



*Peaceful Solution  
Character Education*  
PROGRAM

**RESPONSIBILITY**

**To Change The Hearts And Minds**





# The Peaceful Solution

*Character Education Program*



# The Peaceful Solution<sup>®</sup>

*Character Education Program*



## Teacher's Manual

### Responsibility Unit

*By Yisrayl Hawkins*

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# The Peaceful Solution

## *Character Education Program*

Preface -----	xiii
Introduction-----	xv
How To Use This Program-----	xvii

## Unit Five

### *Responsibility*

Introduction To The Unit -----	Lesson Plan 1 Page a
--------------------------------	----------------------

#### **Chapter One: You Can Count On Me**

Note To The Teacher -----	Lesson Plan 1 Page c
Lesson Plan-----	Lesson Plan 1 page e
Note To The Student -----	Page 1

#### **Chapter One: You Can Count On Me ----- 3**

Introduction -----	3
Being Responsible: Is It Really That Important? -----	4
Understanding The Main Point -----	6
Critical Thinking -----	7
Shared Responsibilities -----	8
How Is Responsibility Learned? -----	9
The Do's And Don'ts Of Responsibility -----	11
A Is For Accountability -----	14
Narrative: Being Responsible -----	16
What I Have Learned -----	18
Enrichment Activities -----	19
Just For Fun -----	20

#### **Chapter Two: Developing A Responsible Character**

Note To The Teacher -----	Lesson Plan 2 Page a
Lesson Plan-----	Lesson Plan 2 page c

#### **Chapter Two: Developing A Responsible Character ----- 21**

Introduction -----	21
--------------------	----

Pop Quiz -----	22
S Is For Self-Control -----	23
Critical Thinking -----	24
Chew On This-----	25
Here Are Some Simple Ways To Control Anger -----	29
Here’s What It Boils Down To -----	31
I Can Make Self-Control Part Of My Character -----	32
Compassion Is The Art Of Caring-----	33
Developing A Positive Work Ethic -----	35
Here It Is In A Nutshell -----	37
What I Have Learned -----	38
Enrichment Activities -----	39
Just For Fun -----	40

**Chapter Three: I Have A Responsibility To Myself**

Note To The Teacher -----	Lesson Plan 3 Page a
Lesson Plan-----	Lesson Plan 3 page c
Activity: What Would You Say And Do? -----	Lesson Plan 3 page f

**Chapter Three: I Have A Responsibility To Myself -----41**

Song: It’s Our Responsibility -----	41
Introduction -----	42
Adolescence—What Is It? -----	43
No Is Okay-----	44
What If I Live In A Family That Is Abusive? -----	46
The Ups And Downs Of Conformity -----	47
Negative Peer Pressure Can Also Lead To Drug/Alcohol Abuse And Premarital Sex -----	49
Let’s Take A Closer Look -----	50
The Other Side Of The Coin -----	51
Matters Of The Heart-----	54
You, Too, Can Say No-----	58
Last, But Not Least...-----	59
What I Have Learned -----	60
Enrichment Activities -----	61
Just For Fun -----	62

**Chapter Four: Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock, Time Management**

Note To The Teacher -----	Lesson Plan 4 Page a
Lesson Plan-----	Lesson Plan 4 page c

## **Chapter Four:**

<b>Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock, Time Management-----</b>	<b>63</b>
Introduction-----	63
Time Management Self-Evaluation-----	64
Time Can Be Your Enemy Or Your Friend -----	66
Wants Versus Needs -----	67
Prioritize -----	68
Schedules -----	69
Get Organized -----	71
The Joys Of Time Management -----	73
What I Have Learned-----	74
Enrichment Activities -----	75
Just For Fun -----	76

## **Chapter Five: It's Not A One Time Thing**

Note To The Teacher -----	Lesson Plan 5 Page a
Lesson Plan-----	Lesson Plan 5 page c

## **Chapter Five: It's Not A One Time Thing ----- 77**

Introduction-----	77
Maintaining A Responsible Character -----	78
C For Consistent -----	79
It's About Discipline -----	79
Responsibility And Discipline Go Hand In hand -----	80
Scenario: Love Is...-----	81
Think About It-----	82
Life On The Flip Side-----	83
Poem: One Bad Choice -----	85
It's About People Too -----	86
Straight Talk-----	87
Does Maintaining A Responsible Character Mean I Can Never Make A Mistake?-----	88
R Is For Reputation -----	90
Putting It All Together -----	92
What I Have Learned-----	95
Enrichment Activities -----	96
Just For Fun -----	97

**Chapter Six: Responsibility And Society**

Note To The Teacher ----- Lesson Plan 6 Page a  
Lesson Plan----- Lesson Plan 6 page c

**Chapter Six: Responsibility And Society ----- 99**

Introduction----- 99  
The Character Of Crime -----100  
Think About It-----101  
Understanding The Main Point-----102  
Crimes In The Millions -----103  
Critical Thinking -----104  
Society’s Response To Crime -----105  
Song: Do Not Steal -----108  
Juvenile Delinquents -----109  
Challenge Question-----110  
Straight Talk-----111  
Can Anything Else Be Done? -----112  
Education Is The Answer -----114  
What I Have Learned -----116  
Enrichment Activities -----117  
Any Mother’s Loss Deserves Our Attention -----118  
Additional Reading: The Letter -----119  
Benefits To Society-----126  
Just For Fun -----127

**Chapter Seven: You Can Be Responsible For Your Safety**

Note To The Teacher ----- Lesson Plan 7 Page a  
Lesson Plan----- Lesson Plan 7 page c

**Chapter Seven:**

**You Can Be Responsible For Your Safety ----- 129**  
Introduction-----129  
Test Your Disaster Knowledge -----130  
Analyze Your Answers -----131  
A Dose Of Reality -----132  
Gone In A Flash-----133  
What You Should Know -----136  
Tornadoes-----137  
Advanced Warning Is Your Best Defense -----139  
Earthquakes-----141  
Responsible Survival Tips -----142

Terrorism-----144  
Be Alert! -----147  
Germ Warfare-----148  
Do You Have An Emergency Kit? -----150  
Let's Take A Closer Look -----151  
Hot Tips -----153  
...For A Rainy Day -----154  
What I Have Learned -----156  
Enrichment Activities -----157

**Identifying Positive And Negative Character Traits ----- 159**

**Bibliography----- 165**

**Glossary ----- 167**



# Preface

## Influence From The Teacher

Thinking back on my early school years, I remember many of the things taught by my teachers that were not part of the regular curriculum. It was those teachings that influenced my thinking. Many of them still guide my actions today.

I remember very early in my childhood, even before my school years, things my parents taught me that actually guided my interaction with others. One statement that I heard more than once from my father, in the face of some frustrating event, was “Son, two wrongs do not make a right.”

Had my father’s words not been mentioned in my hearing, but other, more damaging words, such as “Get even!” “Fight back!” “I’ll never forgive you for that!” or, “I’ll get you for that!” I may have treated others differently.

In my lifetime, I have seen many people retaliate—children, adults and nations. However, I have never seen peace brought by someone doing wrong to another after that person did wrong to him.

Teachers greatly influence our future leaders. This means teachers have a major impact on the outcome of the world’s future. Just a few words placed in a person’s mind, at the proper time, can actually guide that person’s thinking for the rest of his or her life.

A morally sound, wise, caring teacher can help one, ten, or ten thousand students on their way to becoming morally sound, wise, caring adults.

Reading *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to any student will mean a lot. Influencing the student with the personal determination to leave the classroom with the wisdom and knowledge found in these books will mean everything in the student’s life.

Everyone needs direction, but the early teen years are those when children actually seek direction primarily from those outside the home. Most children, during these years, feel that they know everything that their parents know. Therefore, they will listen more closely to those outside the home, thinking they will learn things that their parents don’t know.

The stage is therefore set because the teacher is exalted in their minds as the one having the answers. Hence, we dedicate these books to the teachers; the world leaders of tomorrow.

The trust we place in you is the ultimate sacrifice. We place our children's lives in your hands because we know you will influence them positively. We are confident that they will be the beneficiaries of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* with your influence.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Yisrayl Hawkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "Y".

Yisrayl Hawkins  
Author and Promoter of  
*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*

# Introduction

*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Incorporated* is pleased to introduce you to the most unique, effective and practical character education program available today. You are holding a teaching tool that is guaranteed to minimize crime and violence, social disunity and moral degradation in the classroom, home and community.

Most people are involved in some kind of religion today, so when they express morality, they tend to be guided by what they have been taught by their churches, temples, synagogues or mosques. This is something we must guard against in public schools because of present laws concerning church and state.

We ask that you be aware of the fact that these lessons are designed only for the purpose of developing the student's character. These lessons teach proper, acceptable character education in a way that will penetrate and change the heart and mind of a student, or adult. This program will produce the result in young people that society desires to see.

We have noticed that these lessons are even more effective when the teacher encourages the practice of the principles of the lesson throughout the day as incidents arise between teacher and student, or student and student.

Please remember that your class will be an example, simply because character education is introduced into the school curriculum.

## **Teachers Are The True Leaders Of The World**

All teachers now have the opportunity to make a great change in the character of their students. With the use of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, you are not only teaching, you are actually molding leaders who will use what you are instilling in them to bring about better living conditions in this world.

We must not fail to build moral values in the students we are now teaching. This will not just reflect in the child but in the entire world around us. That is, your leadership will be reflected in the actions of the leaders you have taught and will teach.



# How To Use This Program

The *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* consists of five units that cover *Character, Acceptance, Self-Control, Respect* and *Responsibility*. Each unit is designed and formatted to gently lead the student with the basic concepts of character development to becoming a responsible citizen in society. It is important that you (the teacher) work through these units in the order presented to obtain maximum benefit. As you explore each unit, you will realize that the issues covered are very relevant to our young people. Take as much time as you can to explain the concepts, reiterate where and when possible, and solicit as much student participation as possible.

## Teacher's Manual

The Teacher's Manual is comprised of seven lesson plans each followed by the corresponding chapter. These chapters are duplicated in the Student's Handbook.

## Purpose/Objective

The purpose/objective is your evaluation tool for what or how much the students should learn from the lesson taught. Most of our objectives are measured in behavioral changes. Please watch for these changes as your indicator of which concept might need reinforcement.

## Procedure

The steps outlined in the procedures are for flow and continuity. We ask that you read the procedures prior to presentation, in order to guide the students more effectively. Try to become very familiar with all the steps and the main ideas involved. Ask questions periodically to be sure your students understand what is being presented. If your objective is not adequately met, repeat it or use the Enrichment Activities, found in the handbook section of your manual, to increase understanding of the lesson. Enrichment Activities are also great for reinforcing the concepts taught.

## **Student's Handbook**

The Student's Handbook is a replica of your manual, except that the student's handbook has the answers in the back. Encourage students to read their handbooks before class so they can contribute to discussions or help in problem solving. The activities are designed to help students apply the concepts taught in real life situations. Encourage students to complete the activities.

## **The Role Of The Teacher**

As educators, it is extremely important that we understand the tremendous role we play in the lives of our students. Therefore, our participation in this program is essential to its success. Review the concepts every time a situation arises and not just when the lesson is presented. As significant influences in the lives of our students, we can lay the foundation to help them build strong moral character.

There is a solution to the problems in today's society. *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* has provided you with the solutions needed to make a difference through educating our children, on the values and morals they will need for a lifetime.

# UNIT FIVE

## Responsibility

### Introduction To The Unit

Have you ever considered what our world would be like if everyone took responsibility for their actions, and learned from the outcome of their choices? If everyone developed this one positive character trait of being responsible, it would greatly improve the morale in our homes, schools and society as a whole. Imagine a world where there is no child abuse, because more parents take responsibility for the safety and well-being of their children? Some will say such a world is an impossible standard to achieve. However, the only way we can improve as individuals, and hence as a society, is to have a standard to work towards.

The *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* is designed to educate both children and adults on how to develop positive moral character. Acquiring positive character can improve every aspect of life. But to achieve positive moral character we must do more than imagine, we must put forth effort to educate people to value and develop positive character traits, while eliminating negative traits such as disrespect, irresponsibility and lack of self-control.

The book that you now hold in your hands is designed to help students explore the value of developing a responsible character, and how being responsible can improve the quality of their lives. The activities, scenarios, and role-plays as well as news articles about recent events provide a comprehensive study on the character trait of responsibility.

Other concepts explored in this unit are:

- How to acquire the cognitive abilities and practical skills needed to become a responsible person.
- The benefits of behaving responsibly to avoid taking risks.
- The problems that arise when moral responsibility is lacking from the lives of individuals and society as a whole.

- How a responsible attitude contributes towards preserving the resources of our planet for our use and for future generations.

By teaching your students how to act responsibly you are laying the foundation for the development of caring, compassionate and conscientious adults.

This is our opportunity to encourage and motivate students to acquire a responsible character. Encourage students to develop integrity by practicing positive traits and eliminating negative traits from their characters. Use the enrichment activities to reinforce the concepts of responsibility in the minds of your students.

As teachers and educators, we have a great responsibility to prepare today's children for tomorrow's world. By learning why positive character is important, students may avoid making choices that will adversely affect them for the rest of their lives. Who they become and what they deem important depend largely on what they are taught and what they put into practice today. Therefore, instill in your students the need to practice positive character in all aspects of their lives.

# Chapter One

## You Can Count On Me

### Note To The Teacher

**S**tudents who are taught to be responsible and accountable for their choices and actions develop a greater sense of self-worth and confidence in their ability to make right choices. They will receive the satisfaction of knowing that they are dependable, and trustworthy people who take responsibility for their actions.

In this introductory lesson, students will learn:

- What moral responsibility is.
- That when people in society are irresponsible, others can get hurt.
- How to become responsible.
- That responsibility includes fulfilling tasks and obligations with a positive attitude.
- How to make responsible choices.
- What age appropriate duties and obligations are.
- That responsible people accept the consequences of their choices and actions without making excuses or trying to shift the blame.

**W**hen the concepts of this lesson are fully taught, students will have a greater understanding and appreciation for the value of responsibility in their individual lives and society. Together, we can teach our students to be responsible people, capable of making decisions that will support their positive, moral growth and character development.



# Lesson Plan

## You Can Count On Me

### OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Students will learn what it means to be responsible. They will also explore practical ways in which they can apply responsibility to their own lives.

### MATERIALS

- Teacher's Audio Lessons
- CD player
- Students' handbooks

### PROCEDURE

1. Inform students that today they will begin the **“Responsibility”** Unit of the *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*. Explain that in this unit they will explore the following points:
  - How to make responsible choices.
  - What moral responsibility is and how it is applicable to our society.
  - How we can be responsible for our safety if disaster strikes.
2. Tell students that in today's lesson they will focus on what it means to be responsible, how to develop a responsible character and the rewards of achieving a responsible character. Have students turn to **page 3** in their handbooks and read the **“Introduction.”**
3. Explain to students that responsibility plays an important role in how we function as a society. Many things that we come to rely upon in society are dependent upon someone being responsible. Have students read the section, **“Being Responsible: Is It Really That Important?,”** on **page 4** in their handbooks. Allow time for students to read Articles I and II and complete

the section, “**Understanding The Main Point,**” on **page 6** and then briefly discuss the value of having responsible people within our society and the consequences if they are irresponsible. Have students complete the exercise, “**Critical Thinking,**” on **page 7** or assign it for homework.

4. Tell students that although different people have various obligations and duties, there are responsibilities that are common to all people. Have students give their opinions of what they are. Then have them read the section, “**Shared Responsibilities,**” on **page 8** of their handbooks. Emphasize that ultimately we are responsible for each other. If all people shared this understanding and treated others with compassion and respect we would have a safer and more peaceful world.

5. Discuss as a class what some of their responsibilities are. Guide class discussion by asking students how they think they learned to be responsible for these duties. Accept as many answers as time permits. Have students turn to **page 9** in their handbooks and read the section “**How Is Responsibility Learned?**” Allow students time to do the corresponding exercise on **page 10**.

6. Tell students that an important aspect of being responsible is to know the do’s and don’ts of responsibility. Have students turn to **pages 11-13** and read the section “**The Do’s and Don’ts Of Responsibility.**” Explain that being responsible includes not only completing the task, but also completing it in the way they were instructed and with a positive attitude.

7. Inform students that another important aspect of being responsible is to be accountable for their actions. Ask students what they think being **accountable** means. (*Answers will vary.*) Stress that someone who is **accountable** *accepts responsibility for his actions and faces the consequences of his choices without blaming others.* Have students read the section, “**A Is For Accountability,**” found on **pages 14-15** of their handbooks. Choose a student to read the scenario. Have students answer and discuss the questions that follow. Stress that we cannot learn from our mistakes if we are not accountable for our actions.

8. Tell students that if we are not responsible for our duties we may face consequences. Ask students what they think some of those consequences may be. Accept as many answers as time permits. Play the narrative, “**Being Responsible,**” from the *Teacher’s Manual Audio Lessons*. Have students follow along on **pages 16-17** in their handbooks.

Create class discussion by having students tell about times they were responsible and felt trusted and appreciated because of their efforts or times when they were irresponsible and had to face the consequences of their actions. Stress that a responsible attitude towards our duties and others can be its own reward, but an irresponsible attitude puts more work on others and can lead to distrust and resentment.

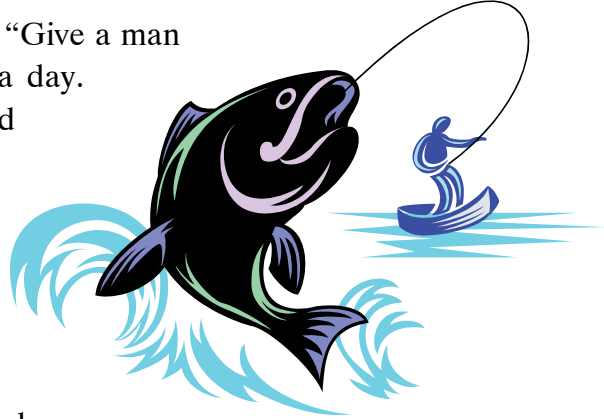
9. Conclude the lesson by having students read, “**What I Have Learned,**” on **page 18** in their handbooks. Encourage students to value the character trait of responsibility and practice it in all areas of their lives. Emphasize that by being accountable for their choices, they can learn from their mistakes. Remind students that although many people have various duties and obligations everyone should share a moral responsibility to treat each other with respect, care and compassion. When we are morally responsible to others we can help make the world a safer, kinder place.



## Note To The Student

**H**ave you ever heard the saying, “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day.

Teach a man to fish, and you will feed him for a lifetime”? How can being taught to fish as opposed to being given a fish change the course of someone’s life? The answer to this question is simple. When you are taught, you gain the knowledge needed to make choices that can lead to success.



Being taught how to develop moral character is much like being taught how to fish. You see, the positive traits that make up moral character, such as honesty, responsibility and respect are the foundation for a successful life. This is why the book that you are now holding in your hands is so important. From this book, you can learn the value of having a responsible character and how to develop positive traits.

### Being Responsible Is Important

At your age, you most likely have chores around the house, in addition to keeping your room clean. You have homework and may even have to help with a younger sibling. Guess what? Having chores and other obligations are great things. They help you learn how to prioritize, make decisions, and complete what you start. Simply stated, having responsibilities now will prepare you for your role as an adult. Speaking of adulthood, the type of adult you will become will depend largely on the choices you make today. If you make irresponsible choices by experimenting with drugs, abusing alcohol, or engaging in premarital sex, you may not even make it to adulthood.

Did you know that young adults have the fastest growing rate of STDs in our nation, and that teen pregnancies have reached approximately one million a year? The bottom line is, if you make irresponsible choices, you are just as likely to have to face the consequences as anyone else. So it is important that you develop a responsible attitude about your choices, obligations, and personal well-being, then consistently practice making choices that are healthy and beneficial to yourself and others.

## **What You Will Learn**

In this unit you will learn to build and develop your character to become a morally responsible person. You will also learn more about what it means to fulfill your obligations, manage time, and treat yourself and others in a responsible way. In addition to this, you will explore the benefits of responsibility to society, and how you can be responsible for your safety in times of disaster.

So pay close attention as the lessons are being taught. Participate in all the activities and class discussions. Practice being responsible as you learn more about developing this important character trait because the lessons you learn today will determine the adult you become tomorrow.

**“Anything worth doing is worth doing until you get it right.”**

# Chapter One

## You Can Count On Me

### Introduction

**H**ave you ever stopped to consider why people are so different? Why are some people honest, while others are dishonest? Why are some kind, while others are unkind? The differences in how we behave and how we treat others are based on our character. Character is the sum of traits that enable you to choose between right and wrong behavior. A person’s character is made up of both positive and negative traits. For example, having respect for others is a positive trait, but disrespect is a negative one. Having self-control is a positive trait, but a lack of self-control is a negative one. You can develop positive character when you focus on developing positive character traits, while eliminating negative ones.

In this unit, you will learn how to develop the positive character trait of responsibility, because, believe it or not, people are not born knowing how to be responsible. Responsibility, like respect and self-control, must be developed over time. Being responsible means you are someone others can count on to fulfill your duties and obligations, but most of all, you can count on yourself to make choices that are positive and supportive of your moral character development.

You learn how to be responsible through everyday tasks, interactions and experiences. The tasks that we sometimes think are boring, because they take us away from the fun things we want to do, are often the ones that teach us how to be responsible. So, the next time you are told to turn off the TV, close the back door, or feed the dog, don’t get upset, you are being taught how to become a responsible person. Developing a responsible character takes time and determination, but being someone others can count on as dependable and trustworthy, is well worth the effort.

## Being Responsible: Is It Really That Important?

**H**ave you ever considered what it would be like if everyone stopped being responsible for their actions, duties, and obligations? Would anything be accomplished? Simple things, that you probably don't think much about, are accomplished because people are responsible.

For instance, what if the school bus driver decided not to show up for work one day and didn't call or notify the bus company of his absence? The school would be expecting the bus to keep its schedule. The students who depend on the bus would be waiting and wondering what caused the delay. Frustrated, they would either return home or walk to school. Just think of all the people it would inconvenience, just because one person decided not to be responsible.



How about this example: at your age you are not old enough to provide your own shelter, clothing, and food. If your parents or guardians failed to meet their obligations to take care of you by providing these basic necessities, as well as an education and love, you would certainly be affected in a negative way.

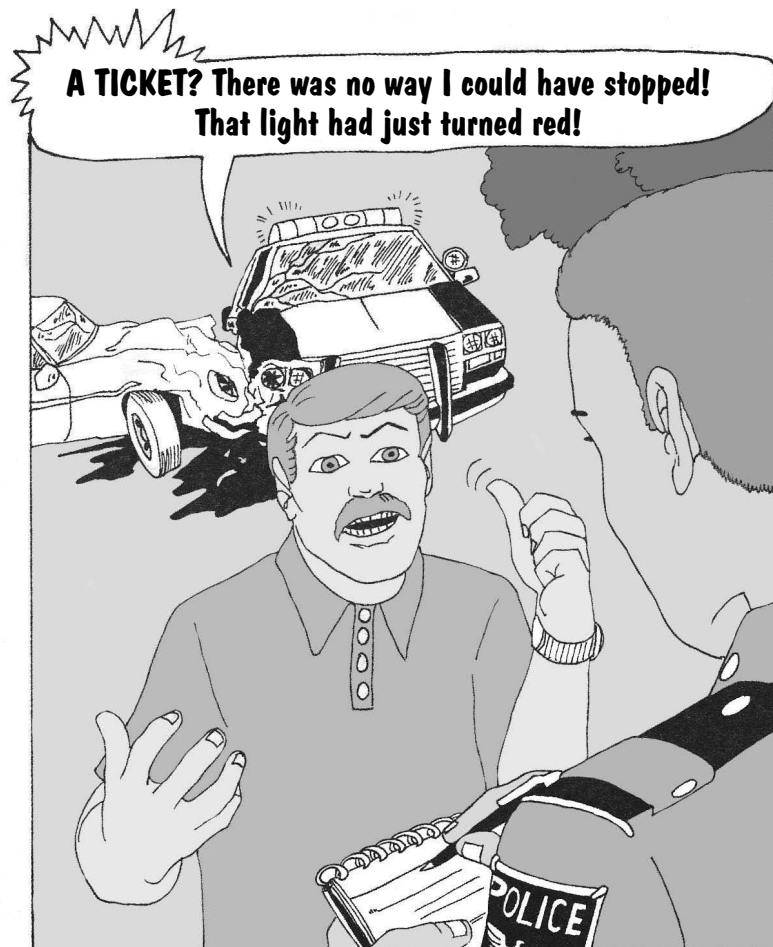
Sadly, this is the case for many children in our society. Because significant people in

their lives fail to be responsible, children are left without a home and all other necessities of life.

