CONSEQUENCES

Each choice we make has a consequence - positive or negative. When we are being responsible we want the best consequences. Giving children examples from life that have had good outcomes is important. An example would be 'I chose to pack my lunch last night, and now I don't feel as rushed this morning. Give your child

opportunities to make good choices, but not rescue them when they forget their responsibilities. Let them pay the consequence this time and chances are they will learn from the experience.

HERE ARE SOME BOOKS ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY

- But It's Not My Fault! (Responsible Me) by Julia Cook
- I Just Forgot by Mercer Mayer
- Arthur's Pet Business by Marc Brown
- The Paperboy by Dav Piley
- Rocky Road by Rose Kent
- Seedfolks by Paul Fleischman

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- Family Project - Ask your child if they would like to be responsible for helping a family member or neighbor with a small project that they need assistance with. Make sure parents know who the person is for the safety of your child and make sure it is something your child will be able to accomplish. Hopefully when finished they will share with their class the experience.