When people fail to take their duties and obligations seriously, they are called **irresponsible**. Irresponsible people tend to ignore their duties or fool around, rather than work hard to fulfill their obligations. They are more likely to act first and think later. They either do not take the time to consider the consequences of their actions or they have a nonchalant, “it doesn’t really matter,” attitude. As a result, they can cause undue stress and frustration, as well as harm to themselves or others.

For example, every time you go for a drive your safety depends upon the responsibility of all drivers. Every day, thousands of people die or are injured in accidents because someone failed to stop at a red light, drove while under the influence of alcohol, or went over the speed limit. People also die or are injured because they do not take responsibility for themselves and fail to wear safety belts.

There are many examples in our society of people who endanger their lives or the lives of others because of their irresponsible actions.



## Understanding The Main Point

Read the articles and answer the questions that follow.

### Article I

#### American West Fires Pilots Accused of Drinking

PHOENIX, Arizona (CNN)—American West Airlines sent termination letters Tuesday to two pilots police say failed Breathalyzer tests as they prepared to fly a jet full of passengers Monday morning, a company spokesman said....

A screener tried to stop the two pilots as they were boarding the plane, but they ignored the screener and boarded the plane to fly anyway. By the time police arrived the two pilots had already taxied off the runway. The police had to contact the Miami Airport Control Tower, which ordered the aircraft to return to the gate.

The pilots, Floyd and Hughes, both had blood-alcohol levels, which exceeded the legal limit in Florida for operating an automobile. In addition to this, the company, American West, has a zero-tolerance policy that does not allow any alcohol use by pilots within 12 hours of a flight. Floyd and Hughes were charged with operating an aircraft and driving under the influence... They were taken to a jail, booked and later released on bond.

<http://www.cnn.com/2002/US/07/02/american.west.dui/>

1. How were the pilots' actions irresponsible? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(The pilots attempted to fly a plane even though they were under the influence of alcohol, which violated company policy.)* \_\_\_\_\_
2. If the pilots had not been stopped and had flown the plane, what do you think could have occurred? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(The plane could have crashed and many people could have been seriously hurt or killed.)* \_\_\_\_\_

### Article II

#### Woman Charged With Abuse In Home Fire - Death of Boy Nephew was left alone so she could make crack sale, Detroit police say.

By David G. Grant/The Detroit News

Detroit—A woman accused of leaving her 7-year-old nephew home alone at 2 a.m. so she could sell crack cocaine was charged Thursday with second-degree child abuse in her ward's death.

Shirley Lippett's nephew, Gary Young, perished in a fire in their frame home April 30...witnesses told police that Lippett, 52, and her 37-year old boyfriend, left the boy alone in the house. While she was gone, a fire started at an electrical outlet and swept through the home, trapping Gary inside.

When Lippett arrived at home, she found it gutted by the fire and her nephew had already died on the front lawn where medical technicians were unable to revive him...



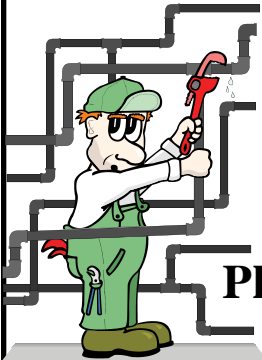
<http://www.detnews.com/2003/metro/0305/09/b02-159797.htm>

1. How were Shirley Lippett's actions irresponsible? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(She left her 7-year-old nephew home alone.)* \_\_\_\_\_
2. What occurred because of her irresponsible behavior? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Her nephew died in a fire and she was charged with second degree child abuse.)* \_\_\_\_\_

After reading the previous articles, it is clear to see that if even one person fails to act responsibly, the results can be disastrous. Without the positive character trait of responsibility, lives can be lost, people can be abused, and confidence in others will become nonexistent.

## Critical Thinking

Listed in the chart below are three occupations. **In the first column, list some of the responsibilities for each. In the second column list what could occur if that person was irresponsible.**

Job	Column I	Column II
 <p><b>Fire Fighter</b></p>	<p><i>Some of the responsibilities for fire fighters include putting out fires, rescuing people trapped in burning buildings, and assisting paramedics at accident sites.</i></p>	<p><i>If a fire fighter was irresponsible, someone could get hurt or even die. Homes could be completely consumed by fires which could spread to nearby houses, wiping out entire neighborhoods.</i></p>
 <p><b>Teacher</b></p>	<p><i>Some of the responsibilities for teachers include being on time and providing an atmosphere of learning and caring for students. They are responsible to fulfill lesson plans and offer every student the opportunity to learn, grow and succeed.</i></p>	<p><i>If a teacher was irresponsible, students could be left without proper care or supervision. Students could slip through the system without receiving proper education, hurting their opportunities at future careers.</i></p>
 <p><b>Plumber</b></p>	<p><i>Some of the responsibilities for plumbers include installing and fixing sinks, faucets, water lines and drainpipes. They also help design and install pipes so that a building's water system works effectively and efficiently.</i></p>	<p><i>If a plumber was irresponsible, pipes could be poorly designed or repaired. This could lead to leaks which could flood homes or destroy property. Without working plumbing, we could not shower, bathe or even use the bathroom.</i></p>

# Shared Responsibilities

**A**lthough we have different responsibilities, if everyone fulfills their duties as they are instructed, we could create a world where we can rely on and trust others. Of course, some people have more responsibilities than others. A man with a family will have more responsibilities than his teenage son. A President will have the responsibility of taking care of his own family as well as the citizens of his country.

Regardless of how varied our duties are, there are some responsibilities that should be shared by all.

► **We are morally responsible to each other.** A moral person is able to choose between right and wrong and is respectful of others. He would never intentionally hurt others or steal from them. When we lack moral responsibility toward each other, society suffers. This is apparent by the high rate of crime, violence and war within our world. By being morally responsible to each other, we can avoid the hatred and hostilities that lead to violence and war. Treating each other with respect, by not being verbally or physically abusive, are examples of being morally responsible.

► **We are responsible for our environment.** This is the only planet in the universe that we can live on at this time. We rely on our planet Earth to sustain our lives. Yet, everyday, we deplete the earth of its natural resources and pollute the air, land, and seas. Even our food sources are polluted at this time. Food and water contaminated by pollution have been known to cause serious diseases within the human body. It is up to everyone to take responsibility for preserving and caring for our planet's natural resources.



# How Is Responsibility Learned?



Now that you know how important being responsible is, how is responsibility learned? Responsibility is a trait that is developed. What you have been taught in regards to how you treat others, how you treat possessions, how you work, and even how you play help you to develop the character trait of responsibility. In other words, you have to be taught to be responsible in everything you do.

Your first lessons in learning to be responsible most likely came from your parents or guardians. For

example, a three-year-old child may be responsible for picking toys off the floor and putting books back on a shelf. However, that same three year old would not be responsible for taking out the garbage, or washing the dishes. These responsibilities would be assigned to someone who is older.

When you begin your school years, you learn to be responsible when asked to erase the chalkboard, distribute students' workbooks, and so on. As you grow older, responsibilities will develop with you. Sooner or later, you will obtain a part-time job and you will learn responsibility there, as you perform the roles or tasks that the job entails.

Two very important aspects of learning to be responsible are to always follow the instructions given precisely and to bear in mind the importance of the duty that you are responsible for.

Were you taught how to wash dishes? Did you know that if they are not rinsed properly, removing all food particles, the stale food left on them can grow bacteria that sometimes cause food poisoning? Therefore, pay close attention as you learn your duties and do them to the best of your ability.



a. List some things you are responsible for \_\_\_\_\_

*(Answers may vary, but should include: getting up in the morning on time, doing chores, completing homework assignments, not being late for appointments.)*

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b. How do you think you were taught to be responsible for these duties?

*(Answers may vary, but should include: your parents set an example before you in the things they are responsible for. They also taught you by giving you tasks, giving you certain deadlines to work with and specific times to do chores.)*

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c. What would occur if you chose to be irresponsible and leave your duties undone? \_\_\_\_\_

*(Answers may vary, but should include: someone else would have to do them or you would suffer the consequences for not completing your tasks, such as a low grade, being late for an appointment, or being grounded.)*

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# THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF RESPONSIBILITY

If you listed chores, homework, or even taking care of a pet as some of your responsibilities, then you are right on target. All of these responsibilities are age appropriate. In other words, you have both the mental and physical capabilities of successfully completing these tasks. Being responsible however, does not mean only completing the tasks. It also includes:

- ✓ Completing the task within the given time.
- ✓ Having a positive attitude.
- ✓ Doing it as you are instructed.

For example, you are responsible for completing your homework and turning it in the next day. What would occur if you turned in your assignment three days late, with grape juice spilled on it, and most of it wrong, because you didn't take the time to do it right? The likelihood is that you would get a poor grade and a lecture about doing your assignments correctly, neatly and on time.

**Here is a list of some Do's and Don'ts of responsibility**

## DO'S

**1. Do have a positive attitude about your duties.** A positive attitude towards your duties shows maturity on your part. Instead of looking at chores as a waste of time or a drudgery, be glad that you are given an opportunity to contribute to your household. By doing your chores, you help your family members. Doing homework or class projects is your opportunity to learn and increase your knowledge.

*Knowledge is power.*

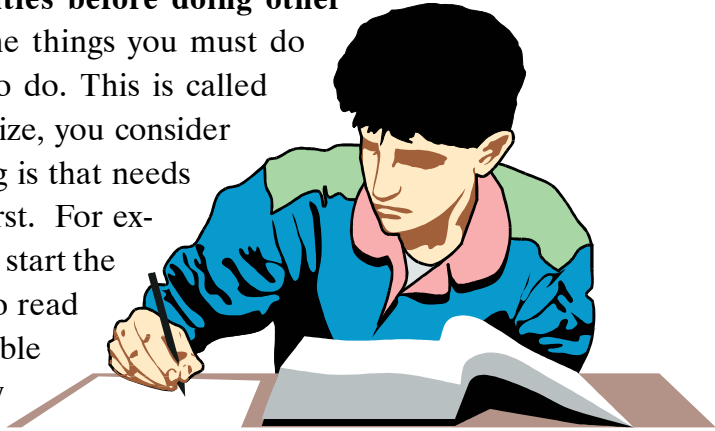
**2. Do make every effort to do exactly what you have been instructed to do.** A responsible person will do everything within his power to do exactly as he has been instructed. Knowing that you did what you were told will give you a sense of accomplishment. So the next time you clean



your room, don't throw your clothes under the bed or hide a pile of miscellaneous junk in the closet, make every effort to do your duties right the first time. By not having to re-do your work you will save a lot of time and frustration for yourself and others.

*If you have to do it, then do it right.*

**3. Do put your responsibilities before doing other things.** In other words, do the things you must do before the things you want to do. This is called prioritizing. When you prioritize, you consider what the most important thing is that needs to be done and you do that first. For example, your mother asks you to start the laundry, but you really want to read your new book. The responsible person would start the laundry first, then read the book.



*Life is more than doing only what you want to do.*

*Life is also about doing what you need to do.*

**4. Do your best work regardless of who you are doing it for.** For example, you do great work for your teacher, but when there is a substitute you goof off and hand in poor work. Or, you may be quick to do something your aunt asks you to do, but refuse to do the same for your uncle. A responsible person would do his best all the time. It shouldn't matter if you are doing it for someone who is important to you or not.

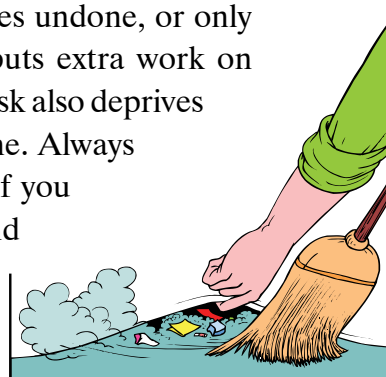
*Responsibility is doing what you know you should do, even when no one is there watching over your shoulder and telling you what to do.*

**5. Do take any assignment or duty you are given seriously and complete what you start.** Your responsibilities are important for your growth and development. Learning to follow through on tasks is the mark of a responsible person. Although it may be hard to believe, taking out the garbage, making the bed, mowing the lawn, and completing school assignments are preparing you for the future. People who learn the value of responsibility as children grow up to be responsible adults.

# DON'TS

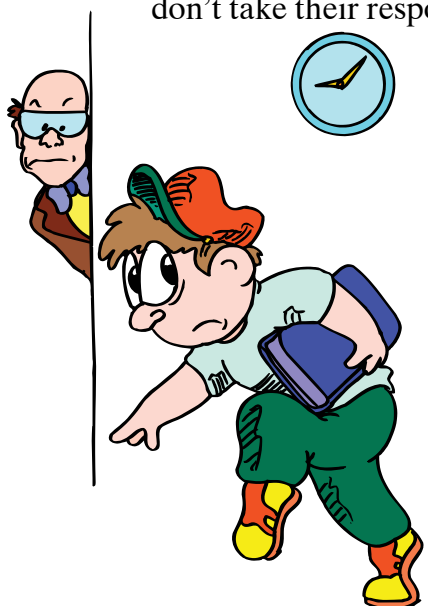
**1. Don't approach your responsibilities with a negative attitude.** A person who argues and fusses about doing chores or other duties lacks the maturity to see the value in contributing to the family's well-being. Someone who complains about doing schoolwork lacks understanding of the value of education. People who complain about their responsibilities make life unpleasant for others and for themselves. For example, you are asked to supervise your younger brother for a short time, but since you had other plans, you began to argue and complain about always being the one to look after your younger brother. By arguing and complaining you can upset your mother and you could also make your younger brother feel that you don't care about him.

**2. Don't do your duties halfway.** Leaving your duties undone, or only partially done, makes things harder on others; it puts extra work on someone else. Someone who does not complete his task also deprives himself of knowing the satisfaction of a job well done. Always take the time to recheck your work. For example, if you are writing a book report, proofread it before you hand it in. If you are cleaning your room, give it one last glance to make sure nothing has been overlooked before you say you are done.



**3. Don't procrastinate.** When you procrastinate you ignore or put off doing your responsibilities to do other things. People who procrastinate don't take their responsibilities seriously. For example, Sam had a book

report due in two weeks. If he was responsible and took his duties seriously he would have set aside a certain amount of time everyday to work on his report. Instead, Sam watched TV and played video games. He kept telling himself that he would start his report the next day. But everyday he would find something else to do instead. The night before the report was due, Sam finally sat down to read his book. He handed in poor work and received a failing grade.



# A Is For Accountability

Another aspect of a responsible character is *the willingness to answer for your choices and behavior*. This is called **accountability**. People who are accountable accept the consequences of their actions and learn from the choices they have made. People who are not accountable for their actions blame others for the choices they have made and make excuses for their actions.

**Read the following scenario to determine if Jenny was accountable for her actions. Then answer the questions that follow.**

Jenny had looked forward to the big field trip for several months. The night before the field trip, Jenny stayed up late watching a movie. The morning of the field trip, Jenny did not get up when her alarm went off, but kept hitting the snooze button. By the time she finally got up, she was half an hour late. Rushing, Jenny made it out the door just in time to miss the bus.



Jenny was mad, “That stupid bus driver, I’m sure he saw me. Jenny began to jog the quarter of a mile to school, and got there just in time to find out she had just missed the bus for the field trip. Her class had boarded the bus at the scheduled time and left. “I can’t believe those people left me. Not even my best friend waited for me,” said Jenny. “Everyone is so lame. I would have waited for them.”

Jenny was mad at everyone for the rest of the day. She even received a conduct form to take home because she had a bad attitude with her teachers.

1. Was Jenny responsible? Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_  
*(No, she should have put off watching the movie so she could get to bed on time.)*

2. Did Jenny accept responsibility for her actions? Explain your answer.  
*(No, she never admitted that it was her fault that she was late and missed the field trip.)*

Accepting responsibility for your actions means being honest with yourself and admitting that you are wrong. When you admit that you are wrong you give yourself an opportunity to change, mature, and grow; otherwise, you will continue to make the same poor choices over and over again. People who choose not to be accountable make excuses for their actions or shift the blame onto someone else.

## STRAIGHT TALK

Trying to hide that you have made a bad choice by blaming someone else is not going to change what you have done. Oftentimes, other



people can see that you are the one at fault, so, the only person you deceive is yourself. Although it is not easy to admit you have made a bad choice, it can be done. If you want to build a responsible character, it must be done.

So, the next time you make a bad decision, don't blame someone else. Be honest, courageous, and admit your mistake. Learn from it and be determined not to make the same mistake again.

**On the lines below rewrite the scenario on page 14. Make Jenny responsible and accountable for her actions.**

Jenny had looked forward to the big field trip for several months. The night before the field trip (Jenny really wanted to watch a movie, but knew if she did, she would get to bed late, so she recorded it to watch at a later date. She set her alarm early so she would have plenty of time in the morning and not be rushed. When the alarm sounded, she bounced out of bed, feeling refreshed. She ate breakfast and was ready for the bus. She was the first one off the bus at school and prepared herself in the classroom for the day's events. When the teacher asked everyone to line up for the field trip, Jenny was prepared and ready.)

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## **BEING RESPONSIBLE**

Today was the first day of school for the new year. Abby and her friends had now moved up to Junior High School. Abby called her friend Brenda and asked, “Hi Brenda. Do you want to walk to school together with Amy and me?”

“Sure,” Brenda replied. “Let’s stop at the corner store on the way. I want to pick up a drink for lunch.”

“That sounds great,” answered Abby. “I’ll see you in about 30 minutes at our usual spot.” Abby hung up the phone and went downstairs to get ready to leave.

“Mom, I’m almost ready to leave. Have a nice day,” said Abby.

Her mother, Mrs. Frost, replied, “Abby, don’t forget to pick up your little brother on the way home. Today is his first day of school. I’m going to take him this morning, but I need you to pick him up this afternoon.”

“Thanks for the reminder,” said Abby. “I’ll remember.”

Abby met up with her friends, and they walked to school together. Junior High School was going to be great. Abby asked her friends excitedly, “Are you nervous at all about Junior High? I am.”

Amy and Brenda both replied that they were a little nervous as well. Amy suggested, “Let’s meet for lunch.”

Brenda replied, “That sounds great to me. We can compare schedules and see how close our lockers are.”

There was so much to see and do at the school. It was hard to keep up with it all. There was a new locker number and combination to memorize plus the new school schedule. There were so many after-school activities to choose from.

When they met at lunch, Abby exclaimed, “Wow, this is so cool! I can’t decide which after-school activities I want to join. There’s the debate team, the chess club, the school newspaper, the science club and the choir.”

“I know,” Amy agreed, “Junior High School is sure different from the baby grades. I’m loving it.”

Brenda added, “Yeah it’s great, but I hear you get a lot more homework in Junior High. I think I’m going to join the choir. You know how I like to sing.”

Abby said, “I definitely want to join the school newspaper. They announced they’re having a short meeting today right after school.”

Brenda and Amy both agreed that they wanted to attend that meeting as well. Lunch was soon over and the girls decided to meet after school in the rotunda to attend the meeting together.

Mrs. Baker called the meeting to order. She said, “Welcome, if this is your first year with us, you are in for a treat. This year we’re planning on putting out a bi-weekly newspaper. The making of a newspaper involves many different positions. We will need writers, photographers, interviewers, and people who want to typeset the newspaper. Think about what you’d like to do and be ready to answer when we have our next meeting two days from now. Let’s meet here again right after school.”

Abby, Amy and Brenda were so excited. Amy exclaimed, “I’m going to sign up for one of the photographer’s positions. You know how I love to take pictures.”

“Yeah,” Brenda added, “we know. You’ve taken some funny ones of us. I’m going to sign up to help with the writing. Someday I want to be an author.”

Abby considered for a moment and said, “I’m going to sign up to typeset. Computers are an interesting challenge to me.”

Soon they were at the corner, and they split up to go home. Abby told the girls, “I’ll call you later. I’ve got some homework already, and I’ve got to cover all my books by tomorrow.”

The girls agreed and parted company. When Abby got home, she opened the door and called out, “Hi, Mom, I’m home.”

“Hi dear,” replied her mother. Abby’s mother’s face changed as she entered the kitchen. She entered with a smile and the smile quickly changed to a concerned look. “Where’s your brother?” she asked.

Abby exclaimed “Oh, no! I forgot all about him.”

“Abby, how could you?” her mother asked firmly. “I hope he’s still at the school and not trying to walk home by himself. I’m going to call the school.” Abby’s mother called the school, “Hello Mrs. Prince, this is Mrs. Frost, is my son, Eddy still there?”

“I haven’t seen him,” Mrs. Prince replied. “He didn’t come to the office. I’ll talk to his teacher and call you right back.” Mrs. Prince called right back and reported, “His teacher said he wasn’t there. She thought he had been picked up.”

“Thank you Mrs. Prince,” said Mrs. Frost. “I don’t know where he could be.”

Just then there was a knock on the door. Abby said, “I’ll get it.”

Abby opened the door and saw her little brother accompanied by a policewoman. Her eyes opened wide. “Mom! Eddy’s home with a policewoman.”

Mrs. Frost rushed to the door. “Hello, ma’am,” the officer said, “Is this your son?”

“Yes, officer,” replied Mrs. Frost relieved. “Eddy, are you okay?”

“I’m fine Mom,” replied Eddy.

“Ma’am, you sure have a smart boy there. We found him trying to walk home by himself. He didn’t know the way, but he knew his full name and address.”

“Mama,” exclaimed Eddy. “I got lost walking home, and I got to ride in a police car.”

“Thank you, officer,” said Abby’s mother. The policewoman nodded her head and left.

“Abby, we need to talk,” said her mother in a stern voice. “Let’s go to the livingroom to talk while Eddy has a cookie and some milk.”

Abby knew she had done wrong. The first thing she did was apologize. “I’m so sorry, Mom. I forgot completely about picking him up.”

“Abby, I understand,” sighed her mother. “However, think about what the consequences could have been if that officer had not found Eddy and brought him home. Eddy could have been kidnapped or even murdered. Being responsible means you are someone others can count on to fulfill your duties and obligations. Do you think that you were being responsible today?”

“No, Mom,” replied Abby. She hung her head in shame.

“Thankfully Eddy’s okay. I think you should apologize to him. Let’s go to the kitchen and join him. Then we can all have a cookie and milk, and we can talk about our day,” said her mother. She gave her daughter a quick hug.

“Thank you for being so understanding, Mom,” said Abby. “I learned a valuable lesson. I’m going to carry a small notebook so I won’t forget anything in the future.”

“That’s a great idea,” said her mother. “Now let’s go see your brother.”

## What I Have Learned

- I am being responsible when I can be depended upon to fulfill my duties and obligations as well as when I make choices that are positive.
- Being responsible is an important quality to have as part of my moral character development.
- When I fulfill my duties and I'm accountable for my actions, I gain the satisfaction of knowing that I have done exactly as I was instructed with a positive attitude.
- I can demonstrate responsibility by being accountable for my choices and actions.
- In some circumstances, my life and safety depend upon others taking their responsibilities seriously and fulfilling their obligations.
- When others do not act responsibly, the results can be tragic.
- It is very important that each individual take his or her responsibilities seriously.
- A responsible person is respected and appreciated by others for their dependability.
- A responsible person can be counted on to always do the best job possible.

**“A responsible attitude towards your duties and obligations gives you structure, strength, and backbone.”**  
**—The Peaceful Solution**

## Enrichment Activities

1. Interview a parent, teacher or principal. Ask what things they are responsible for. Ask how they view their responsibilities and what consequences would result if they were irresponsible.
2. Make a list of your daily responsibilities and how completing those tasks benefits you and others.
3. Complete the “**Just For Fun**” activity found on **page 20**.

# Just For Fun

Find the words from the word list in the puzzle below.

S	S	L	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>N</b>	T	N	D
R	Y	B	S	S	X	E	O	P	L	L	M	N	C	Y
T	R	M	O	<b>D</b>	L	N	M	B	J	<b>B</b>	<b>O</b>	W	<b>E</b>	T
B	R	E	L	<b>R</b>	L	O	<b>A</b>	Q	C	<b>I</b>	<b>R</b>	T	Y	<b>I</b>
Z	P	Z	J	<b>A</b>	I	<b>D</b>	A	N	T	<b>S</b>	<b>A</b>	W	A	<b>L</b>
L	K	U	T	<b>W</b>	<b>N</b>	Q	U	<b>C</b>	G	<b>N</b>	L	G	O	<b>I</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>O</b>	N	W	Q	<b>B</b>
E	X	S	<b>P</b>	<b>R</b>	N	<b>F</b>	O	T	Y	<b>P</b>	I	Y	N	<b>A</b>
C	A	<b>E</b>	B	S	<b>S</b>	X	<b>S</b>	P	R	<b>S</b>	I	C	B	<b>T</b>
Q	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	B	<b>I</b>	Y	<b>A</b>	S	H	P	<b>E</b>	H	G	M	<b>N</b>
G	N	<b>L</b>	T	K	<b>R</b>	E	G	R	Q	<b>R</b>	O	B	T	<b>Y</b>
Y	G	<b>A</b>	I	<b>C</b>	H	E	X	K	B	<b>R</b>	Y	P	P	<b>O</b>
Z	<b>S</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>O</b>	N	Q	<b>C</b>
C	R	<b>R</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>E</b>	U	<b>C</b>
K	<b>P</b>	O	<b>A</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>S</b>	H	O	<b>A</b>

## Word List

appreciation  
assignment  
dependable  
duty  
irresponsible

moral  
accomplish  
obligation  
procrastinate  
responsible

reward  
satisfaction  
value  
accountability

# Chapter Two

## Developing A Responsible Character

### Note To The Teacher

**I**t is one thing to tell children that they need to be more responsible. It is quite another thing to teach them, step by step, how to develop a responsible character. In this lesson, students will learn that becoming a responsible person does not occur overnight and is, in fact, a combination of several traits, such as self-discipline and determination.

Other concepts that will be covered in this lesson are:

- Developing responsibility begins with how we think about ourselves, others and our duties and obligations.
- Self-control and discipline are important parts of making responsible choices.
- Compassion plays a key role in being responsible towards others.
- Having a positive work ethic shows that you are accountable for your duties and obligations.

As educators, we know that simply instructing a child to read a book will not make the child capable of reading. We must teach a child to read step by step. In like manner, we must teach our children that there are specific traits and attitudes that they need to acquire if they are to develop responsible characters. Let us, through education, give our children the skills they need to become conscientious, caring, and hard working adults.



# Lesson Plan

## Developing A

### Responsible Character

#### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn that acquiring self-control, compassion and a positive work ethic will enable them to develop a responsible character.

#### MATERIALS

- Students' handbooks

#### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson, “**You Can Count On Me,**” by asking students the following questions:
  - a. What does it mean to be responsible? (*Being responsible means to fulfill your obligations to yourself and others and being accountable for your actions.*)
  - b. What are two responsibilities that all people must share? (*We must be morally responsible to each other and we must be responsible for our environment.*)
2. Inform students that today they will learn how to develop a responsible character. They will focus on how practicing self-control, having compassion for others, and consistently having a positive work ethic are important to the development of a positive character. Have students turn to **page 21** in the *Student's Handbook* and read the “**Introduction.**” Allow time for students to complete the “**Pop Quiz**” found on **page 22**. Explain that A and B answers are not choices that a responsible person would make. Emphasize that knowing which areas they need improvement is an excellent way to begin the process of developing responsibility as a character trait.
3. Explain to students that many people are responsible in some areas, but their goal should be to become consistently responsible

in all areas of their lives. Tell students that the deciding factor between a responsible and an irresponsible person is self-control. Refer students to the section “**S Is For Self-Control**” found on **pages 23-24**. Tell students that when they practice self-control, they can stop and think about the consequences of their actions, so that they can make responsible choices. Assign the “**Critical Thinking**” exercise on **page 24** as homework.

4. Explain that to become responsible in all areas, we must become aware of our thoughts and how they affect our choices and actions. Explain that because we sometimes make irresponsible choices when we are angry, we should be especially careful of angry, hostile, or violent thoughts. Have students complete the exercise on **page 28** and discuss why Scenario II exemplifies how practicing self-control can help us control our thoughts. Emphasize that anger without self-control can result in irresponsible and dangerous choices. Have students turn to **page 32** in their handbooks and read the section “**I Can Make Self-Control Part Of My Character.**” Explain that they can identify negative thoughts by determining if their thoughts are violent or angry. Thoughts can also be negative if they lack compassion or humility. Stress that negative thoughts can be directed towards themselves or others.

5. **Activity: Identify That Thought**—One at a time read the negative thoughts found on **page f** of the lesson plan in the *Teacher’s Manual*. Call on students to identify the thought as positive or negative. If the student identifies the thought as negative, have him talk about what consequences could result from acting upon that thought. He is then to replace the negative thought with a positive one. This is an excellent way for students to learn how to control their thoughts, so do as many as time permits.

6. Tell students that controlling their thoughts can also help them to become compassionate towards others. Explain that demonstrating compassion towards others is a responsibility that we all share. When we, as a society, lack compassion for others the result can be hatred, crime, and violence. Have students take turns reading the section, “**Compassion Is The Art Of Caring,**” found on **pages 33-34**. Allow time for them to do the exercise on **page 34**. Discuss their answers as a class. Stress the importance of using self-control to become aware of thoughts that could lead to a cold and uncaring attitude about others.

7. Tell students that the next factor in developing a responsible character is to have a positive work ethic. Have students take turns reading the section, “**Developing A Positive Work Ethic,**” on **pages 35-36** in their handbooks. Allow time for them to complete the exercise on **page 36**. Discuss their choices as a class. Emphasize that doing any task to the best of their ability saves time and energy and is the mark of a responsible person.

8. Conclude the lesson by re-emphasizing the importance of controlling their thoughts in order to make responsible choices. Have students read the section, “**What I Have Learned,**” found on **page 38**.

## Identify That Thought

Read each thought and have students identify if the thought is positive or negative. If negative, ask students what would be the consequences of thinking in that particular way. Ask students for examples of positive thoughts that can replace the negative thoughts. (Possible answers provided.)

THOUGHT	POSITIVE/NEGATIVE	CONSEQUENCES/ REWARDS	REPLACEMENT THOUGHTS
He/she is so stupid.	Negative	You can begin to devalue that person. You can begin to feel like he/she has nothing to contribute. You may tell others your opinion about that person and cause someone else to feel the same way.	Just because he does not know something does not mean he/she is stupid.
I hate myself. I'm always doing something stupid.	Negative	You can begin to form a low opinion of yourself. You can begin to not care about yourself.	I can learn from my mistakes and make better choices.
I'm glad I spoke to her. Although she is different from me, she seems like a great person.	Positive	You meet new and interesting people. Being accepting of others brings unity and peace.	N/A
After school I'm going to get even.	Negative	You could become violent and aggressive. Someone could be physically injured.	I will make an appointment to discuss this with our school counselor. Retaliating against people is a negative character trait.
I'm glad he fell. He deserves it.	Negative	By wanting someone to be hurt or injured, you show a lack of compassion.	I hope he's okay. Even though we are not getting along, he does not deserve to get hurt.
I can't believe the teacher picked her over me.	Negative	You could begin to feel resentful, hostile and jealous. This could lead to spreading rumors about that person, or treating her disrespectfully.	She deserves it, she works very hard. Maybe next time I will get picked. So what if I was not picked this time.

“Your thoughts become your words. Your words lead to your actions, and your actions define your character.”

# Chapter Two

## Developing A Responsible Character

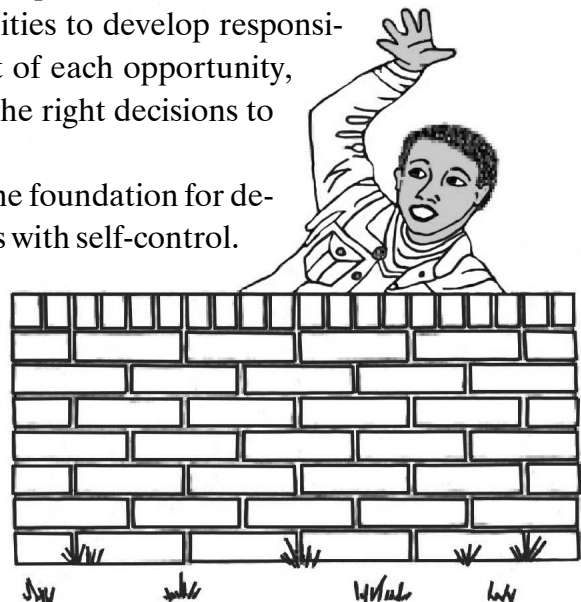
### Introduction

**D**eveloping the trait of responsibility is a process that occurs gradually. Each duty that you fulfill brings you one step closer to becoming responsible. In fact, becoming a responsible person can be compared to building a brick wall. The choices you make to do your chores, complete your homework, and take care of your pets are like bricks that build responsible character. Think about it: one brick alone can't form a wall. It takes many bricks, layered one on top of the other. In the same manner, one responsible act will not make you a responsible person. For example, if you completed your homework and cleaned your room only once a year, not only would you be in a lot of trouble and living in a pigsty, you would also be *irresponsible*. It takes repeatedly fulfilling your obligations and being accountable for your actions over a period of time before you can be considered responsible.

Every day, you will be given opportunities to develop responsibility. It is up to you to make the best of each opportunity, to have a positive attitude, and make the right decisions to fulfill your duties and obligations.

In this chapter, you will learn that the foundation for developing a responsible character begins with self-control.

You will also learn that by treating others with respect and compassion and consistently having a positive work ethic, you can begin the process of becoming a responsible person.



# Pop Quiz

Take the following quiz to determine if you are on your way to developing a responsible character.

1. I do my chores:
  - a. Only when there is someone to check-up on me.
  - b. If I think I'm going to get into trouble.
  - c. Because it is the right thing to do.
  
2. I do my homework:
  - a. When there's nothing great on TV.
  - b. If I remember.
  - c. Because education is important to me.
  
3. If my friends try to talk me into doing something wrong I would:
  - a. Go along with them, because they're my friends.
  - b. Pretend to agree with them so that they won't stop being friends with me.
  - c. Be truthful and say, "I'm not interested."
  
4. I do my best work:
  - a. If I'm getting paid for it.
  - b. If I'm doing it to impress someone.
  - c. Because it is the right thing to do.
  
5. I follow instructions:
  - a. If I like the person who is instructing me.
  - b. When I feel like it.
  - c. Because being obedient shows respect.
  
6. If I do not feel comfortable doing something I would:
  - a. Do it anyway in order to fit in.
  - b. Not do it, but pretend that I did.
  - c. Make a choice that will enable me to develop positive character.

So, how did you do? Any question you answered *A* or *B* indicates that you are *not* being responsible in those areas. Questions that you answered *C* show that you are demonstrating responsibility in those areas. Remember, a responsible character means being responsible in *all* areas. If you got all *C* answers, then, way to go! You are well on your way to becoming a responsible person. You recognize the value of completing your duties as you have been instructed and making moral choices that show respect for yourself and others. Keep up the great work.

## S Is For Self-Control

There are many factors that affect whether or not we choose to develop a responsible character. One of them is called self-control.



Self-control enables you to control thoughts, decisions, and behavior by weighing the consequences of your actions, then making a choice to be accountable and respectful toward others and yourself. Self-control is so important that it is the foundation of a positive character, because developing all other positive character traits, such as compassion, respect, and responsibility, rest upon our ability to control our thoughts and make wise decisions.

By practicing self-control, you can avoid making choices that you will regret or can cause harm to yourself or others. To develop self-control, you must stop before acting, think about the right thing to do, decide the best way to handle the situation, and the consequences or rewards that can result from the decision you make.

Were you ever asked to do something by a parent, teacher or employer, that you didn't want to do? How did you react? Did you think to yourself, "They're not being fair. This is dumb. Why do I have to do it?" Once those thoughts went through your mind, how did you respond? Did you get upset, roll your eyes, or refuse to obey? Did you consider that your parent, teacher, or employer has a right to ask you to complete a task? If you refused to obey (as long as the request was not morally wrong), then you weren't practicing self-control, because you didn't stop to think about the right way to handle the situation or consider the consequences of your actions.

**The bottom line is:  
A lack of self-control leads to irresponsible choices,  
which then leads to negative consequences.**

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## **Critical Thinking**

What are some of the consequences that could come from disrespecting and refusing to obey an authority figure? \_\_\_\_\_

*(Answers may vary, but should include: you could lose a privilege or receive a punishment. You could also lose the trust of the person in authority.)*

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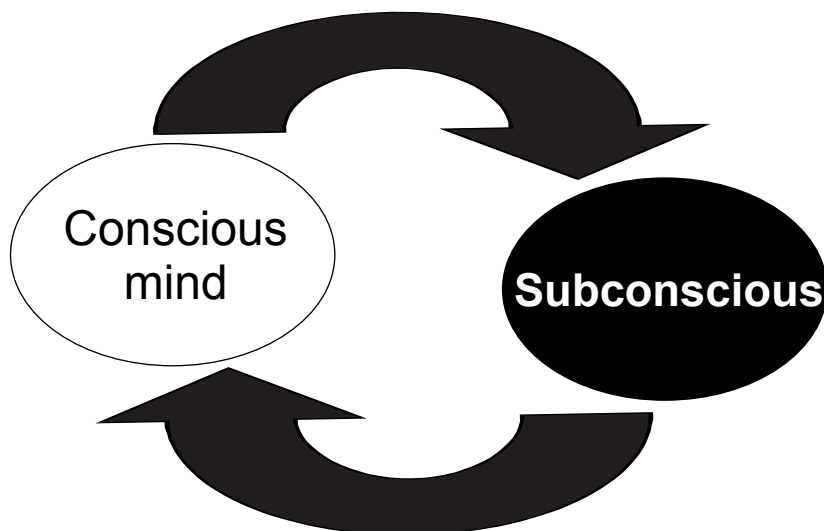
# Chew On This

**Every action, whether responsible or irresponsible, begins with a thought.**

That's right. Every action begins with a thought, sometimes even thoughts you are not aware of. Your mind is a powerful tool in shaping and developing your character. What you think about, whether positive or negative, will affect what you believe, value and ultimately, how you behave. In order to become a responsible person with positive character, you must become aware of how your thoughts affect your actions. Then, you must be willing to practice self-control to stop negative thoughts before they turn into negative actions, which can lead to negative consequences.

Have you ever thought about how your mind works and why you make the choices you make? If you have, then welcome to the club. How the brain functions, and why we think and behave the way we do, are questions that have baffled humankind for thousands of years.

The mind is divided into two parts, the conscious and the subconscious. The conscious mind is your reasoning mind. It enables you to make choices and decisions. What you think with your conscious mind feeds into your subconscious mind, whether positive or negative.



The subconscious mind often functions automatically. This means that you do not have to do anything for your subconscious mind to work, it functions simply because you are alive. Your heartbeat and your breathing are two of the functions that are controlled by your subconscious mind. If you had to consciously remember to breathe, you would probably forget, just like you forget where you left your books or your keys.

Although the conscious mind is capable of forgetting, the subconscious mind never forgets. It records every detail of everything you have ever seen or experienced, every conversation you have heard and every interaction you've had. Most of the information stored in your subconscious mind does not reach the conscious mind. However, the subconscious mind is so powerful, that even though you are not aware of it, it influences your behavior.

Throughout your life, you will make decisions that are based upon the information that is stored in your subconscious mind. As you grow and mature, the conscious mind acquires, through experience and training, the ability to reason and consider the consequences of your subconscious responses.

Here is a perfect example: Your classmate constantly picks on you. Even though you have asked him to stop, he persists. Finally, you become so frustrated and annoyed, you consider hitting him. That desire to hit him comes from your subconscious mind, because you, like most people, have internalized that violence is a way to solve a problem. Although it's not appropriate, subconsciously you see violence as a legitimate option for stopping him from picking on you.



When we stop and think about the best way to handle a situation, even when we are angry, we are practicing self-control. It takes careful consideration of what is morally right to avoid violence and aggression when we are angry. Controlling anger is an important part of developing the trait of responsibility, because even when we are angry we must be accountable for our actions.



Do you know that anger is normal? That's right. It is an emotion, much like joy and sadness. Just as people feel joy or sadness for different reasons, so too, do people become angry for different reasons. Do you know someone who has a short fuse? Does he/she get angry quickly and at almost anything?

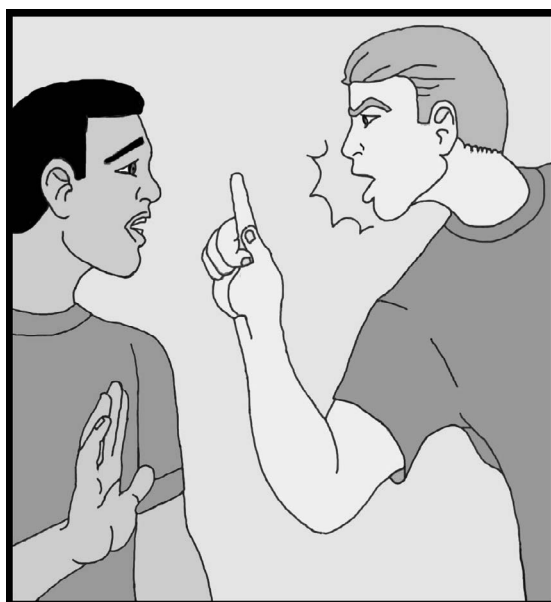
What about someone who hardly ever gets angry but when they do they become quiet and won't say a word to anyone. What about you? How do you behave when you become angry? Knowing how to control your anger so that you do not hurt yourself or others, or damage property is another way you can be responsible.



Although anger is normal, rage is not. **Rage** is *uncontrolled anger*. Rage can be damaging, even destructive.

Someone who hits, pushes, or yells at others has lost control of their anger and is in fact, enraged. If you cannot control your anger you are likely to hurt others or yourself. Being angry should never be an excuse to become verbally or physically aggressive, refuse to complete a task, or not do what you are told. Controlling your

anger, before it turns to rage or affects the way you treat others or the way you fulfill your obligations, begins by controlling your thoughts.



Read the following scenario and look at the pictures. Notice how thoughts can result in actions.

The hallway is crowded. John stepped on Rick's new shoes and did not apologize. Rick could choose to think:



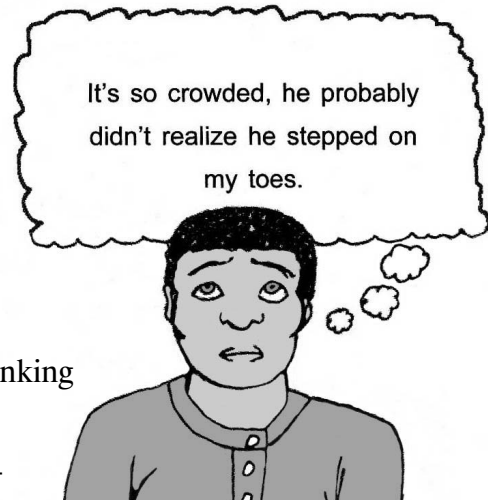
Both of these thoughts led to Rick's anger. What actions do you think can result from these thoughts?

(Answers will vary but may include: Rick might start yelling at John or even push John in the hallway. He might continue to dwell on his negative thoughts and seek revenge or retaliation.)

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Instead of choosing to think in a way that will fuel his anger and possibly lead to rage, Rick could think:



What actions do you think would result from thinking this thought?

(Answers will vary but may include: John would likely dismiss the incident and go on his way without giving it another thought.)

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It is up to you to become aware of your thoughts so that you can control anger, before it turns to rage. What we think about life's frustrations and how we choose to handle them can make the difference between developing a responsible or an irresponsible character.

# Here Are Some Simple Ways To Control Anger:

**1. Know your anger triggers**—Take the time to understand what triggers your anger. Do you get angry if you feel you are being treated unfairly? Do people taking your belongings without your permission make you angry? Do you find yourself arguing with people easily?

**2. Develop an anger management plan**—Once you become aware of your anger triggers, set up a plan to handle your anger before it gets out of control. An anger management plan is simply a way to diffuse your anger and to be responsible for your actions. Any great anger management plan will include using self-control. Below are some guidelines to help you design your own anger management plan. Remember, what works well for one person may not work for someone else. Find out what helps you control your anger and then make it a habit.

The first thing to do if you feel yourself getting angry is to:

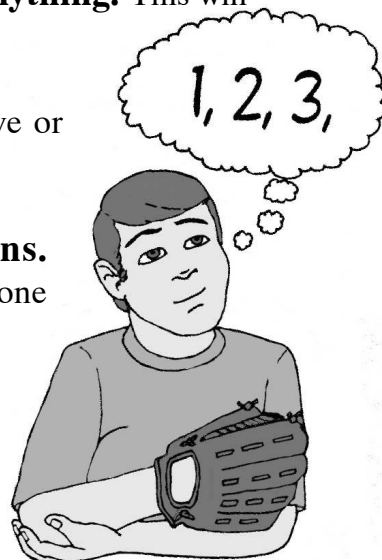
## **STOP** and **THINK**

And then...

► **Count to 10 or 20 before you say or do anything.** This will give you an opportunity to calm down.

► **Be aware of your thoughts.** Are they positive or negative?

► **Think of the consequences of your actions.** Acting on negative thoughts can result in you or someone else getting hurt.



When people do not control their thoughts or their anger the results can be deadly.

## **Family Killed Teen Suspected in 4 Slayings**

ADDY, Washington, Jan. 1—A 16-year-old boy was arrested after his parents and two siblings were found dead along a rural road near this small mountain community in northeast Washington.

Investigators said the bodies were covered with snow. All four, including the two siblings, ages 11 and 18, were believed to have been shot at their home on Dec. 23 and then taken to the nearby road in the family pickup, investigators said.

The sheriff's office said friends and family members notified authorities after the family had not been seen for five days.

### **Police: Anger and Arguments**

William L. Lembcke, 16, was booked in the Stevens County Jail on Saturday for the investigation of first-degree murder, Sheriff Craig Thayer said. A court appearance was scheduled for Tuesday.

The boy had a juvenile record, and the family had been having problems, Thayer said.

"It does appear there was some anger and some arguments that have occurred, not just recently, but over some period of time," he said.

### **Shocked, Concerned Neighbors**

Neighbor Lyla Richardson, who called the sheriff's office on Friday to ask deputies to check on the family, said she had been trying to call Robert Lembcke, 49, and his wife, Diana, 43, for several days after noticing one of their horses was loose.

"I'd see the lights come on, I'd call, and nobody would answer the phone," she said.

"It's a shock to me," said Earl Humbert, another neighbor. "Everybody kind of keeps to themselves up here, pretty much."

abcnews.com 1/1/01

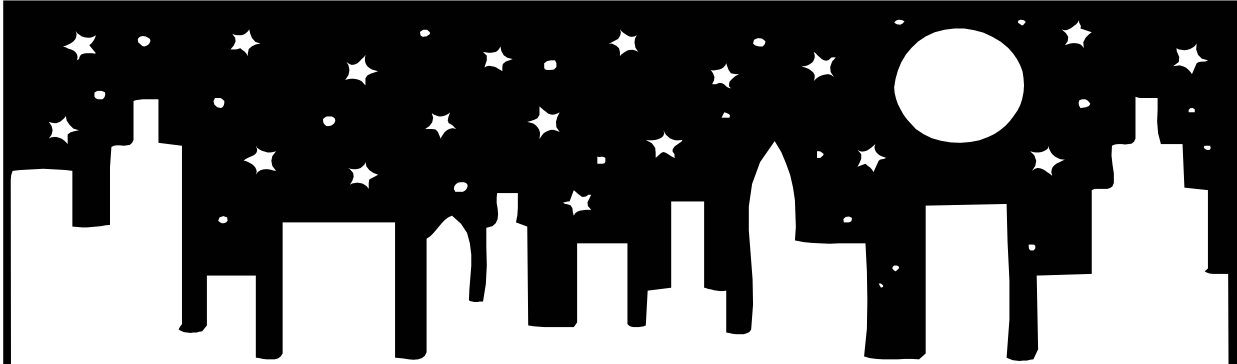
Because of a lack of self-control, four people are dead and a young man who should have been completing high school and looking to the future may instead be facing a life-term in prison.

**We have a responsibility to treat others with respect.**

**Being angry shouldn't change that.**

**The Peaceful Solution**

## Here's What It Boils Down To...



Anger is not a license to behave disrespectfully or violently. Control the tone of your voice so that you can speak in a respectful way and communicate appropriately. Never use physical aggression to handle your anger. We are the most intelligent life on planet Earth; surely we can find peaceful ways to handle our frustrations. Hurting others because we're angry is wrong.

Once you have dealt with anger in the right way, **let it go**. If you keep thinking about what made you angry, it will cause hate and hostility to build up and become part of your character. Keep in mind that an important part of developing a responsible character is controlling your thoughts so that you can be respectful, even when you get angry. No matter what someone does to you, learn to forgive and move on with life. Not everyone has learned how to practice the Peaceful Solution. And, let's be honest, we are all striving to improve our positive character development, so give each other room to grow.

# I Can Make Self-Control Part of My Character

Having self-control is an important part of developing a responsible character. By practicing self-control you can stop yourself from making choices that could lead to embarrassment, or harm to yourself or others.

Here are a few simple ways you can make self-control a part of your character:



- ① Beware of your thoughts, especially if you are angry or upset. Thoughts that are mean, hurtful or violent towards yourself or others are negative. When these thoughts go through your mind, it is time to practice self-control.
- ② Stop and consider how these thoughts could lead you to behave. Remember, thoughts lead to actions. For instance, violent thoughts can lead to physical aggression. A common form of physical aggression in schools is fighting. Fighting can lead to physical injury, suspension, or even expulsion.
- ③ Once you have evaluated your thoughts and considered your actions and their consequences, stop again, and start replacing those negative thoughts with positive ones. Instead of thinking about how much you dislike someone, think instead about his or her positive qualities. By controlling negative thoughts you can learn to make responsible choices.

# Compassion

## *Is The Art Of Caring*

**A**nother way you can make responsibility part of your character is to have compassion. Compassion is to care for others and to have a desire to relieve their suffering. This also involves controlling how you think. If you see someone in need, think about how you would want to be treated if you were in a similar situation.

**A NOTE OF CAUTION:** Having compassion for others does not mean putting yourself in danger to assist every stranger you meet. The truth is, people can be cruel and do take advantage of others. So always consider your safety first. Then, keep your eyes open for opportunities where you can safely assist someone else. For example, returning lost items to their owners or to the lost and found department is not only honest, but also compassionate. How would you feel if you lost one of your belongings? Would you want someone to return it to you?

Another way you can show compassion is by never intentionally causing harm to someone else. Pranks, like pulling a chair from under someone as he is about to sit down, as well as purposely tripping someone and causing him to fall, are unkind and cruel. They show a lack of compassion and are irresponsible acts that could result in someone getting seriously hurt.

You can also show compassion by being careful about how you speak to others. For example, you should never tease or make fun of others. Rather than use your words to bring someone down, you could say something kind. You could also take the time to encourage and motivate others if they are unsure of the right choice to make. For example, if a friend confides in you that he feels pressured to experiment with drugs, you can encourage him not to do anything that could negatively affect the outcome of his life. Then, encourage him to speak to his parents/guardians, teacher, or guidance counselor. Remember, having compassion is a form of interaction and all actions begin with a thought.

Read the beginning of the following scenario, which has two opposite endings. In the respective columns determine what positive or negative thoughts one must have in order to arrive at each conclusion.



At the mall, you see an elderly lady with several packages. Her hands are full and she is struggling to open the door and balance all of her packages at the same time. Suddenly, a strong gust of wind pulls the door from her hand. She trips and regains her balance but some of her packages fall.

Positive Thoughts	Negative Thoughts
<p><i>(“Oh no! That lady almost fell. She looks like she is having trouble.”)</i></p> <p><i>(You go to help her by opening the door for her. You could ask if she needs help picking up the packages that fell.)</i></p>	<p><i>(“Old people are so pathetic, she can’t even open the door.”)</i></p> <p><i>(You totally ignore her and go out another door leaving her struggling to keep the door open while the rest of her packages fall.)</i></p>

From this exercise, it should be clear to see that your thoughts affect your actions. Having positive thoughts about others means realizing that they, like you, are worthy of respect and consideration. Having compassion for others is a responsibility that all people should share.

“The quality of work you do and how you do it say a lot about your character.”

—The Peaceful Solution

## Developing A Positive Work Ethic

**H**ave you ever heard the saying: “If you’re going to do something, do it right”? What this means is that we should work up to our full potential and do everything to the best of our ability. This is called having a positive work ethic and it is another important part of developing a responsible character.

What are some of the chores or jobs that you are responsible for? How do you fulfill your duties? Do you consistently do your best, or do you do it halfway and without careful consideration for the quality of work that you are doing?



Believe it or not, how you fulfill your duties, whether responsibly or irresponsibly, results from how you think about your obligations. People who think that work is a waste of time, lame, boring, too hard, or that they have better things to do like talk on the phone or shoot some hoops, often do a poor or unsatisfactory job in fulfilling their duties. Because they do not see the value in completing all tasks, they pick and choose which ones are easiest and which ones they won't do.

To develop a positive work ethic, you must begin controlling your thoughts in regards to your duties and obligations. Instead of thinking that your chores and other obligations are boring, too hard, or a waste of time, consider how you can assist other family members by doing your part,

or further your education by completing your homework. By changing your thoughts and attitude about your duties, you can also have the personal satisfaction of knowing that you have done exactly as you have been instructed. Taking responsibility for the quality of work that you do means not just getting it done, but getting it done right, neatly, and within the required amount of time.

## Give 100% to whatever you have been assigned to do.

**Read the following scenarios and choose the answer that best demonstrates a positive work ethic.**

1. Sheila was failing math. She:
  - a. blamed her math teacher.
  - b. asked her teacher for extra help, because she did not understand the concepts.
  
2. Jeff was angry that he had to clean the garage by himself. Jeff thought that his brother should help.
  - a. Jeff kept thinking about how unfair it was. He swept the dirt in the corners, and threw items around the garage.
  - b. He controlled his anger and did a great job cleaning the garage, even though he had no help.
  
3. Valerie got a failing grade on her last book report. She didn't think it was fair. Now that a new book report is due, Valerie should:
  - a. not even bother doing it. After all she'll probably fail this one too.
  - b. carefully review the book report that she failed, so that she does not repeat the same mistakes and do her very best to get a passing grade.
  
4. Monica got home late from band practice. She missed supper, but her mother had set aside a plate of food for her. Monica ate and then looked at the sinkful of dishes; it was her night to wash them. Monica should:
  - a. tell her mother she shouldn't have to do the dishes because she didn't even get to eat with everyone else.
  - b. do the dishes.



## STRAIGHT TALK

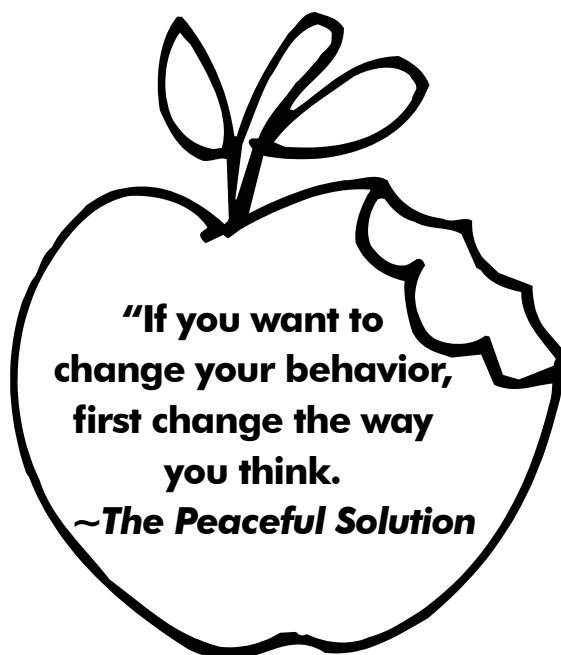
The next time you think a chore or assignment is boring or too hard, keep in mind that the purpose of chores is not to entertain you, but to prepare you for even greater responsibilities, such as living on your own and having your own family someday.

# HERE IT IS IN A NUTSHELL

**W**hen you stop to carefully consider your thoughts and actions and then make a positive decision to control your anger, treat others with compassion, and complete your duties as you've been instructed, you are developing a responsible character. Remember, you have to consistently make positive decisions, one situation at a time and one day at a time, in order to develop responsibility as a character trait. You have to consistently make right decisions until they become habit. Keep in mind that all decisions begin with your thoughts. If you are having a hard time controlling your thoughts and you find yourself focusing on the negative, start replacing those negative thoughts with positive ones. For example, you can change thoughts like, "Why should I do anything for anybody? Nobody does anything for me" to "I should treat others the way I want to be treated." Replacing negative thoughts with positive ones in order to make responsible decisions will not be easy at first, but don't give up. You can do it with patience and determination. Remember in the long run that you, and everyone who interacts with you, will benefit from the positive character that you have developed.

## What I Have Learned

- ☑ In order to develop a responsible character I must always be aware of my thoughts. I will ask myself: “Are they positive or negative, and how will they affect my actions?”
- ☑ I demonstrate that I am developing a responsible character when I use self-control to stop and replace any negative thoughts with positive ones.
- ☑ Positive thoughts lead to positive decisions, and this in turn, leads to positive actions.
- ☑ Negative thoughts can lead to rage and violence. I will pay attention to my thoughts and show respect when angry with someone.
- ☑ I show compassion when I am careful to never intentionally harm someone else, and I’m careful how I speak to others.
- ☑ I practice a positive work ethic when I control my thoughts in regards to my duties and obligations. I will strive to work up to my full potential and do everything exactly as I have been instructed.
- ☑ To develop a responsible character I must be aware of all my decisions regarding how I treat myself and others, and that I care about the quality of work I do.

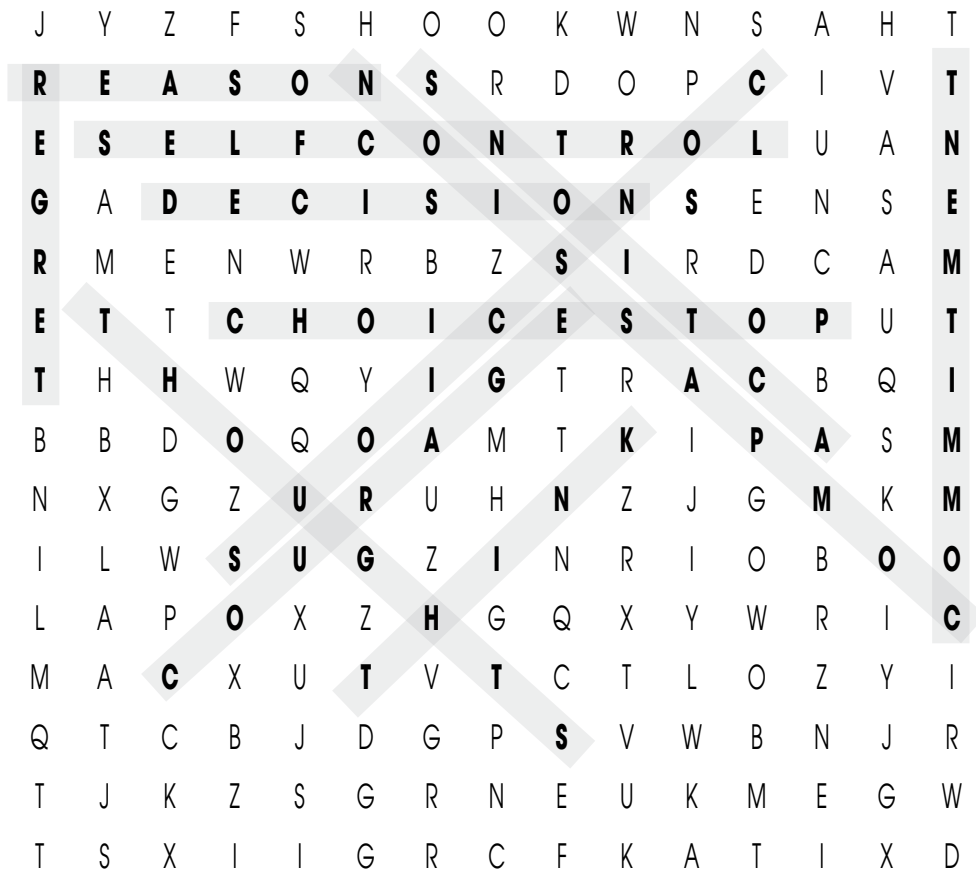


## Enrichment Activities

1. Keep a daily journal of your thoughts and whether they are positive or negative, the results of those thoughts, and what you could do to keep them more positive.
2. Do the “**Just For Fun**” activity found on page 40.

# Just For Fun

Find the words from the word list in the puzzle below.



## Word List

actions  
choices  
commitment  
compassion  
conscious

courage  
decisions  
reasons  
regret

self-control  
stop  
think  
thoughts

# Chapter Three

## I Have A Responsibility To Myself

### Note To The Teacher

As children grow older, it is normal to expect their responsibilities to increase. However, the trend seems to be spiraling downward because our youth lack the discipline needed to improve their sense of responsibility.

The goal of the *Peaceful Solution Character Education Incorporated* is to provide teachers with the necessary tools to help students develop self-discipline in all areas of their lives so they can become responsible citizens.

In this lesson students will learn:

- That they are responsible for the choices they make.
- That accepting correction from those in authority with a humble and positive attitude is a responsible choice.
- That responsible people will choose positive conformity to help them build a moral character.
- That being serious about their education is a responsible choice.

As educators, it is our duty to teach children how they can be responsible for themselves. By doing so, we give them the ability to make decisions that will not put their lives in danger, or compromise their moral character development.



# Lesson Plan

## I Have A Responsibility To Myself

### OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

Students will learn that they have a responsibility to themselves to make choices that will support the development of a positive moral character.

### MATERIALS

- ▶ *Teacher's Audio Lessons*
- ▶ CD player
- ▶ Paper bag
- ▶ Students' handbooks

### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson, **“Developing A Responsible Character,”** by asking the following questions:
  - a. What role does self-control play in the development of a responsible character? (*Self-control enables you to stop, think, and make the right choice to be responsible.*)
  - b. Name three ways we can develop a responsible character? (*By controlling our thoughts, having compassion for others, and developing positive work ethics.*)
  
2. Ask students, how can we be responsible for ourselves? Have students listen to the song, **“It’s Our Responsibility,”** from the *Teacher’s Audio Lessons* in order to discuss answers. The words to the song are on **page 41**. Explain that in this lesson they will explore several ways that they, as young adults, can be responsible for the choices they make. They will learn about the importance of accountability; accepting the decisions of those in authority; avoiding risky behavior, negative conformity, and peer pressure. Have students turn to and read the **“Introduction”**

and **“Adolescence—What Is It?”** found on pages 42-43 in their handbooks.

3. Tell students that they can avoid making many poor choices by listening to and accepting the decisions of those who are in authority and have their best interests at heart. Ask students, have you ever wanted to go somewhere or do something, but when you asked your parents/guardians, they told you “no”? If time permits, allow students to share some of their experiences. Explain that hearing the word “no” to our requests can be disappointing; however, it is also necessary for our positive growth and development. Have students do the section, **“No Is Okay,”** found on pages 44-46 for homework. Emphasize that most parents/guardians simply want to guide, protect and teach their children so that they will know the difference between right and wrong.

4. **Activity: “What Would You Say And Do?”**—Note: Prior to this lesson, copy the scenarios found on pages f-g of this lesson plan. Cut the scenarios apart and place them in a paper bag for each group to choose from. Instruct students to divide into four to six groups, depending on the size of the class. They are to brainstorm the scenarios and decide how they would handle the situation as the parents/guardians and how the child should respond. After each scenario, discuss the following:

- a. If the “parents/guardians” handled the situation appropriately.
- b. If the “child’s” response helped the situation or made it worse.

5. Tell students that in addition to being accountable for their actions and accepting “no” for an answer, they must also be aware of negative conformity and peer pressure. Have students turn to and read the section, **“The Ups and Downs of Conformity,”** found on pages 47-48. Allow students to complete the exercise on page 48. Discuss the similarities.

6. Ask students what negative peer pressure is. Accept as many answers as time permits. Explain that negative peer pressure is a form of conformity that can lead to dangerous and irresponsible choices. Stress the importance of making responsible choices to avoid risky behavior. Explain that just as there is negative peer pressure, there is also positive peer pressure. Tell students that learning to discern between the two will help them to make responsible choices about what they will or will not do for the sake of friendship. Assign pages 49-53 for homework.

7. Explain to students that they can also demonstrate a responsibility to themselves when they control their emotions. Although it is normal at their age to become interested in members of the opposite sex, premarital sex is a dangerous and irresponsible choice that results in many negative consequences. Assign **pages 54-57** for homework.

8. Remind students that earlier in this chapter, they learned that accepting the word “no” with a respectful and humble attitude is a responsible choice. Emphasize that when dealing with negative peer pressure, it is okay for them to say “no” to risky behavior and to anyone who would try to pressure them into making irresponsible choices. Have students read the section, **“You, Too, Can Say No,”** found on **page 58**.

9. Conclude the lesson by having students read the section, **“What I Have Learned,”** found on **page 60**. Encourage students to make responsible choices by accepting the guidance and correction of those in authority, resisting negative peer pressure, and controlling their emotions.

## Activity

# What Would You Say And Do?

1. Yvonne's friend called and said she was going to watch a documentary on AIDS at the library. She and some of their friends wanted Yvonne to go too. Yvonne knows you already have a planned family activity, but asks to go anyway.

- a. As the parents/guardians, what would you say; what would you do?
- b. As Yvonne, how would you respond?

2. Luke and his friends all decide to wear their clothes inside out to school. As he comes downstairs and greets his parents, they look up and are surprised. Luke acts as though nothing is wrong. Finally, his parents ask if he realizes his clothes are on inside out. Luke then lets them know what he and his friends planned to do.

- a. As the parents/guardians, what would you say; what would you do?
- b. As Luke, how would you respond?

3. Miranda's mother is putting away clean clothes in Miranda's room when she notices something unusual in a drawer. Upon further investigation, a bag with some drug paraphernalia and pot is found. Just then Miranda walks into the room with some friends.

- a. As the parent/guardian, what would you say; what would you do?
- b. As Miranda, how would you respond?

4. It was 10 o'clock at night and Justin was due home by 9:30. His cell phone had been called several times but it just went to voice mail. His friend's parents were called, but there was no answer. Justin walks in the door and goes straight to his room without saying a word.

- a. As the parents/guardians, what would you say; what would you do?
- b. As Justin, how would you respond?

5. Maria's father was at work, when the phone rang. It was the principal at Maria's school, reporting that she had been found smoking cigarettes behind the building at lunchtime with a group of friends. Maria's father was asked to come to the school to pick her up. Maria was sitting in a chair, head down, when he walked into the principal's office.

- a. As the parent/guardian, what would you say; what would you do?
- b. As Maria, how would you respond?

# Activity

## What Would You Say And Do?

### Answer Key

1. Yvonne’s friend called and said she was going to watch a documentary on AIDS at the library. She and some of their friends wanted Yvonne to go too. Yvonne knows you already have a planned family activity, but asks to go anyway.

a. As the parents/guardians, what would you say; what would you do? *(You would listen to Yvonne and then remind her of the planned family activity. You would help her to be responsible by requesting that she call her friends to let them know she wouldn’t be going. You could suggest that the next family outing could be to see the documentary together.)*

b. As Yvonne, how would you respond?  
*(You would accept your parents’ answer, call your friend back and tell her you won’t be able to go, but thank her for thinking of you, and then look forward to the activity, knowing you will get to see the documentary another time.)*

2. Luke and his friends all decide to wear their clothes inside out to school. As he comes downstairs and greets his parents, they look up and are surprised. Luke acts as though nothing is wrong. Finally, his parents ask if he realizes his clothes are on inside out. Luke then lets them know what he and his friends planned to do.

a. As the parents/guardians, what would you say; what would you do?  
*(You would ask if this was a planned school event, and then once you realize they are doing this on their own, you could ask how the principal and teachers would react to it, to get Luke thinking. You would help him to see that such a decision would cause problems and ask him to dress properly.)*

b. As Luke, how would you respond?  
*(You should be willing to see the problems that could arise from such an act and change clothes, thanking your parents/guardians for helping you make a right choice.)*

3. Miranda’s mother is putting away clean clothes in Miranda’s room when she notices something unusual in a drawer. Upon further investi-

gation, a bag with some drug paraphernalia and pot is found. Just then Miranda walks into the room with some friends.

a. As the parent/guardian, what would you say; what would you do? *(You would talk with Miranda and discuss the dangers of such risky behavior. You would research with her the harm that it can cause and brainstorm a plan to help her to overcome it.)*

b. As Miranda, how would you respond? *(You would appreciate that your parent/guardian did not just read you the riot act, but was willing to help you see the dangers involved and create an overcoming plan to stop the use of drugs. You would make every effort to stick with the plan and make better choices.)*

4. It was 10 o'clock at night and Justin was due home by 9:30. His cell phone had been called several times but it just went to voice mail. His friend's parents were called, but there was no answer. Justin walks in the door and goes straight to his room without saying a word.

a. As the parents/guardians, what would you say; what would you do? *(You would go to the bedroom and point out that Justin is home later than expected. You would allow him to explain. You would then discuss the importance of being responsible and making right choices. You would emphasize the importance of trust and the need to be accountable for being home on time or calling to let you know there is a delay. You would also point out that this is being respectful and that a proper greeting when entering the home is too. You would choose a consequence for Justin's behavior.)*

b. As Justin, how would you respond? *(You would apologize for not calling and not greeting your parents/guardians when you first came in. You would stop and think about your actions to see where you made a bad choice and make every effort to be more responsible in the future. You would accept the consequence with a positive attitude.)*

5. Maria's father was at work, when the phone rang. It was the principal at Maria's school, reporting that she had been found smoking cigarettes behind the building at lunchtime with a group of friends. Maria's father was asked to come to the school to pick her up. Maria was sitting in a chair, head down, when he walked into the principal's office

a. As the parent/guardian, what would you say; what would you do? *(You would discuss the situation with the principal and allow Maria to apologize for the inappropriate behavior. You would also apologize to the principal and take Maria home, discuss the situation and explain why it was a bad choice. You would find an appropriate consequence*

*for the behavior, such as writing a report on why cigarette smoking is not healthy, or the importance of respecting school rules. You would continue training your child to make more responsible choices.)*

b. *As Maria, how would you respond? (You would be very apologetic and humble. You would listen to what your father said without arguing, interrupting or blaming someone else for your choice to smoke. You should also accept the consequence and learn from it, so that you do not make the same irresponsible choice again.)*



## **It's Our Responsibility**

When you feel torn apart by decisions you must make,  
and it seems like problems get you down.

Take a minute to stop and think,  
that consequences of our actions come around.

Recognize that we ourselves can choose,  
the way we walk along life's path.

Never letting pressure or influential things,  
cause us to turn to anger, then to wrath.

### **CHORUS:**

It's our responsibility to make right choices,  
it's our responsibility to be steadfast.

We alone are held accountable for our actions,  
so take your time then think before you act.

Many times we see results of war,  
world news is always on TV.

Babies wandering 'round without their parents,  
all because we act impulsively.

Never knowing the consequences thereof,  
'til usually all is said and done.

Where will we be if we continue like this?  
Generations extinct, one by one.

### **CHORUS:**

It's our responsibility to make right choices,  
it's our responsibility to be steadfast.

We alone are held accountable for our actions,  
so take your time then think before you act.

Maybe we can do it, take your time do it right.

Realize that unity can be; let's not fight.

Diligent effort is what we need to make it right,  
Keeping true peace, as the goal in our sight.

### **CHORUS:**

It's our responsibility to make right choices,  
it's our responsibility to be steadfast.

We alone are held accountable for our actions,  
so take your time then think before you act.

“If we strive diligently to acquire a responsible character, we create the possibility of a world where everyone can be successful.”

—The Peaceful Solution

# Chapter Three

## I Have A Responsibility To Myself

### Introduction

**D**o you know that the choices you make today can affect your future? Responsible choices that uphold your positive growth and development will enable you to become a person of integrity. Irresponsible choices, on the other hand, will eventually lead to regrets. You are responsible for the choices you make, in regards to how you conduct your life and what you choose to conform to.

In the previous chapter, you learned about some of the basic ways you can develop a responsible character. In this chapter, you will learn that making moral choices, having self-respect, and avoiding risky behavior are ways that you can be responsible for your own health and well-being. The fact is, you cannot do whatever you want to do, and not suffer the consequences of your actions.

You have an obligation to yourself to continuously seek ways to develop and improve your character. To do this, you must be accountable for your actions, accept the advice of those in authority, and use self-control to make proper decisions. You must also be willing to follow the rules and guidelines that dictate morals and proper conduct. When you hold yourself to a high standard, you are being responsible for the gift of life you have been given.

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Life is fragile. Handle with care.

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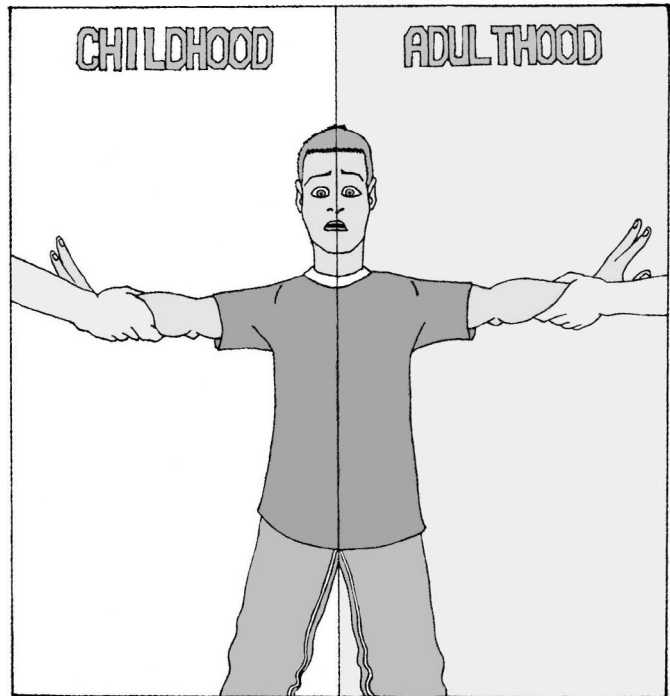
# Adolescence—What Is It?

Adolescence is that time period between childhood and adulthood that can be frustrating and wonderful all at the same time. Many teens complain of feeling as if they are being pulled in opposite directions. On one hand, they are told to act like adults; on the other hand, for their own safety and well-being, they must still be treated like children.

This is one of those ironic aspects of being an adolescent. Although you may not be old enough to be totally independent and make all of your own decisions, you are

old enough to be responsible for the decisions you *do* make, and to face the consequences or rewards. So, if you choose to act irresponsibly, then the choice is yours and you have no one else to blame but yourself.

Make every effort to use self-control to avoid risky behavior that could cause regret, danger to yourself and others, or embarrassment. Behavior such as experimenting with drugs, premarital sex, or criminal activities are irresponsible and can change your life for the worse.



## **A** **Hard Fact**

Nothing positive can come from engaging in risky behavior. Those who experiment with drugs or overindulge in alcohol to get high, always end up feeling low. Premarital sex can lead to a bad reputation, unwanted pregnancies, abortions and incurable diseases. As for taking part in criminal activities, the result can be juvenile detention and a possible permanent record.

Don't risk your health, safety and future just to try something new and be part of the in-crowd. Choose instead, to be responsible for your life by being accountable for your actions.

# NO IS OKAY

In addition to being accountable for your actions, you must also be humble and accept the correction and advice of your parents, teachers and other authority figures. By having the right attitude, you can give them an opportunity to help you make positive decisions. Believe it or not, most adults want to help you avoid the mistakes they have made, and the only way for them to do that is to teach, correct and guide you.

Although you are getting older and more independent, there is a lot you don't know, and that's okay. Learning is a lifelong process. To learn you must have teachers. Ordinarily, you wouldn't think your parents as being your teachers, but they are. In fact, your parents were your first and most influential teachers. Have you ever stopped to consider just how much they have taught you?



## Critical Thinking

What are some things your parents/guardians have taught you? \_\_\_\_\_

*(Answers may vary, but should include: how to cook, do laundry, clean the house, or mow the lawn.)*

\_\_\_\_\_

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Do you know what the whole purpose of being taught is? So that you can gain knowledge, grow up, become a successful adult, and contribute to society. Also, when you have a family of your own you will be able to care for and teach them. Although you are given some independence at this time, you must be willing to accept that your parents/guardians have a right to make some decisions for you, as well as decide how much independence you are allowed.

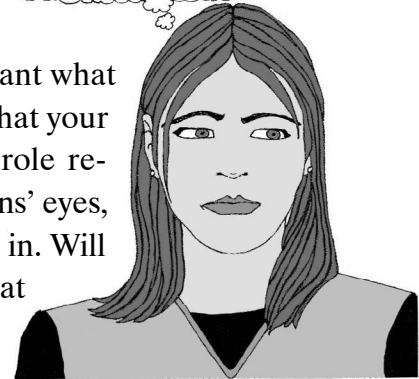
Ironically, just at the time when you feel you are ready to test your wings, your parents/guardians are saying, "Sorry, I can't let you fly yet." This difference of opinion is the foundation for many misunderstandings and arguments between adolescents and their parents/guardians. The truth is, the world can be a dangerous place. Because most of the world has not yet learned the Peaceful Solution, there are many people who commit crimes by raping, killing, and brutalizing young people. In

addition, there are also dangers associated with negative conformity and risk-taking behavior that includes experimenting with drugs and premarital sex.

Being responsible to yourself means being able to consider the viewpoints of those who care for and are in charge of you. What you may interpret as your parents/guardians “raining on your parade” is, instead, their love for you and their concern for your health and safety. Seeing another person’s viewpoint requires self-control. You have to stop, think, and then put yourself in their shoes.

*I wonder how I would feel or what I would say if I were in my mom’s shoes.*

Someday you, too, may be a parent and will want what is best for your children. In order to understand what your parents/guardians are going through, do a little role reversal. See yourself through your parents’/guardians’ eyes, and then consider the dangers of the world we live in. Will you feel comfortable sending your child out late at night, or to someone’s house who you know nothing about? Keep in mind if you are hanging out with the wrong group of people and they do something illegal, you will also suffer the consequences.



Most parents/guardians take their job of parenting very seriously. They want to protect their children from harm and danger. Of course, there are always exceptions to the rules. There are some parents/guardians who are negligent and abusive and do not give proper guidance to their children, but we will discuss this in the next section. Overall, parents/guardians are really not trying to cramp your style, keep you from growing up, or from having fun. They are just trying to teach and protect you so that someday when you become an adult and can make all of your own decisions, you’ll be able to make the right ones.

So, the next time you ask to stay out late or to go to someone’s house who your parents/guardians don’t know and they say, “no,” don’t get upset. And the next time you ask to attend an activity and your parents/guardians offer to chaperone, don’t get upset. Instead, be glad and appreciate that you have parents/guardians who care enough about you to take an interest in your life. Just remember, that although the word “no” can be disappointing, “no” is okay, especially when it is coming from those who are in charge of you and are protecting you so that you can grow to be healthy in mind and body.

**WARNING: DO NOT AVOID ASKING PERMISSION BECAUSE YOU MAY BE TOLD “NO”. MAKING CERTAIN DECISIONS ON YOUR OWN CAN HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.**



## What If I Live In A Family That Is Abusive?

When families do not function in a healthy way they are called **dysfunctional**. In a dysfunctional family, there might be verbal, physical or even sexual abuse. There might also be alcohol and drug abuse. If you, or someone you know, is living in an abusive home, then seek help from a trusted adult immediately. Encourage your friend to seek help. Do not keep physical, verbal, or sexual abuse a secret. Let someone know who can help you.

In a dysfunctional family, normal healthy interaction that should exist between children and parents/guardians is often strained or non-existent. Children find it difficult to have positive communication with their parents and may make many decisions on their own and without proper guidance. Sadly, the majority of pre-teens and teenagers who engage in risky behavior come from these types of homes.

Learning how to make responsible decisions is one way to stop the cycle of abuse. Regardless of what your circumstances are, you control what you think, your attitude and how you behave.

If you are in an abusive situation, it is normal to feel angry, scared, or alone. However, without getting help from a caring adult, you can end up feeling resentment towards those who are abusive. Remember, you have a choice. You can choose to hold on to resentment and allow that resentment to turn to hate and hostility, or you can choose to commit yourself to developing positive character, getting an education, achieving positive goals, and acquiring the skills and knowledge to make better decisions and someday provide a safe, healthy environment for your children.

For now, you can make responsible choices that may improve your situation. If you are in an abusive home, the first thing you should do is to get help immediately from a teacher, guidance counselor or even another family member who you trust. You must also always forgive. Forgiving may not be easy, but without this character trait, you can allow resentment to turn to hate. The emotion of hate can hinder your positive growth and development. Even if you do not have a supportive home, you now know through the *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* what is acceptable behavior and how to build a positive character.

### Answer true or false to the following statements.

- False 1. As a young adult, you do not need the advice of parents, guardians, or other authority figures.
- True 2. Parents/guardians are also your teachers.
- False 3. Parents and other authority figures just want to keep you from having fun.
- True 4. One way you can be responsible for yourself is to be humble and accept the advice and correction of those who care for you.
- True 5. If you are in an abusive home you can get help from a trusted adult. You must also learn to forgive.

# The Ups And Downs Of Conformity

Developing responsibility towards yourself also includes being aware of who your friends are and what you are willing to conform to. To **conform** is to *change your behavior and attitude to be in agreement with certain standards or customs*. For example, obeying the speed limit and other laws is a form of conformity, but so, too, are joining a gang and taking part in criminal activities. In other words, conformity can be either positive or negative.



Conformity is part of human nature and there are many examples of conformity within society. The clothing, music, and automotive industries, just to name a few, make billions of dollars each year because they market to our need to conform. They make it appear, through commercials and magazine ads, that everyone is buying a certain product, getting a certain hairstyle, and driving a certain car, and if you don't conform to these standards you'll stick out like a sore thumb.

## *Just what does negative conformity have to do with being responsible to myself?*

Sometimes our need to fit in and belong can lead to making choices that can result in regrets. Remember, some forms of conformity are negative. Negative conformity can be harmful, dangerous and even life threatening. One of the most common forms of negative conformity is called negative peer pressure.

Have you ever heard the saying, "You tell on yourself by the friends you keep?" Friends often have many shared character and personality traits and they take part in many of the same activities. Friends also have the greatest influence on each other in terms of what they will conform to. Oftentimes, you conform to a friend's choice in music, clothes, hairstyle, and mannerisms without realizing it.



Consider the following:

1. What type of music do you listen to? Do you prefer rock, rap, or alternative? How many of your friends enjoy the same music?

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2. What type of clothes do you wear? Do you prefer the gothic or grunge look, or maybe something more preppy or modest? How many of your friends wear the same type of clothes?

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3. What type of shoes do you wear? Do you prefer brand name sneakers, or platforms, or sandals? How many of your friends wear the same type of shoes?

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4. What do you do for fun? Do you prefer horseback riding, skiing, hiking, reading or swimming? How many of your friends do the same?

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5. What's the latest slang that you use? Do your friends use the same?

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Fashion trends and slang all begin with one person or one movie. After a while, others begin to adopt the same style and way of speaking. In other words, they begin to conform to that standard. Many of the standards that we choose to conform to are harmless. For example, the color blue might become popular for the season, so you and your friends buy blue shirts.

Conformity, in the form of peer pressure, is said to be negative when friends influence each other to make immoral choices. An **immoral choice** is *one that does not show respect for yourself, others, property, or the environment*.

Negative peer pressure can sometimes be very subtle. For example, a friend says to you, "You want a hit off this joint?" You say, "no," and your friend replies, "Come on, everybody is doing it." Notice, your friend did not tell you that you had to smoke, he simply implied that if you didn't smoke you would be different from everybody else.



On other occasions, peer pressure can be very bold. It can take the form of dares, teasing and harassment. Whether subtle or bold, negative peer pressure can lead to danger.

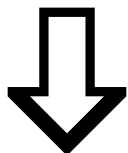
# Negative Peer Pressure Can Also Lead To Drug /Alcohol Abuse And Premarital Sex

Everyday thousands of young adults are pressured to drink alcohol in excess, try drugs, or engage in premarital sex. Here are a few facts:

- \* 48 percent of teens have used illegal drugs in their lifetime; 39 percent in the past year; 25 percent in the past 30 days.
- \* Within their lifetime, 40 percent of teens have used marijuana; 21 percent have used inhalants; 12 percent have used LSD; 11 percent have used methamphetamine; 10 percent used MDMA (Ecstasy).
- \* Approximately 3.3 million Americans, ages 12-26, are problem drinkers. Alcohol addiction can lead to poor performance and absenteeism in school. Drunkenness can lead to violence and other crimes such as stealing and robbery to buy more alcohol.
- \* Every 3 million teens—about 1 in 4 sexually experienced teens—acquire an STD. In a single act of sex with an infected partner, a teenage woman has a 1% risk of acquiring HIV, a 30% risk of getting genital herpes and a 50% risk of contracting gonorrhea.
- \* Up to 15% of sexually active teenage women have been found to be infected with the human papillomavirus, many with a strain of the virus linked to cervical cancer.
- \* 10-29% of sexually active teenage women and 10% of teenage men tested for STDs have been found to have chlamydia.
- \* Each year, almost 1 million teenage women become pregnant.

For many, abusing alcohol, trying drugs or engaging in premarital sex may not seem as dangerous as jumping off a bridge, but they can be. Alcohol and drug related deaths have occurred with children as young as twelve. Millions of teenagers are diagnosed with an STD or become pregnant every year. Don't think these things can't occur to you.

Of course, death is the ultimate consequence of risky behaviors, but there are others, such as stress, depression, brain damage, inability to achieve desired goals, and lifelong health problems.



It is up to you to draw the line on what you will or will not do for the sake of friendship. You shouldn't have to risk your self-respect, health or life to impress your friends, or fit in and feel accepted.

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## HERE'S THE BOTTOM LINE

If your friends are trying to talk you into doing anything that could cause harm to yourself or others, or if you are in a situation where everyone but you is making an immoral choice, you are faced with negative peer pressure. Keep in mind that just because you are being pressured, does not mean you don't have a choice. You can choose to be respectful of yourself, and responsible for the decisions you make, even when being negatively pressured.

## Let's Take A Closer Look...

If you are unable to decide if you are faced with negative conformity or peer pressure then ask yourself the following questions.

▼ Am I being asked to make an immoral choice? **Immoral** means *to go against what is right*. For example, a moral principle is not to steal. An immoral choice is to steal.

▼ Is this disrespectful to others or myself? **Disrespect** means *not showing care or concern*. For example, a disrespectful action would be to curse at an adult who is trying to correct you.

▼ Is this dangerous to me physically, mentally or emotionally? Anything that can knowingly cause harm to yourself or others should be avoided. For example, if someone dares you to try a sexual act with them, just say, "No way." You don't have to prove anything to anybody.

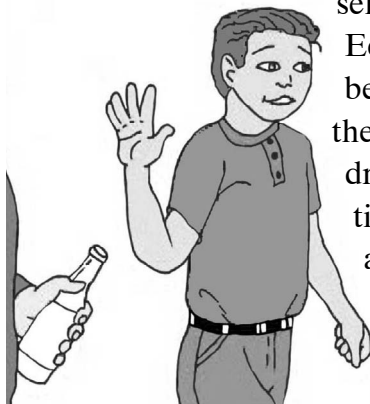
▼ Will this cause shame or embarrassment to the people who care about me? If you know that your parents/guardians would tell you "no" if you were to ask their permission to do something, then don't do it behind their

backs. For example, what would your parents/guardians say if you were to ask permission to cut class to go to the mall?

▼ Will this cause me any regrets? Just one bad choice can change your life forever. Avoid acting **impulsively**, that is, *without thought of the consequences*. Don't just do something because everyone else is doing it. Stop and think about how your life, future, and goals will be affected.

▼ Can this result in harm or death, to me or someone else? Right now, you are in the prime of your life; you are young and full of energy, but you are *not* invincible. If you purposely risk your life, you can die just like anybody else. Don't risk your life by experimenting with drugs. If your friend is doing it, beg him or her to stop, then let an adult know. Remember, life is a gift; treat it with care.

If you can answer "yes" to any of these questions, then you are faced with negative conformity. In which case, turn around and walk away. You are responsible for the decisions you make. You don't have to be like everyone else, when everyone else is making the wrong choices. You can choose to have



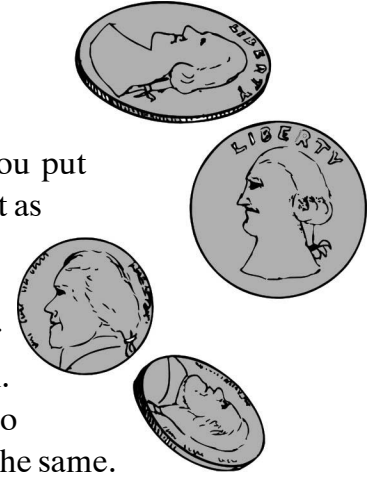
self-control, self-respect and to be responsible for your life. Educate yourself on the dangers of these risky behaviors, because although it is rare for someone to die the first time they try a drug or huff something, it does occur, and some drugs are so addictive that people get hooked the very first time they try them. It only takes one sexual act to contract a disease or lead to an unwanted pregnancy. Don't let this occur to you! Determine in your mind to never let anyone talk you into, or make you feel bad about, not taking part in something you know is wrong.

# The Other Side Of The Coin

**“How does positive conformity help me to be responsible to myself?”**

When you are able to choose positive conformity, you put yourself in the best position to have a successful life. Just as there is positive conformity, there is also positive peer pressure. Having positive friends who have self-respect, avoid risky behavior, and demonstrate compassion for others, will help you to make responsible choices as well. It’s a fact, that if you surround yourself with people who make moral choices, you, too, will be more likely to do the same. Individuals who are responsible know the difference between positive and negative conformity and then choose to conform to only that which is positive.

Read the following list to help you determine what positive conformity is.



## Positive Conformity...

- ▲ ...is moral. It will help you demonstrate respect for life, property and the environment.
- ▲...will help you to build a positive character. It will present opportunities to be honest, responsible, respectful, and compassionate.
- ▲ ...will not cause you to compromise your mental or physical safety. It will not involve you in risky behavior.
- ▲ ...will not intentionally cause harm to others. You don’t want friends who entertain themselves by making fun of others.
- ▲ ...will not cause regret. Regrets in life are often the result of saying or doing something you know is wrong. When you try your best to make right choices, you lessen opportunities for regrets.

Positive conformity has the potential to help you build integrity and become a better person. Be determined to develop responsibility to yourself by making moral choices, regardless of what the crowd is doing. Even if you lose a few friends at first, in time, you will make new friends, who like you, are trying to develop positive characters. Others will respect your courage and determination to make right choices, but most of all you will respect yourself.

Read the following scenarios and answer the questions that follow.

### Scenario One

Simon's hobby was collecting stamps. He had a pretty impressive collection that had been passed down to him from his dad. Simon had been looking for a long time for a special stamp to add to his collection. When he finally found it, it cost \$300. He simply could not afford it, and probably would not be able to earn enough money to buy it for quite some time. Frankie, Simon's friend, noticed that the glass display case was unlocked and the salesman was helping another customer. He suggested that Simon reach inside the case and steal the stamp. "It's no big deal, Carl and I do it all the time. How do you think I was able to get all those CDs?"



a. Is Frankie influencing Simon to conform to a negative or positive standard? Explain your answer. (Frankie is influencing Simon to conform to a negative standard by

suggesting that he steal the stamp.)

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b. What responsible choice should Simon make? \_\_\_\_\_

(Simon should tell his friend, Frankie, that stealing is wrong and he  
won't get the stamp in a dishonest way. He will earn the money, even  
though it will take some time. He should also tell his friend to stop  
stealing because it could get him into trouble.)

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## Scenario Two

Lisa was the new girl at Adams Junior High. At her old school, their idea of fun was to hang out behind the old courthouse and smoke cigarettes. On Lisa's first day at the new school, she dressed in hip huggers and a cut-off shirt, but soon noticed that everyone else was dressed differently. Mrs. Haler, the vice-principal, explained to Lisa that they had a dress code and that she would have to put her sweater on. Since everyone else was dressed differently, Lisa felt uncomfortable and had no problems putting on her sweater. At lunch, she asked some of the girls from her homeroom if they wanted to go have a smoke. They gave her a strange look. One girl said, "We don't do that here, is that what you did at your old school?"

"Well, yeah," Lisa answered. "What do y'all do for fun?"

"Lots of things," answered a girl named Brittany. "There is the debate club, the orchestra, the art club, hiking and canoeing, all sorts of things."

"Wow, that sounds like fun," said Lisa. "When do you get to do all of these things?"

a. Do you think Lisa will conform to negative or positive conformity in her new school? Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_

*(Lisa will conform to positive conformity at her new school because of the positive influence of the other students.)*

b. How did the girls at Lisa's new school demonstrate positive peer pressure? \_\_\_\_\_

*(The girls at Lisa's new school dressed according to the dress code. They also told Lisa that they didn't smoke cigarettes. They then encouraged Lisa with all the fun activities that they did do.)*



It might be hard to be the only one choosing to be positive while everyone else is being negative. So be prepared, because when you are committed to being responsible, you just might be the only one standing for what is right.



# Matters Of The Heart

Another important part of being responsible for yourself is learning how to keep your emotions under control. It probably seems like overnight you went from thinking that the opposite sex was “gross” and “yucky” to... not so bad after all. Once again, you are faced with another irony of adolescence. Your body may have literally matured overnight; awakening feelings that you did not know existed; yet you are not old enough to marry the “object of your affection.”

*So, just what should I do  
with all of these pent up emotions?*

**CONTROL THEM.** That’s right, you have to control your emotions. You have an obligation and a responsibility to yourself and to the object of your affection to practice self-control.

**The society we live in does not make this easy to do.**

We live in a society where sex is part of almost every TV show, song, commercial, movie, magazine, and music video. Movie stars and singers all act sexy and they are known, in addition to their talent, for their sex appeal. Clothing is designed to attract the opposite sex; even perfumes and colognes have been manufactured to increase sex appeal. With sex so much a part of your daily lives, you get the impression that “everybody is doing it,” and if you’re not, you’re a misfit.

The problem is that with so much emphasis on sex, there is very little emphasis placed on the consequences of having sex before marriage. There are no sitcoms depicting young women and men getting diagnosed with herpes or syphilis; no music videos about how life changes for the millions of young men and women who are diagnosed HIV positive; no action-packed movies of their suffering and daily struggles with a disease that will ultimately take their lives.

What you hear about in songs and see on videos, TV and movies, is the passion without the consequences, the highs without the lows. Don’t let that fool you. Promiscuous sex leads to suffering and death.



With sex literally everywhere, and none of its consequences broadcast with equal fervor, it is even more important to become responsible and learn now how to control your feelings, before you make a decision you will regret. Using self-control will help you avoid getting into a sexual situation that you are not ready for.



Although the media makes it appear that when you like someone, you should automatically have sex with him or her, this is far from the truth. You have an obligation and a responsibility to yourself and to others to control your emotions. Having a crush or interest in someone does not give you the right to touch him or her in a sexual way. In fact, if you really care about someone, you should show respect by not encouraging risky behavior. It is up to you to stop and think about the consequences of premarital sex.

Here are a few simple ways you can do this:

- ☒ Do not intentionally try to attract someone's attention. You might get more attention than you bargain for, that might lead to being abused or raped.
- ☒ Do not be alone with someone of the opposite sex. Girls, you put yourselves at risk for being forced into sex. Boys, you put yourself at risk for being falsely accused, and both of you put yourselves at risk for doing something you will regret.
- ☒ Be determined in your mind and keep focused on all the positive goals that you want in life. Catching an STD or becoming pregnant will prevent you from reaching your goals.

Does this sound old-fashioned? Maybe so, but where is it written that being "old-fashioned" is wrong? There is nothing wrong with protecting yourself from risky behavior that could leave you emotionally scarred, as well as pregnant, with a sexually transmitted disease, or both. Over 1,000,000 young, unmarried women every year in the United States alone get pregnant, or have sex only to get dumped by their boyfriends. Avoid the regrets and consequences that come from this irresponsible choice. Make wise decisions and be responsible to yourself.

Read the following poem about one young woman's decision to engage in premarital sex and the consequences of her actions.

## *I Should Have...*

*I thought it would make me popular, I should have walked away.  
Now it's a decision I must live with every day.  
I thought I could start it, and then draw the line.  
But he told me it was okay, and everything would be fine.  
Before it was over, I knew that it was wrong.  
I should have been responsible, I should have stood strong.  
What would he do with a baby was all that he could say.  
He said he couldn't handle it, then turned and walked away.  
Now I sit and wonder about the life that's come to be.  
How will I alone take care of this baby and me?  
My parents felt such disappointment, sadness and shame.  
And as for me, I have only myself to blame.  
This decision was mine to make, all mine.  
I should have used self-control and taken more time.  
If I had thought carefully, I would have known it was wrong.  
I should have been responsible, I should have stood strong.*



**Answer the following questions.**

1. Did the writer make a responsible decision? Explain why or why not.  
*(No, she chose to engage in premarital sex, even though she knew it was wrong.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How do you know the writer regretted her decision? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(The continual use of the phrase "I should have" indicates the regret she felt for her decision.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How will the writer's decision affect the rest of her life? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(She will have greater responsibilities at a younger age. She will have the responsibility of caring for a child she is unprepared for. This could prevent her from fulfilling her goals.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Who else was affected by her decision? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Her parents, her unborn child and the father of the baby.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_

Young men also feel pressure to engage in premarital sex. This negative choice results in unplanned and unwanted pregnancies to which they are just as responsible as their partners. Read the following poem about a young man who had to make an important decision.

## My Decision

My friends told me it would make me a man.  
 But the stress of this choice I could barely stand:  
 Whether to go against what I know is right,  
 Or to please my friends, to fit in, to be tight  
 What about *her* feelings? I say,  
 What about the innocence this act will steal away?  
 To make this choice, I was up all night  
 Tossing and turning, nothing seemed right.  
 That morning I decided right then and there  
 That being a man means making my choice clear.  
 With courage, I told my friends my decision  
 Then stood firm through the hail of their derision.  
 I made it through, I withstood their scorn  
 And stood firm on my choice, for that day, a man was born.



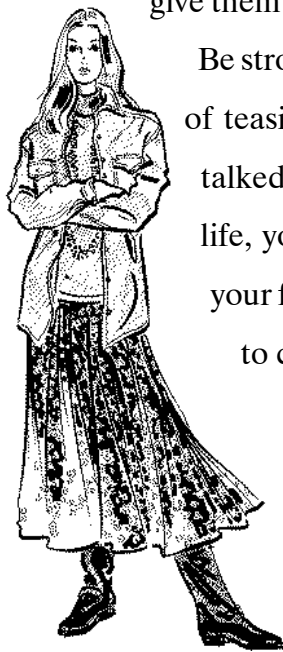
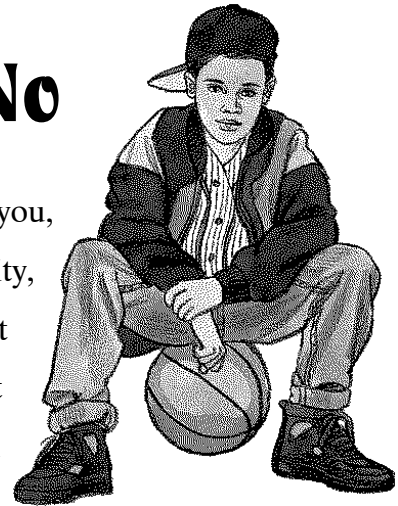
### Answer the following questions.

1. What decision did the writer make? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (*The writer chose not to engage in premarital sex.*)  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Was the writer's decision easy to make? How do you know? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (*No, the writer's decision was difficult to make. He stayed up all night.*)  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Were the writer's friends trying to influence him positively or negatively? Explain your answer. (Negatively. We know this because his friends were trying to influence him to engage in a risky behavior. Then they made fun of him for making a positive decision.)
4. What other character traits did he display because of his responsible choice? (He showed respect, determination, and self-control.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_
5. What does the writer mean by "that day a man was born"? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (*The writer meant that having sex does not make a boy into a man. The true measure of a man is making the right decision and standing firm on it.*)  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# You, Too, Can Say No

When it comes to being responsible for yourself, you, too, can say no! When faced with negative conformity, in the form of friends trying to convince you that “everybody’s doing it,” trying a drug just once won’t hurt you, or over-drinking alcohol helps you deal with stress, you can politely and firmly say “no.” Say it like you mean it; if you hesitate, or say it like you’re not sure, your friends might think that you are just playing around. This will give them the opportunity to try to talk you into something that’s wrong.

Be strong when you say no, and then stand firm. Don’t let any amount of teasing, or name-calling make you change your mind. Don’t get talked into something you will eventually regret. This is about your life, your future and your self-respect. Oh, and one more thing, if your friends will put you down for being responsible, you might want to consider finding some new friends.



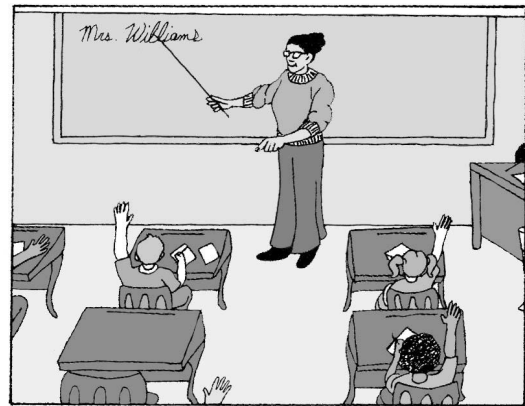
## Friends don't talk friends into making bad choices

## **LAST, BUT NOT LEAST...**

As you grow physically, you have an obligation to yourself to develop mentally as well; and to continuously seek ways to develop and improve your character. Another way you can do this is by gaining the most education you can. Don't take school lightly and play around, watch TV, or hang out with friends when you should be studying.

Oftentimes, school is treated as a big social club, where people go to hangout, kick back, meet a few friends, and chill. Keep in mind that the purpose of school is to become educated. This is not to say that you shouldn't have fun at school; in fact, learning and discovering new things are fun. But fun should be part of learning and learning should never be neglected to have fun.

Consider what it would be like if everyone's focus was on learning and improving themselves. There wouldn't be any time to put others down because they're not up to date on the latest fashions, to cut class and hang out on the back staircase, or get into fights because someone rolled her eyes at the wrong person. The atmosphere of your school, and every other school around our nation, would change if all students made getting an education and improving their lives a top priority.



So, in addition to all the other ways that were discussed in this chapter on being responsible to yourself, add getting an education to the list. Becoming an educated person is something you must do for yourself, no one else can do it for you. You have to apply yourself to paying attention in class, completing assignments on time and doing your personal best. Don't be concerned with how well your peers are doing or compare yourself to them, because everyone has different abilities. It is up to you to do the best you can, with the abilities you have.

**Don't confuse being responsible with being boring or uncool; there is nothing boring about having positive moral character.**

## What I Have Learned

- Although I am growing up, I must still ask permission from my parents/guardians.
- Being responsible means accepting my parents'/guardians' guidance and direction, because they are helping to keep me safe in a world that can be dangerous.
- It is important to recognize the difference between positive and negative conformity. I owe it to myself to choose only those things that are positive, because negative conformity can leave me susceptible to risky behavior that can change my life for the worse.
- I am responsible for my own health and well-being. Therefore, I will not purposely risk hurting myself; nor will I take drugs or engage in premarital sex, because all of these are risky behaviors, which can leave me with regrets.
- I must also be responsible about my feelings in regard to the opposite sex. By making responsible choices and behaving appropriately I can demonstrate true interest in someone by respecting them.
- I can say “no” to negative peer pressure.
- I have a responsibility to take my education seriously and work to the best of my ability.
- By learning to be responsible now, I am building a successful future for myself.

# BREAK THE CHAIN

**Children who come from abusive homes usually grow up to be abusers themselves, and make the same mistakes with their children that their parents made with them. Break the chain; learn to be responsible for your actions so you never do anything that will harm another person.**

## Enrichment Activities

1. Do research on teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Write a paper including facts about the rate of growth in the past ten years.
2. Write a short essay telling how you want your reputation to be.
3. Complete the “**Just For Fun**” activity found on **page 62** of your handbook.

# Just For Fun

Decode each word using the decoder below. Replace each small letter in the scrambled word with the capital letter above it.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
l a m b n o c p q d r e s f t g u v h y w j x k z i

1. laeqqyz ability
2. lmmtwfy laen accountable
3. lfcnv anger
4. lwyptvqyz authority
5. anpljqtv behavior
6. mptqmn choice
7. mtfotvs conform
8. mtfyvt e control
9. bzhofmyqtfle dysfunctional
10. nstyqtfh emotions
11. tanz obey
12. vnhgnmy respect
13. vnhgtfhqaen responsible
14. vqhrz risky

# Chapter Four

## Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock, Time Management

### Note To The Teacher

In today's fast-paced world, schedules are filled with all sorts of extracurricular activities. Most families stay so busy that their only time to come together is over a meal. For many, that occurs while going through the drive-thru of their preferred fast food restaurant.

Despite busy schedules, children are not always taught how to manage their time. Parents struggle with getting their children up in the morning, while teachers contend with those straggling in late for class or forgetting to make time for their homework the night before.

This lesson will focus on the following issues:

- Time management is an important tool in maintaining a responsible character.
- The value of time management in regards to responsibility. The ability to differentiate between wants and needs.
- The need to organize and prioritize in order to better manage various tasks and obligations.
- The benefit of learning how to manage time and to structure days, and how this, in turn, also benefits others.

This lesson should help our youth to become more responsible in time management, which will improve their overall positive character development.



# Lesson Plan

## Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock, Time Management

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn that managing their time effectively is an important part of being responsible.

### MATERIALS

- Students' handbooks

### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson, “**I Have A Responsibility To Myself,**” by asking students the following question:

How do we learn to make responsible choices? (*Answers may vary, but should include: we can learn to make responsible choices by listening to and accepting the advice of those in authority, accepting “no” for an answer, and being very careful what we conform to.*)

2. Inform students that in today’s lesson they will learn about the importance of effectively managing their time. Tell students that learning to manage time is another way they can demonstrate responsibility towards themselves and others. Have students turn to **page 63** in their handbooks and read the “**Introduction.**” Then, have students complete the “**Time Management Self- Evaluation**” on **pages 64-65**. Discuss the results of the “**Self-Evaluation.**” Emphasize that time management involves discipline and consistency.

3. Explain that without evaluating what activities and obligations need to be accomplished on a daily basis, it is easy to leave important duties undone. Have students read the sections, “**Time Can Be Your Enemy Or Your Friend**” and “**Wants Versus Needs,**” found on **pages 66-67** at home. Stress that the effective use of time involves prioritizing, planning and scheduling.

4. Inform students that one of the best ways to manage time is to learn how to prioritize their needs based upon order of importance. For example, chores and homework should come before watching television or talking on the phone with friends. Have students turn to **pages 68-70** in their handbooks and read the section, “**Prioritize.**” They are to then complete the accompanying activities. Call on volunteers to share their list of after-school priorities and note that although students may have similar lists, there will be some variation based upon personal preferences and parental expectations.

5. Ask students, “How do you feel when you have to search for something you need?” (*Answers may include: frustrated, stressed, or angry.*) Tell students that another important aspect of time management is organizing their personal belongings. Ask students to talk about some of the things they could organize in order to manage their time more effectively. (*Answers may include: clothes or school supplies.*) Have students turn to **pages 71-72** in their handbooks and read the section “**Get Organized.**” Emphasize that disorganization wastes time and causes frustration.

6. Guide class discussion by asking the following questions:

- Has a friend ever kept you waiting past the time you had decided to meet? (*Answers will vary.*)
- How did that make you feel? (*Answers will vary, but may include: frustrated, annoyed or worried.*)

Explain that managing time effectively shows consideration and respect for others and may prevent conflicts. Have students turn to **page 73** in their handbooks and read the section, “**The Joys Of Time Management.**”

7. Ask students how learning to manage their time now could help them in the future. (*Answers should include: employers prefer people who are timely and can meet deadlines, and people who manage time well are more productive at work.*)

8. Conclude the lesson by re-emphasizing that responsible people manage their time effectively. They prioritize their needs versus their wants, schedule their duties and obligations, and organize their belongings in order to reduce stress and frustration. In addition to this,

they are also conscientious and respectful of other people's time. Have students turn to **page 74** and read the section, "**What I Have Learned.**" Tell students that effectively managing time shows that they are dependable and responsible.



**Responsible people use time wisely.**

# Chapter Four

## Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock, Time Management

### Introduction

The alarm clock goes off, but you're too tired to get up because you stayed up past your bedtime the night before. You hit the snooze button, but you never hear the alarm come back on. Half an hour later, you awake to the sound of your mother asking, "Why aren't you up yet?" You literally bounce out of bed and jump in the shower. You barely get wet before you jump back out, throw on some clothes and run outside just in time to catch the bus. You sit down with a sigh of relief but soon your relief turns to major stress as you realize you forgot the report on your desk at home that was due today, and Mrs. Henry, your English teacher, informed the class that any late reports would automatically have ten points taken off.

Has anything like this ever occurred to you? Do you run out of time trying to accomplish everything you have to do? At the end of the day do you say to yourself, "I should have put more time into studying for that test tomorrow instead of watching TV"? *The ability to effectively manage your duties, chores, activities and leisure time is called **time management**.* Time management plays a very important role in being responsible. In this chapter, you will learn about the importance of managing your time effectively and explore ways that this can be done.

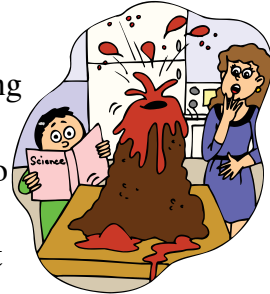


# Time Management Self-Evaluation

Do you use time wisely? Are you responsible with your time? Take the following self-evaluation to find out how you manage your time.

**Circle the one answer that fits your time management style.**

1. You have a class project due in two weeks, you:
  - a. Start right away and spend all of your free time working on it.
  - b. Put it off until the night before and try to cram two weeks work into one night.
  - c. Set aside one hour every day to work on your project until it is completed.

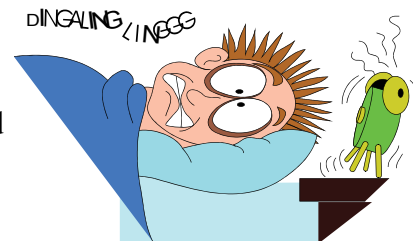


2. Your mom left you with a chore list a mile long, you:
  - a. Give up, and watch TV instead. There is no way you could complete it anyway.
  - b. Ask her which ones you could ignore.
  - c. Read the list carefully, then pace yourself and do one chore at a time.



3. When it comes to your belongings, they are usually:
  - a. On the floor in your room.
  - b. All over the house.
  - c. Neat and orderly and in their appropriate places.
4. You usually do your homework assignments:
  - a. The next morning during homeroom.
  - b. On the bus going to school.
  - c. At the same time every evening before you go to bed.

5. To wake up in the morning, you:
  - a. Wait for your mother to call you.
  - b. Hope the neighbor's dog will bark loud enough for you to hear.
  - c. Set your alarm clock.



6. When you set appointments to meet your friends, you:
  - a. Keep them waiting at least 10 minutes.
  - b. Remind them that you usually run behind schedule so they could be late too.
  - c. Get there right on time.
  
7. Do you write down assignments and bring home the right books to do your homework?
  - a. No way, there is no point in writing things down, I have a great memory.
  - b. No way, why bring books home? I do my homework the next morning during homeroom.
  - c. I sure do, I might forget something really important and making time to study has helped my grades.
  
8. When you have free time, you:
  - a. Spend it daydreaming about all the fun things you can do.
  - b. Spend it calling friends to see who is home.
  - c. Make plans the day before so you can make the most of every minute that you have.
  
9. You go to bed:
  - a. When there is nothing left to watch on TV.
  - b. When you're so tired you can barely crawl into bed.
  - c. Early enough to get 6-8 hours of sleep, because at your age, you need sufficient sleep to function effectively.



How did you do? For all *A* and *B* answers give yourself two points. For all *C* answers give yourself 5 points. If you scored between 18 and 26 points, you need major help managing your time. Scoring between 27-39 points means you need to focus on specific areas in order to improve your time management skills. Scoring a whopping 40 to 45 points means you are well on your way to being a responsible person because you manage your time effectively.

# Time Can Be Your Enemy Or Your Friend

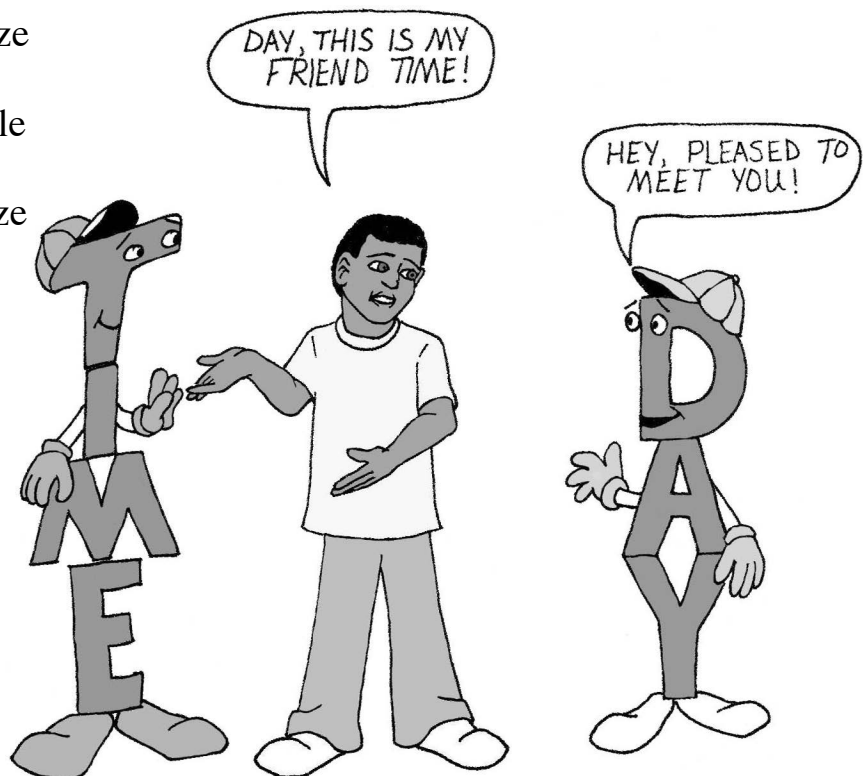
**T**he passage of time is something that most people take for granted. We know that the sun always rises in the east and sets in the west. Many people try to squeeze in as many activities as they can into the daytime hours. For those of you who have busy lives, it may even seem as if time is your enemy, because you often run out of time before you run out of things to do.

Did you ever have a day when you had so many things to do that you forgot to do something that turned out to be very important? Without careful planning and scheduling, it is very easy to overbook your activities for the day.

Carefully consider the most important things you need to do for the day and make a schedule that includes how much time each activity would take. If you stay focused on your schedule, you can make time your friend instead of your enemy.

The basic steps to making time your ally are:

- Know your needs versus your wants
- Prioritize
- Schedule
- Organize
- Focus





# WANTS VERSUS NEEDS

**T**he first step in managing your time effectively is to learn the difference between what you want to do and what you need to do. Things that you *need* to do are necessary in order to function effectively and to meet your obligations. Things that you *want* to do are those things



that, if you are honest with yourself, are not that important and may, in fact, hinder you from fulfilling your obligations. For example, your father asks you to mow the lawn. Just as you are about to do this chore, your friend calls and says that his brother is giving him a ride to the park, and asks if you want to come. The answer that takes into consideration what you need to do, which is to do your chore as your father has asked, would be, “no.”

Of course, going to the park is far more appealing than mowing the lawn, so you might ask your friend if he wouldn’t mind waiting an hour while you complete your chore. You could also ask if he would like to help so you can leave earlier, or ask if he could go the next day instead. By focusing on what you need to do and making other arrangements for what you want to do, you can begin to responsibly manage your time.

Here is another example. You need to study for your mid-term exam, which is scheduled for tomorrow. A bunch of your friends are going to the planetarium to watch the meteor shower and ask you to go. You need to study, but you know meteor showers are rare, and you want to see the show. The responsible thing would be to go to see the meteor shower, but come straight home, instead of staying to hang out with your friends, so you have time to study for your test.

Understanding the difference between what you want to do and what you need to do, takes careful thought and being honest with yourself. You have to stop, think, and then make the right choice to be responsible. In other words, it takes self-control. There will always be fun activities to pull you away from the things you need to do. This is why you must be willing to practice self-control, because having fun should never come before fulfilling your obligations to yourself and to others.

**Prioritize**—*To decide what is most important and to do those things first.*

## Prioritize

**O**nce you distinguish between your needs and wants, the next step is to rank the things you need to do based on the order of importance. This is called prioritizing. Consider the following list of needs; use the blank lines to rank them from what must be done first, second, third and fourth.

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Go to school _____                | 4 |
| Get dressed _____                 | 2 |
| Shower and brush your teeth _____ | 1 |
| Eat breakfast _____               | 3 |

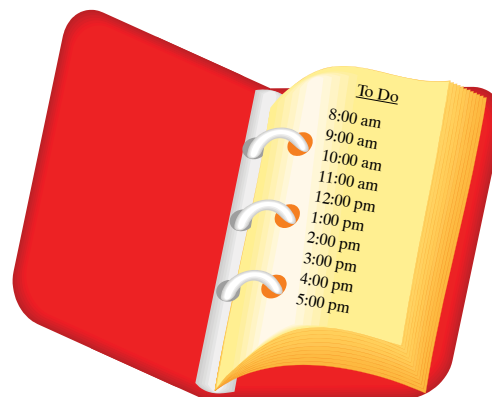
Often, we prioritize our needs without realizing it. Of course, you will need to get dressed before you go to school. If you walk into school wearing your pajamas you’re going to get some pretty funny looks. However, there may be some variation in ranking hygiene (showering and brushing your teeth) and eating. Some people, based upon their personal choice, may eat breakfast and then shower. The bottom line is, when it comes to prioritizing, some things will be ranked based upon the individual’s preference, up-bringing and needs.

**Using a typical day after school, list the things you need to do in the first column, then list the things you want to do in the second column, and lastly use the third column to prioritize your list of needs and wants.**

<b>NEEDS</b>	<b>WANTS</b>	<b>WHAT TAKES PRIORITY</b>
<i>Example: do homework</i>	<i>go to the park</i>	<i>do homework first</i>

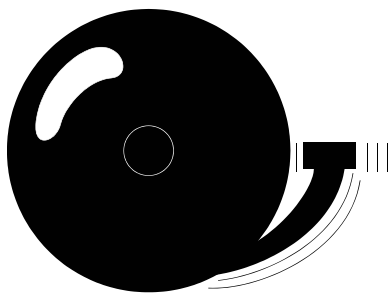
# Schedules

The third step in learning to make time your friend is to learn to organize your duties, chores, and activities. This is best done by using a schedule to keep everything in an orderly, easy-to-follow manner. Many people keep a schedule of what they need to do in their minds. For instance, you know that on a weekday you need to wake up at 7:00 am and be ready to leave the house by 7:40 am in order to catch the bus and arrive at school on time. Having done this for so long, it has become a habit and you can remember this basic schedule without having to write it down. This is called internalizing your schedule.



However, you will find that as you get older you will have many different duties and obligations that will not always occur at the same time. Without taking the time to organize and write down your duties for the day, you may forget to do something important or arrive late for a function. Making a daily “To Do” list, preferably the night before, will help you organize and schedule your activities.

Making up a schedule and organizing your time takes planning. So, take some time daily to sit down and consider what you need to accomplish for that day and do not procrastinate. In other words, do not put off for tomorrow what needs to be done today. Write it down in a notebook that you have set aside for that purpose. As you accomplish each task, check it off.



**WARNING!**  
**WARNING!**  
**WARNING!**

Do not put so many activities on your daily list that you become overwhelmed and frustrated trying to get it all done. First, write down what absolutely must be done that day. If there is extra time, additional activities may be scheduled. Fill out a page for each day.

Unit Five

Below is a five-day schedule. Fill in the blanks with the correct day to schedule your activities. Although it may seem time consuming at first, it will save time in the long run.

Time	____ day	____ day	____ day	____ day	____ day
6:00 am					
7:00 am					
8:00 am					
9:00 am					
10:00 am					
11:00 am					
Noon					
1:00 pm					
2:00 pm					
3:00 pm					
4:00 pm					
5:00 pm					
6:00 pm					
7:00 pm					
8:00 pm					

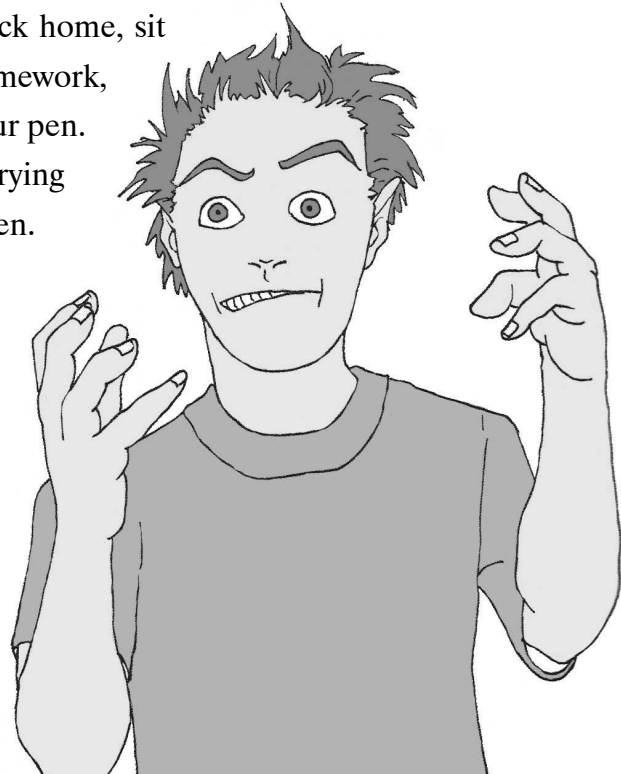
Remember, keeping a schedule will help you keep up with your various activities and will enable you to see how you can fit everything into your day. Seeing everything listed will also help you to be realistic about what you can accomplish. If your schedule is jam packed and there is no way you can accomplish everything, then it's time to prioritize and evaluate what must be done based on needs versus wants.

Do you misplace your jacket, lunch, glasses or keys and pull your hair out looking for them while your ride honks, impatiently waiting for you? If you can answer “yes” to this question, it’s time to...

# GET ORGANIZED

Being organized takes into consideration everything from your time to your belongings. The more organized you are, the less time you waste. Have you ever forgotten to bring a book home that you needed for homework and spent twenty minutes on the phone trying to call one of your classmates to see who has a book you could borrow? Finally, you found someone who will lend you his book, but you have to walk over to his house to get it. You get back home, sit down at your desk to begin your homework, and realize that you misplaced your pen. You spend another ten minutes trying to figure out where you left your pen.

Welcome to the world of a disorganized person. Being disorganized wastes time and effort, and causes frustration and stress. In the world of a disorganized person, everything takes twice as long, and is twice as hard to accomplish.



## Here Are A Few Points To Help You Get Organized

- Write down all assignments and make sure you have all of your books before leaving school.
- Get into the habit of doing certain things such as homework and chores at the same time everyday.
- To avoid wasting time looking for keys or glasses, have a specific place you always put them.
- Keep your belongings neat, clean and orderly.



Take the time to be organized. Using less time to fulfill your obligations leaves you with more time to do the things you want to do.

Learning to manage time also includes getting to all appointments on time. People who are frequently late are seen as irresponsible and unreliable. Learning to be on time for events and activities demonstrates not only responsibility, but also shows respect for other people. The fact is, no one likes to be kept waiting, especially when it occurs frequently. It causes the person who is waiting to become frustrated and even annoyed.

## Here Are A Few Simple Ways To Help You Be On Time

- Buy a reliable watch and wear it.
- Buy a reliable alarm clock and use it.
- Set your watch and clock 10 to 15 minutes earlier, then function as if that was the actual time.
- Write a schedule of daily activities and events, and refer to it often.
- Use a calendar to write in events and activities that are scheduled for a later time.

*THINK ABOUT IT: Time lost can never be regained.*

# The Joys Of Time Management

When you manage time effectively, you demonstrate that you can be relied upon and trusted by others. You then have a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment because you complete your obligations in a timely manner. People who manage their time well also reduce their stress and frustrations. Knowing where your belongings are, pacing yourself, and being on time can keep your day running smoothly.

## Which one would you rather be?



OR



Learning to manage your time will not only help you now, but also in the future. As you mature, your responsibilities will increase, as will your duties and obligations. It is a fact that all employers want people who are timely and who can manage their time properly. To put it simply, no one will want to pay you for just sitting around and wasting time. An employer wants to trust that his employees are conscientious and dependable. So take the initiative and begin putting these time management techniques to use in your life. You will improve the quality of your life today and set the foundation for managing your time effectively as an adult.

## What I Have Learned

- ☑ Evaluating my time management skills will enable me to become more capable at effectively managing my time.
- ☑ By carefully considering what the most important things I need to do for the day are and making a schedule, I can manage my time wisely.
- ☑ Keeping a schedule will help me keep up with my various activities and help me see how I can fit everything into my day.
- ☑ The more organized I am, the less time I waste.
- ☑ To manage my time I will strive to get to all functions on time.
- ☑ I can cut down on my stress and frustrations, by completing the things I need to do in a more timely fashion.
- ☑ Responsible people who manage their time successfully are trusted to be dependable.

**“Responsible people manage time effectively.  
They make the most out of their day.”  
—The Peaceful Solution**

## Enrichment Activities

1. Develop a daily schedule and strive to stick to it.
2. Make a list of areas in your life in which you would like to be more organized. Challenge yourself to organize your first priority within the next week.
3. Complete the “**Just For Fun**” activity found on **page 76**.

# Just For Fun

Find the words from the word list in the puzzle below.

A	Q	W	E	R	T	R	E	L	I	A	B	L	E	Y
C	X	C	V	N	B	E	L	U	D	E	H	C	S	U
T	Z	A	A	S	D	F	G	H	D	K	D	D	O	I
I	K	L	L	M	N	J	H	G	E	E	F	E	D	N
V	P	R	I	O	R	I	T	I	Z	E	M	V	S	O
I	I	U	Y	T	R	M	E	I	I	W	Q	I	A	I
T	O	P	B	V	A	C	N	X	N	Z	P	T	T	T
Y	Q	W	E	N	R	A	T	Y	A	U	I	C	O	A
A	S	D	A	F	G	G	H	J	G	K	C	E	L	G
M	N	G	B	R	V	C	X	Z	R	N	E	F	M	I
L	E	K	O	J	H	G	F	D	O	S	F	F	A	L
Q	W	S	E	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	F	E	P	B
A	I	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	C	D	K	O
D	N	M	E	L	B	I	S	N	O	P	S	E	R	L

## Word List

activity  
 disorganized  
 effective  
 responsible

manage  
 obligation  
 organized  
 prioritize

plan  
 reliable  
 time  
 schedule

# Chapter Five

## It's Not A One Time Thing

### Note To The Teacher

**H**ow does one progress from developing the character trait of responsibility to being a responsible person? What is the deciding factor? It is common knowledge that making a responsible decision once does not mean an individual is responsible. The decision to be accountable in all aspects of life, must be done consistently and over a period of time before one is considered a responsible person. This is an important fact to teach children. It is vital that children understand that they cannot be inconsistent in making responsible decisions, for even one irresponsible choice can change the outcome of their lives.

Concepts that will be taught in this lesson are:

- Self-control, consistency, and discipline are necessary elements for maintaining a responsible character.
- Irresponsible choices can be dangerous and irrevocable.
- It is important to maintain responsible interactions with others.
- The reward for maintaining a responsible character is a positive reputation.

So often we realize the importance of maintaining a responsible character after we have made choices we regret. As educators, parents and role models, this is our opportunity to teach our children how to maintain a responsible character and avoid those things that can negatively affect their lives.



# Lesson Plan

## It's Not A One Time Thing

### PURPOSE /OBJECTIVE

Students will learn that they have a responsibility to themselves to continue to make choices that will support the development of their positive moral character.

### MATERIALS

- *Teacher's Audio Lessons*
- CD player
- Students' handbooks

### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson, “**Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock, Time Management,**” by reminding students that managing their time effectively is an important part of being responsible. Ask students the following questions:

- a. What are the basic steps to managing your time? (*The basic steps to time management are to know your wants versus your needs, prioritize, make a schedule, organize your belongings and stay focused on what needs to be done.*)
- b. In what ways can you be more organized? (*Answers may vary, but should include: you can be more organized by keeping your belongings neat and orderly, writing down all assignments and making sure you have the right books before you leave school.*)

2. Tell students that in today's lesson they will learn how to maintain a responsible character. Have students turn to **page 77** in their handbooks and read the “**Introduction.**” Guide class discussion by asking, what are some other things, not mentioned in the text, that must be maintained? (*Answers may vary, but should include: a car, because the oil must be changed and the engine tuned periodically; a house, because repairs must be done, and the house must be cleaned on a regular basis; the lawn, because the grass must be mowed, and watered.*)

3. Explain to students that it takes other positive character traits to maintain a responsible character. Ask students to name some. Tell students that the ones they will focus on for this lesson are self-control and discipline. Have students turn to the section,

**“Maintaining A Responsible Character,”** found on **pages 78-80** and take turns reading the text. Emphasize that consistently making right choices to be responsible requires discipline.

4. Choose a student to read the scenario, **“Love Is...,”** found on **page 81**. Have students answer the questions, and then discuss the answers as a class. The exercise, **“Think About It,”** on **page 82**, can be assigned for homework. Emphasize that it is important to develop discipline in order to build a responsible character.

5. Tell students that irresponsible choices, due to a lack of self-control and discipline, can lead to serious consequences. Have students read the section, **“Life On The Flip Side,”** found on **pages 83-84**. Then listen to the poem, **“One Bad Choice,”** from the *Teacher’s Audio Lessons*. Allow students to follow along on **page 85** in their handbooks. Guide class discussion by asking the following questions:

- a. How was the character irresponsible? (*He did not consider how his choice would affect the rest of his life.*)
- b. In what way did he lack self-control? (*He did not think about the consequences of his actions.*)
- c. What was the result of his actions? (*He suffered a loss of freedom, and estrangement from family members because he was in jail.*)

6. Tell students that maintaining a responsible character also includes how we treat others. Remind students that in Lesson One, **“You Can Count On Me,”** they learned that we are morally responsible for each other. Have students read the section, **“It’s About People Too,”** found on **page 86**. Stress that we all have a responsibility to treat others with respect and compassion. **Pages 88-89** can be assigned as homework.

7. Stress that a negative reputation is a direct result of not maintaining a responsible character. A positive reputation, on the other hand, opens doors to trust and positions of leadership. Encourage students to read the section, **“R is for Reputation,”** found on **pages 90-91** at home.

8. **Activity**—Divide students into five groups. Have them turn to the activity, **“Putting It All Together,”** found on **pages 92-94**. Assign one letter to each group and instruct each group to answer the letters. They must encourage the writers to make responsible choices and to use self-control and discipline. At the end of the activity allow a volunteer from each group to read his/her group’s reply.

9. Conclude the lesson by re-emphasizing that self-control, discipline, and consistency are needed to maintain a responsible character and to develop a positive reputation. Have students turn to **page 95** and read the section, **“What I Have Learned.”** Remind students of the importance of consistently making positive choices, because one bad choice can affect them for the rest of their lives.

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**“Being responsible is something  
you must practice and work at.”  
—The Peaceful Solution**

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# Chapter Five

## It’s Not A One Time Thing

### Introduction

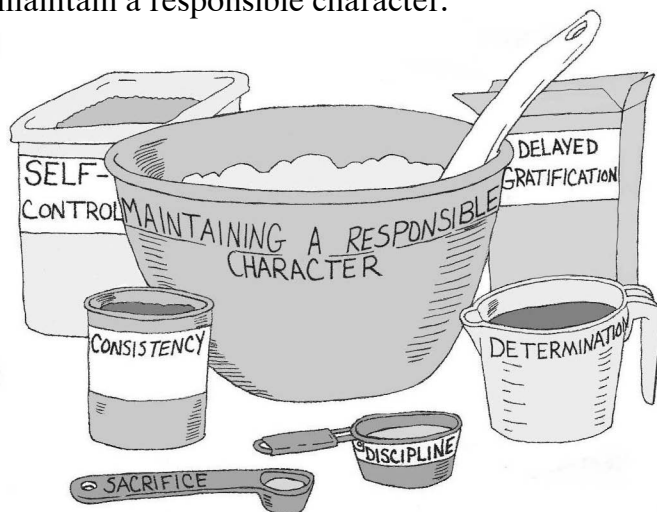
**M**ost things in life need consistent care and attention in order for their value to be retained. Think about it; don’t you have to take care of your belongings? By treating them with care, and putting them away after you use them, you prevent them from being lost or damaged. You also have to take care of yourself. You can’t bathe just once and be clean for the rest of your life, nor can you clean your room once and have it remain clean for years to come. *Consistently taking care of something in order to preserve its worth* is called **maintenance**, and many things must be maintained, from your hygiene to your clothes; the list is endless. The point is, if you want to keep anything functioning and looking its best, you must take care of it.

A responsible character, like so many other things in life, must also be maintained. For it, too, requires care. If you drop your guard and allow yourself to be pressured into doing something that is wrong, you could end up embarrassing yourself, disappointing your parents, or worse.

In the previous chapters, you explored how avoiding risky behavior, being accountable for your actions, and managing your time all play important roles in the development of a responsible character. In this chapter, you will learn how to maintain your responsible character by consistently making positive choices. By paying attention to the choices you make, and avoiding those decisions that could negatively change the course of your life, you are working at maintaining your responsible character.

# Maintaining A Responsible Character

Have you ever baked a cake? How many ingredients did you use? For most cakes, it takes eggs, sugar, flour, salt, and usually several other ingredients. In like manner, it takes several different ingredients, or traits, to maintain a responsible character.



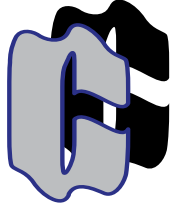
## Main Ingredient: Self-control

In the previous chapters, you learned that by practicing **self-control**, which is *the ability to stop, think, and weigh the consequences of your actions*, you can make responsible choices. Self-control can be used to maintain your positive character, as well. In fact, self-control is to responsibility, as a foundation is to a house. If someone lacks self-control, he will not make responsible choices. When it comes to maintaining your positive character, you have to constantly be on guard to stop and think carefully before making decisions that will cause moral dilemmas.

When situations arise that you know your parents/guardians would



not approve, stop and consider the consequences of your actions. Never rush into following the crowd, which could consist of one person or many. The point is, don't make decisions without thinking about the consequences, just because others are doing it.



## FOR CONSISTENT

To be **consistent** is to *think and act in the same manner all the time*. Consistency is another important trait in maintaining a responsible character. For example, if you start your homework and chores at the same time every day you are being consistent. If you only do them when you have nothing else to do, then you are not being consistent. You are consistent only if you display the same characteristics, at every opportunity presented to you.

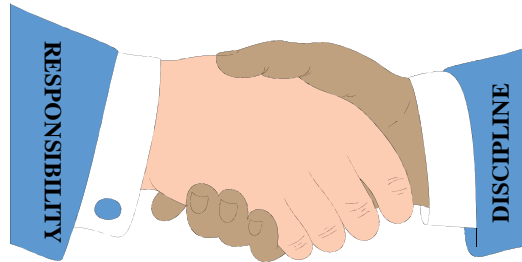
Just how important is it to be consistent? Well, consider what it would be like if your parents/guardians only fed you once in a while, and you didn't know when you would get your next meal. Sadly, there are many children who face this reality and live every day not knowing if or when they will be cared for. Or, what if you were the boss of a company, and your employees either came to work late, or not at all? How would your company function? Would you keep those employees or hire new ones? Many things in life depend upon consistent actions and interactions. When your behavior is both positive and consistent, you are building a responsible character.

## It's About Discipline

To be disciplined is to follow a specific pattern of behavior until it becomes a habit and a normal part of the way you behave. Becoming disciplined requires both self-control and being consistent. In what ways are you already disciplined? For example, do you automatically say "please" and "thank you," and ask permission before touching the belongings of others? If so, this is positive behavior that, through consistent practice, has become the normal way in which you interact with others.

In addition to disciplining yourself to be courteous, there are many other things you can do to become disciplined. For instance, going to bed at a certain time every night and waking up at a specific time every morning requires discipline. Scheduling a study time and studying everyday at that time also takes discipline. Is it easy to become disciplined? No, it is not. Once again, this is where developing self-control is very important, because to become disciplined you must consider the advantages and benefits of what you need to do, then you must do it consistently until it becomes a habit.

## Responsibility And Discipline Go Hand In Hand



### **Discipline Sometimes Requires:**

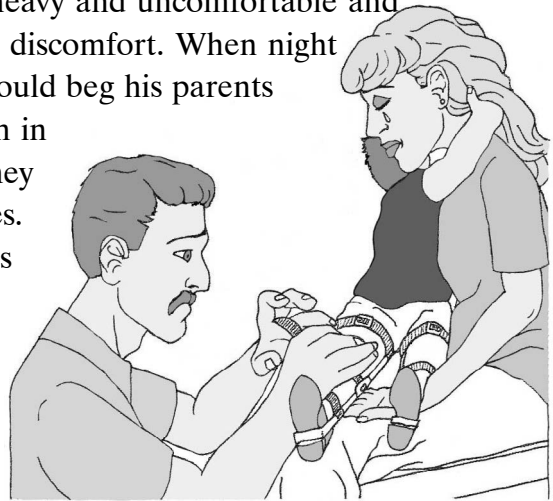
- Sacrifice**—to do without one thing in order to gain another.
  
- Delayed gratification**—postponing your reward for a later time.
  
- Determination**—the act of never giving up once a positive decision is made.

Read the following scenario about what it means to be disciplined.

## Love Is...

A young couple had a child with a crippling disease. Their doctor told them that they would have to put braces on the child's legs every night in order for his legs to grow normally. Their son was only three years old at the time and the braces were large and heavy. In order for the braces to be effective they would have to be tightened onto his legs. The little boy grew to fear his braces. They were heavy and uncomfortable and when they were tightened, it caused him discomfort. When night approached, he would try to hide, and would beg his parents not to put his braces on. Seeing their son in such distress, they, too, would cry, but they never missed a night of putting on his braces.

Because they were disciplined to do as they had been instructed, their son grew into a healthy young man who walked without even a trace of a limp. The son was rewarded because of his parent's discipline.

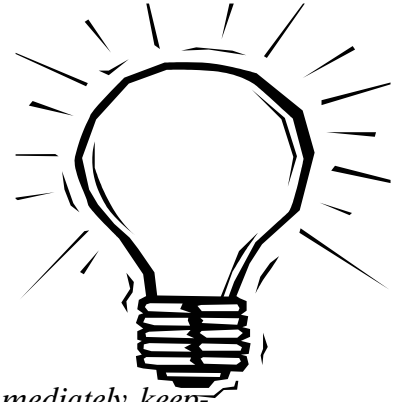


Answer the following questions.

1. Did the little boy's parents have self-control? Explain your answer.  
(Yes, they continued to put the braces on their son every night, even though they knew it was uncomfortable for him and caused him discomfort.)
2. In what way were they consistent? (They didn't miss a night putting on the braces.)
3. How were the parents disciplined? (They consistently did as they were instructed.)
4. How were the parents and their son rewarded for their responsible actions? (The son was able to grow into a healthy young man who walked without even a trace of a limp and his parents were rewarded by watching him grow healthy and strong.)

Remember, being a disciplined person may not always be easy, but maintaining a responsible character is worth the sacrifices you make.

# Think About It...



1. List three areas you can be more disciplined in.

*(Answers may vary, but should include: doing chores immediately, keeping up with homework, or obeying those in authority, while maintaining a positive attitude.)*

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2. What changes could you make in order to be more disciplined in these areas?

*(Answers may vary, but should include: making a list of chores to do, writing on a calendar when homework is due, schedule time daily to work on it, or paying attention when those in authority speak and follow their instructions exactly.)*

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3. How can being more disciplined in these areas make you more responsible?

*( Answers may vary, but should include: consistently doing chores at the set time, keeping up with homework, and obeying authority develop self-discipline. Consistent practice will help you to develop the reputation of being a responsible person.)*

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# Life On The Flip Side

When people do not maintain a responsible character the results can be disastrous. Spur of the moment decisions made without considering whether they are moral or immoral, right or wrong, can leave you up a creek without a paddle.



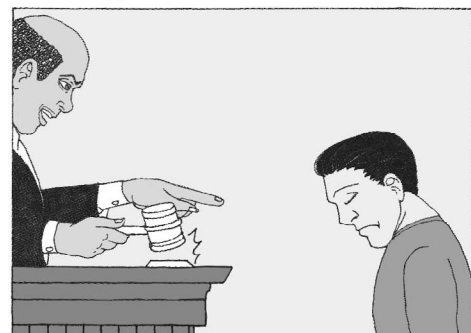
A person lacking self-control, discipline and consistency is likely to make irresponsible choices that can lead to embarrassment, danger, or worse.

Read the following scenario about a man who paid a heavy price for not maintaining a responsible character.

## One Time Is Too Many

Henry was a law-abiding citizen until he lost his job. Instead of making a responsible choice to find another job, he decided to rob a convenience store. He was arrested and tried for his crime. The day that he was sentenced to ten years in prison the judge asked him if he had any final words. With tears, and great regret Henry said, “But I have never broken the law before. I only did it that one time.”

The judge, shaking his head, replied, “One time is all it took for you to become a thief.”



It is a fact that in our society, making even one irresponsible choice could change the outcome of your life.

**Read the following article and answer the questions that follow.**

## Transcending The Wall

### Michael

On August 11, 1987, I was arrested. It was the beginning of the end of nearly two years in the drug trade—all that followed was a long trial and a 45-year prison sentence. I was 19 then, I am 37 now. Most of my adult life and most of my maturing have taken place behind prison walls.



Like many other adolescents, I was lured into the drug trade by promises of immediate riches and fun times. I had been working for my father since I was a child. When I was as young as six, he took me with him to construction sites; he just wanted me beside him. I spent each summer going to work, either with him or with his employees. By the time I was 17, I knew his business well. I worked everyday after school and had loads of responsibility. It was around that time that I was attracted to the “easy life” offered by large-scale drug trafficking. I lost my discipline and, as a result, I lost my freedom.

1. Was Michael taught responsibility? Explain your answer.  
(Yes, his father took him to work with him as young as six years and taught him the business.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What irresponsible choice did Michael make? \_\_\_\_\_  
(He chose the “easy life” and began drug trafficking.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Describe the consequences of Michael’s choice? \_\_\_\_\_  
(He was arrested for selling drugs and sentenced to 45 years in prison. He lost his freedom.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

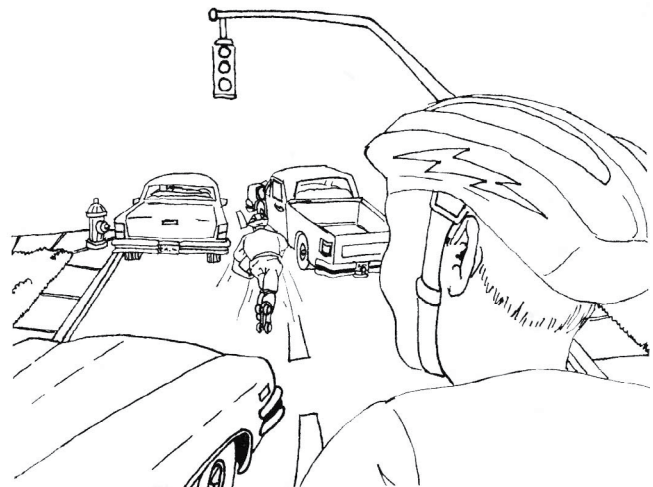


Listen to and discuss the following poem.

## One Bad Choice

If yesterday could have let me see,  
Where this choice would have led me,  
I would not have done the things I had done,  
For one bad choice hurts everyone.  
I thought that I could play the drug game;  
Instead, I caused my parents shame.  
It is my life; now, I stand alone,  
I did not consider my family at home.  
The tears that came to my mother's eyes,  
Rang as loud and clear as my brother's cries.  
How could I have been so blind?  
To think my crimes, I could leave behind.  
So here I sit behind steel bars,  
My friends and family are now so far.  
Knowing now that what I've done  
Was a bad choice that hurt everyone.

Not maintaining a responsible character is like playing in traffic. It can be dangerous and unpredictable.



# It's About People Too

You must also maintain responsible interactions with others. This means not doing or saying anything to intentionally disrespect another person. Consistently treating someone with kindness, respect and compassion means considering how you would want to be treated if you were in that individual's shoes.

Sometimes people say and do things that frustrate, upset, or annoy us. Regardless of how frustrated or angry you are with someone, you must maintain self-control. You do not have the right to curse at, hit or disrespect a person in anyway. Think about it! If you don't have self-control, and the other person also lacks self-control, you could have a bonafide fight on your hands. Fighting is a lose-lose situation; no one wins. The one who throws the hardest punch only proves physical strength, not intelligence.

## **Here are some other ways you can maintain responsible interactions with others.**

✓ **Don't be rude, just because you're in a bad mood.** Waking up on the wrong side of the bed is no excuse to be discourteous or disrespectful to others.

✓ **Got bit by the "love bug?" Remember, don't touch anyone in a sexual way.** Control your emotions. Crushes, puppy love and other matters of the heart are no excuse to behave irresponsibly. Even making a sexual comment or joke to them or about them is impolite.

✓ **Bite your tongue before you gossip or spread rumors about someone.** Reputations have been ruined because people think gossiping is a form of entertainment. If you have to report something that you have seen, be sure to report the facts to the appropriate person in authority, and not your interpretation of them. Think twice before you offer a negative opinion about someone. Opinions are your personal view, and not necessarily the truth.

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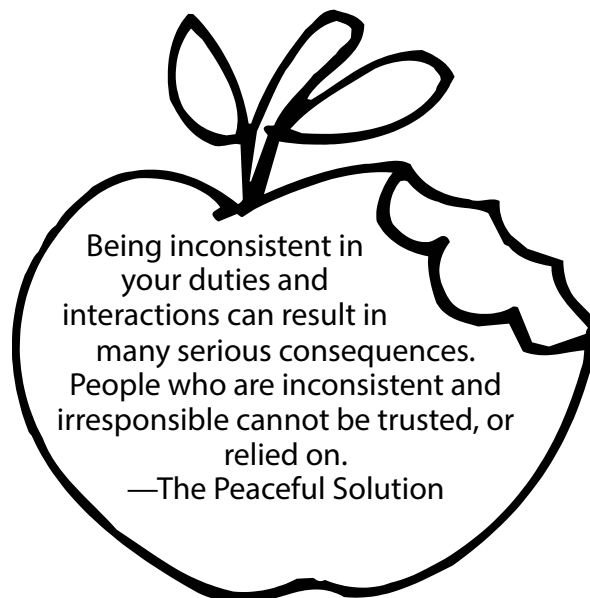
## STRAIGHT TALK

We all share a responsibility to treat others with care. If you are ever in doubt as to how you should treat someone, ask yourself, how you would want to be treated. If you don't like others cursing at you, then don't curse at them. If having rumors spread about you makes you upset; it will most likely upset someone else if you did the same. Maintaining responsible interactions with others is quite simple. It all boils down to this: **think of others and not just yourself.**



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# TAKE A BITE OUT OF THIS



## *Does maintaining a responsible character mean I can never make a mistake?*

By being in complete control of your thoughts, considering the decision you must make and weighing the consequences of your actions, you can avoid many of the so-called “mistakes” people make in life. One of the reasons why people make poor choices is because they think the only way to learn about something is to experience it.

**Have you ever heard the saying:  
“Experience is the best teacher?”**

The fact is:

**Experience can be the worst way  
to learn a lesson.**

For example, we shouldn’t have to experience taking an addictive drug to know that it is addictive. The testimonies and life experiences of the countless people who have become addicted to the same drug should be enough proof. In like manner, you shouldn’t have to get your hands burned to know that fire is hot.

There is nothing wrong with learning from the experiences of others. In fact, you are really wise if you do. By listening to other people’s experiences and educating yourself about the dangers of certain behavior, you can steer clear of the mistakes that leave so many people with so many regrets. When you focus on maintaining a responsible character, you lessen the opportunity that could leave you with a criminal record, a drug addiction, an unwanted pregnancy, or with a sexually transmitted disease.

## **Is there any way to recover from making an irresponsible choice?**

Sometimes people act **impulsively**, this means they *act without carefully thinking about the consequences of their actions*; or, they think that if they experiment with some risky behavior, they won’t be affected.

If you have made poor choices in the past, you can change your behavior. Making a bad choice does not mean you are a bad person. Sometimes when people make irresponsible choices, they think since they have “blown it,” there is no hope for them. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, that’s why character education is so important; it teaches you how to change from the inside out. So, don’t give up on yourself if you have made some irresponsible choices in the past. You can learn to make responsible choices and change your behavior, because where there is life and determination, there is hope.

Here are a few simple steps to help you recover from poor choices and change your life:

1. **Never try to hide what you have done wrong.** If you know you have done something wrong, find someone to talk to who can help you process your choices. Don’t act like a bad choice is no big deal; it is!
2. **Focus on what changes you need to make in your thoughts and actions to avoid making the same poor choices.** This could mean changing your routines and finding new friends to hang around. It is up to you to make changing your character a priority, because the truth is, no one else can do it for you.
3. **Once you have decided on what changes you need to make, start applying those changes to your actions and interactions with others.** *Knowing* what needs to be done and *doing* what needs to be done are two different things.

Some irresponsible choices can affect you for the rest of your life, because the consequences of some decisions are irreversible. For example, if someone dares you to ride your bike down a steep hill and you fall and damage your spine, you could be in a wheelchair for the rest of your life. Experimenting with drugs can cause death on the first try and engaging in premarital sex can lead to pregnancy or an incurable disease the very first time. Don’t risk your health or your life to experiment or experience things you know are risky. If bad things can occur to others who take risks with their lives, recognize that it can occur to you too.

# R IS FOR REPUTATION

**Whether positive or negative,  
you earn your own reputation.**

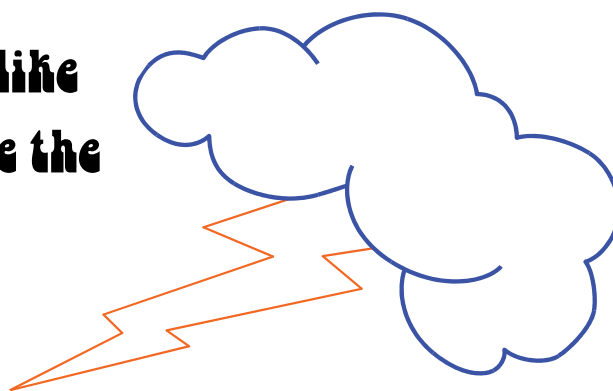
When you are responsible and maintain your moral character, you can earn a positive reputation. Your **reputation** is *how you are known by others*. Your reputation can be positive or negative, and is based upon whether or not you maintain a responsible character. Often a person's reputation can be summed up in simple statements, such as: "You can trust him; he won't let you down," or "She's dependable; I'd trust her with my life." On the other hand, it could be summed up with statements, as: "Don't leave your bag open when he's around," or, "I wouldn't trust her if she was the last person on earth."

Have you ever met someone and after you were introduced, the person said, "I've heard a lot about you"? Does it make you nervous? Do you wonder what it is they've heard? People can hear about you, and form opinions about your character, long before they meet you. This is because our reputations precede us. Making poor choices can stick with us for a long time and close doors to opportunities that may have been opened to us if we had made better choices.

Here is a simple fact of life: if you make irresponsible decisions, you can earn a negative reputation. Often, someone with a negative reputation is treated with contempt or scorn. In other words, people won't hide the fact that they dislike that individual. For example, if you have earned the reputation of being a gossip, you will find that conversations will stop when you enter a room, and no one will tell you anything that matters to them. A negative reputation can cause one to lose friends and opportunities.



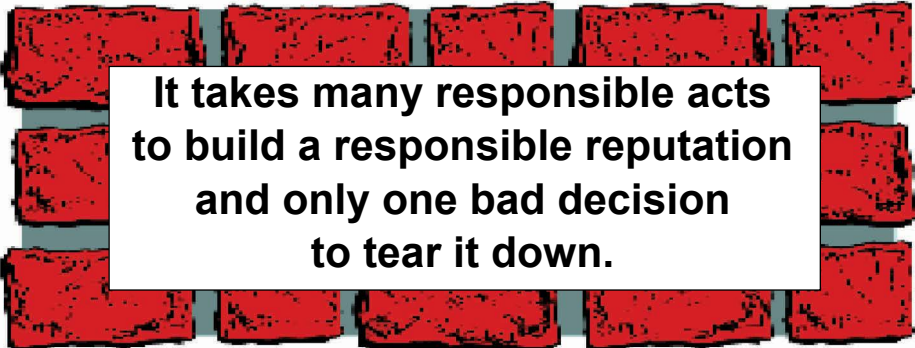
**Having a bad reputation is like seeing the dark clouds before the rain.**



If you have made some irresponsible choices and now have a bad reputation, then begin right now to start changing the way you think and act. Earlier in this chapter, you learned how to recover when you have made a bad choice. Use those same steps to change your character and your reputation. Your reputation won't change overnight and it may take some time before others realize that you are trying to change. In the meantime, don't get discouraged if no one notices the "new you" right away. You must be determined to apply self-control and discipline to be a responsible person, because it is the right thing to do, and not to get others to notice. Your acts of kindness and dependability must be demonstrated over a period of time before you are recognized as being responsible in those areas. Once you are recognized as a responsible person, you must continue to consistently maintain your moral character.

A positive reputation opens the doors to many opportunities, and rewards. A responsible person is respected and admired by peers, parents, and teachers. Can you imagine being given positions of leadership without asking for them? This occurs when you have a reputation for being responsible. People are glad to know that there are those they can trust to follow instructions, to be truthful, and dependable.

The rewards of having a responsible character can follow you into adulthood. Having a responsible character can help you to be honest in business dealings, fair, and respectful to others. So continue to build and maintain a responsible character, the rewards are unlimited.

A graphic of a brick wall made of red bricks with grey mortar. In the center of the wall is a white rectangular sign with a black border. The sign contains the text: 

**It takes many responsible acts to build a responsible reputation and only one bad decision to tear it down.**

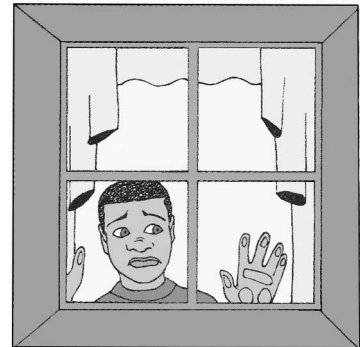


# Putting It All Together

Now that you know how important it is to maintain a positive character and build a positive reputation, what advice can you give to others who are trying to develop responsibility as a character trait, or who are dealing with someone who is not acting responsibly? Read the following letters to the Peaceful Solution, then, write your response on the lines provided. Remember to encourage the letter writers to make responsible decisions, and to use self-control and discipline to arrive at a peaceful solution. This will enable them to develop positive characters at the same time.

1. Dear Peaceful Solution,

My brother is ten years older than I am and he has already moved out of our parent’s home. He lives with roommates near the college he attends. He keeps promising me he will come by to see me, or take me to the park, you know, brother stuff, but he never keeps his word. The other day, he called and told me he was on his way so I should get ready, but he didn’t show up. Later that night, I called him to find out if he was okay, and he said he had gotten side tracked, and that’s why he didn’t come over. What should I do?



—Fed Up in Fresno

Dear Fed Up,

(Do not allow the failed promises of your brother to discourage you from maintaining a positive relationship with him. Tell him you really look forward to spending time with him when he makes plans with you, but when he doesn’t keep his word by showing up and doesn’t call to cancel, you are worried. By doing so, you will help him to realize how not acting in a more responsible manner affects you and probably others.)

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## 2. Dear Peaceful Solution,

I have had the same best friend since kindergarten. We have spent most of our lives together, but since we started junior high school we have drifted apart. My friend is so busy hanging out with the “in crowd” that she doesn’t even hear me when I say, “Hi.” I don’t recall doing or saying anything to upset her, so I don’t know why she’s ignoring me. What should I do?



—Lonely in Lewiston

Dear Lonely,

(When the opportunity arises, ask your friend what you did to bring about a change in your relationship. Be willing to take responsibility for your actions. Most importantly, make an effort to branch out and make new friends who show respect, concern, compassion and responsibility towards others.)

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## 3. Dear Peaceful Solution,

Up until the other day, I had never intentionally stolen anything in my life. I started at a new school and met some new girls who kept telling me I was *too* nice. On the way home from school, one of my new friends dared me to steal something out of a convenience store. I told her no, but she and the other girls kept pressuring me to do it. Although I know that stealing is wrong, I did it anyway because I was afraid they wouldn’t like me anymore. I got caught. The store’s manager called my parents and my friends told everyone at school. Now, I have a reputation as a thief. I feel horrible. I want people to know that I am not a bad person and that I am not a thief. What should I do?



—Humiliated in Hampton

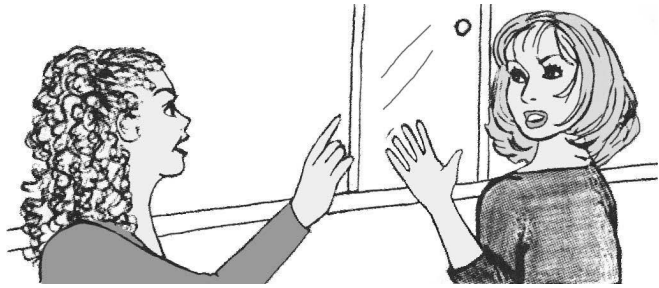
Dear Humiliated,

(Learn from your actions and be determined to stand up for what is right, rather than give into negative peer pressure in the future. It won’t be easy to build your reputation back, but just keep practicing self-control and being accountable for your actions and eventually others will take notice, as well.)

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4. Dear Peaceful Solution,

My friend, Michelle, asked me to go to Carl's house next week for a party. His parents aren't going to be home, and because he is already in high school, they trust him to stay alone. I told her



it was a bad idea, and that I wasn't going to go. The only problem is she insists she's going anyway. I don't want her to get into any trouble, but I don't want to betray her trust in me either. Help! What should I do?

—Torn in Toledo

Dear Torn,

*(A true friend does not concern herself about betraying a confidence if she could prevent her friend from getting into trouble. The responsible thing is to inform a trusted adult about your friend's decision.)*

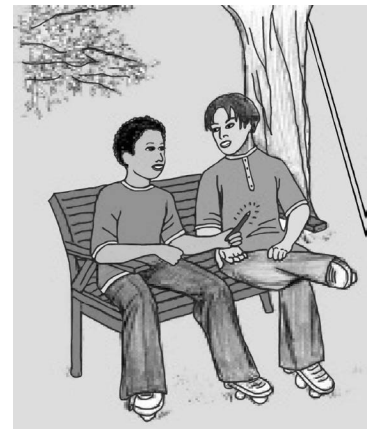
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5. Dear Peaceful Solution,

I hang out with these guys who used to be really cool, but now they've taken up a new hobby. Suddenly, they're into destroying people's property, like their mailboxes and writing on walls with spray cans. I live in a small town and it's not like there are a lot of boys my age. So basically, if I stop hanging with them, I don't have friends. I guess I just don't know why they changed. I know I don't want to get into any trouble, but I don't want them to get into any trouble either. What should I do?



—From Confused in Capeville

Dear Confused,

*(In order to help your friends, you will have to inform an adult who can effectively handle the problem. Do not allow your need for friends to force you into lowering your standard of responsible behavior towards the property of others.)*

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# What I Have Learned

- ☑ Just like many things in life, a responsible character must be maintained.
- ☑ When I apply self-control, consistency, and discipline to my decisions and actions I can maintain a responsible character.
- ☑ When people do not maintain a responsible character, one irresponsible choice could negatively affect them for life.
- ☑ When I focus on maintaining a responsible character, I reduce the opportunity to make mistakes that could change the outcome of my life.
- ☑ I must also maintain responsible interactions with others. This means not doing or saying anything to intentionally disrespect another person.
- ☑ My reputation precedes me. If I earn a negative reputation by being irresponsible in my choices and actions, I can disqualify myself from many opportunities and friendships.
- ☑ By maintaining a responsible character, I can earn the reputation of being honest and dependable.
- ☑ Responsible people are trusted to follow instructions, fulfill their obligations, and treat others with respect.

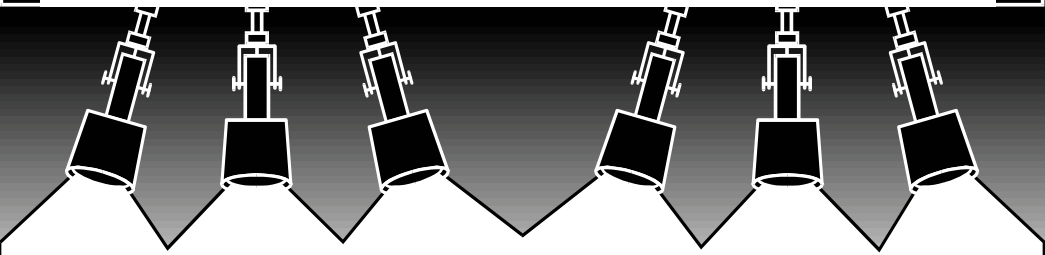


**“It is easier to build a responsible reputation than to fix an irresponsible one.”**

**—The Peaceful Solution**

**reputation**

## Enrichment Activities

- 
1. Develop your own short story about someone who made an irresponsible choice, recognized the mistake and took responsibility to make better decisions in the future.
  2. Write a short essay telling how you want your reputation to be.
  3. Complete the **“Just For Fun”** activity on page 97.

# Just For Fun

Unscramble each word and write it on the line.

1. tisstnocen      consistent
2. regnad          danger
3. yedleda        delayed
4. nimterednoita determination
5. sipcidnile      discipline
6. catratifinoig gratification
7. lupsiveim      impulsive
8. niatniam        maintain
9. sipernolaty    personality
10. zercogein     recognize
11. tupnotirea    reputation
12. facesiric      sacrifice

## Word List

maintain  
danger  
reputation  
discipline  
gratification  
impulsive

personality  
consistent  
recognize  
sacrifice  
delayed  
determination



# Chapter Six

## Responsibility And Society

### Note To The Teacher

**W**e currently live in a society where crime has become commonplace. The amount of violence shown by the entertainment industry and found in real life has left many young people desensitized to the effects of crime on the individual, the community and society as a whole.

Teens are committing more crimes than ever before. The threat of school shootings has not diminished. Parents fear sending their children to school, wondering if they will see them alive at the end of the day. Teachers are at a greater risk in their profession, due to school violence.

The *Peaceful Solution Character Education Incorporated* believes we have a responsibility to teach our students a better way to live. It is our goal to turn the negative character traits of selfishness, greed, aggression, hate and a lack of self-control into the more positive traits of respect, self-control, and responsibility.

In this lesson, students will learn:

- That there is a direct correlation between a lack of moral responsibility and crime and violence.
- Some of the measures society uses to reduce crime and violence.
- The value of choosing to act and live in a morally responsible way.



# Lesson Plan

## Responsibility And Society

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn that a lack of moral responsibility to others results in crime and violence within our society.

### MATERIALS

- ▶ *Teacher's Audio Lessons*
- ▶ CD player
- ▶ Students' handbooks

### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson, **“It’s Not A One Time Thing,”** by asking students the following questions:
  - a. How can you maintain a responsible character? (*You can maintain a responsible character by practicing self-control, consistently making right choices, developing discipline and treating others with respect and compassion.*)
  - b. What are some of the rewards of maintaining a responsible character? (*Answers may vary, but should include: you can earn a positive reputation, you will be trusted, and you will be given positions of leadership.*)
2. Ask students, who remembers what it means to be morally responsible to others? (*Answers may vary, but should include: not stealing from them or destroying their property; respecting them physically and verbally, and not intentionally hurting them in any way.*) Tell students that in today’s lesson, they will learn that when people in society lack moral responsibility towards others, the result is crime and violence. Have students turn to **pages 99-100** in their handbooks and read the **“Introduction”** and **“The Character Of Crime.”**
3. Tell students that it takes only a small percentage of morally irresponsible people to adversely affect the majority. Have students take turns reading the article found on **page 101**. Allow students to complete **“Understanding The Main Point,”** found on **page 102**, and discuss their answers as a class.

4. Have students turn to **page 103** in their handbooks to the section, “**Crimes In The Millions,**” and analyze the chart. Discuss and answer the “**Critical Thinking**” questions, found on **page 104**, as a class. As the class determines the correct answers, allow time for students to write the answers in the spaces provided in their handbooks. Emphasize that a lack of moral responsibility, coupled with a lack of self-control, are the causes of the crimes that negatively affect society. Briefly go over the information on **pages 105-107**, explaining society’s answer to crime is the prison system. Tell students the different types of prisons.
5. Play the song, “**Do Not Steal,**” from the *Teacher’s Audio Lessons* and discuss the lyrics found on **page 108**. Ask students the following questions:
  - a. What emotions can someone feel when someone steals from them? (*Answers may vary, but should include: anger, sadness, frustration, and revenge*)
  - b. What are some of the consequences to society because of stealing? (*Answers may vary, but should include: children are separated from their parents when they become incarcerated, people are left hungry without a way to provide for their needs leading to poverty, wars and death.*)
6. Tell students that minors constitute one-fifth of the arrests made yearly. Read the section, “**Juvenile Delinquents,**” found on **page 109**. Analyze the corresponding graph of juvenile arrests found on **page 110** and discuss the “**Challenge Question,**” as a class, by allowing as many students as possible to share their opinions about the causes of juvenile crime. Summarize the discussion by explaining that because juveniles generally commit crimes in groups, peer pressure and conformity are leading causes. Choose a student to read “**Straight Talk**” on **page 111**. Students can brainstorm answers to the activity and write relevant answers in their handbooks.
7. Tell students that just as people learn how to be violent and aggressive, they can also learn to be compassionate and respectful towards others. When all members of society are morally responsible to each other crime, violence and aggression will be things of the past. Have students turn to **pages 114-115** in their handbooks and read the section, “**Education Is The Answer.**” As homework, have students do the activity on **page 115**.
8. Conclude the lesson by telling students that in order to educate society on the value of moral responsibility, we must begin by educating every person. Have students read the section, “**What I Have Learned,**” on **page 116**. Emphasize that crime will no longer plague society when everyone learns that we have a responsibility to treat others morally.

“In order to have a society of responsible people, each individual must be willing to accept responsibility for his choices and the outcome of his life.”

—The Peaceful Solution

# Chapter Six

## Responsibility And Society

### Introduction

**W**herever you see things accomplished and progress made, someone has been responsible. Did you ever wonder who took responsibility to build and develop roads, schools, stores, and all the other buildings and services that we have grown accustomed to?

Within the last fifty years, our society has been responsible for inventing and producing many technological advances. Although fifty years ago might seem like ancient times to you, it really wasn't that long ago. In fact, most of your grandparents and some of your teachers will tell you that fifty years ago seems like yesterday to them. Fifty years ago, television was just invented and it was only black and white, there were no personal computers, video games, microwave ovens, Walkmans, CD players or even CDs; and that's only a few things that weren't developed yet.

Although we live in a society where technology is increasing by leaps and bounds, is our moral responsibility to each other increasing at the same rate? Do we treat others with compassion or do we make irresponsible choices that jeopardize the lives and safety of others? You can be the judge, as we explore this chapter, as to whether or not we live in a morally responsible society.

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**The overall trend in all forms of crime  
has been upward since 1945.**

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# THE CHARACTER OF CRIME

One way to determine if individuals in a society are morally responsible for each other is to examine the rate of crime in that society. **Crime** is defined as *a grave or serious offense especially against morality*. Crimes such as burglary, rape, murder, and assault (*to be physically aggressive*) are examples of ways people are morally irresponsible to each other.

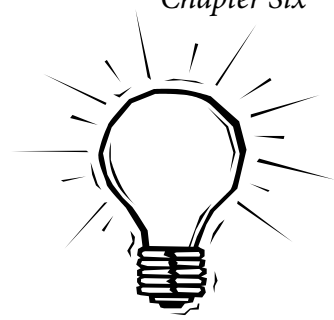
Remember, morally responsible people are considerate and compassionate. They use discipline and self-control to make choices that demonstrate respect for themselves and others. They are people of integrity. There are many people in society who are morally responsible to others.

However, there are also many others who have not learned the value of being morally responsible so they are likely to possess negative character traits, such as, selfishness, greed, hate, lack of self-control, and aggression. Therefore, they are more likely to commit crimes. When even one crime is committed, theft for example, it can change the way people conduct their lives.

When people know that there is a thief in their neighborhood, they become fearful that their belongings will be stolen or their house burglarized. They make sure their doors are locked and close all windows at night. Some people buy dogs to scare off would-be thieves, and others spend thousands of dollars for security systems to protect their homes. Crime changes the quality of people's lives.



# Think About It...



**At the heart of every crime  
is a morally irresponsible person.**

Have you watched the news or read a newspaper recently? How many reports about crimes did you notice?

**Read the following report about a crime, then complete the activity on page 102.**

## **Counselor beaten, set on fire; teen girls arrested**

by Richard Liebson, Shawn Cohen and Kristoffer A. Garin

MOUNT PLEASANT—A counselor at a Mount Pleasant center for troubled teens was in serious condition at the Westchester Medical Center yesterday after surviving a savage attack by eight girls who police said beat her, set her afire and poured chlorine bleach on her face.

“I’m shocked by the viciousness of this,” Mount Pleasant Police Chief Louis Alagno said of the assault at the Pleasantville Cottage School. “It’s hard to believe that we’re dealing with children here.”

Six of the eight girls—two 16-year-olds and four 15-year-olds—were arraigned last night on charges of attempted second-degree murder. The older ones were sent without bail to the Westchester County Jail in Valhalla. The others were to be sent to the Woodfield Cottage juvenile detention center.

During her ordeal, the 32-year-old counselor was punched, kicked, stomped and scratched by the girls before “they doused her with rubbing alcohol and set it on fire,” Alagno said. “They continued to beat her and then doused her face with chlorine bleach.”

They also cut her hair with scissors, beat her with a telephone and kicked her down two flights of steps, according to the

charges read in court last night.

Alagno said the victim—the lone adult at the cottage where 16 girls live—was unable to escape or call for help. She had just begun the 11 pm to 7 am shift, taking over for two counselors who work during the day.

The attack ended sometime after midnight, when the girls saw some adults walking toward the cottage and fled, police said. At that point, the counselor managed to run to another cottage for help. She was in severe pain but lucid when a cottage employee drove her to the hospital.

Richard Altman, chief executive officer of the JCCA, called the attack “a gross violation of the community norm at Pleasantville Cottage School. It is so far out of bounds that we believe the girls involved in the assault have to be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.”

While not offering any excuses for their actions, Denis Gufarotti, resident director, noted that the girls were assigned to the cottage because they have emotional problems. “These are kids who have tragic backgrounds, kids who have been abused and whose families have struggled themselves,” he said.

[www.thejournalnews.com](http://www.thejournalnews.com)

## Understanding The Main Point

1. How was the victim of the crime affected? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(The counselor was beaten, burned and had chlorine bleach poured on her face. She was in severe pain.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How do you think this crime may affect the victim's family? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Answers may vary, but should include: the victim's family may be sad and shocked to hear of how she was viciously abused. )*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How do you think other counselors at Mount Pleasant may be affected? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Answers may vary, but should include: other counselors may be afraid while at work. They may ask that two people be scheduled for the 11pm to 7am shift. They may even want to change jobs.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How were the girls who committed the crime affected? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(The older girls are now in jail and facing charges for attempted second-degree murder. The younger ones were sent to another detention center. By committing this crime they have changed the outcome of their futures.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Here Is Something To Think About

If one crime could have so many negative consequences, how do you think 15 million crimes annually would affect society?

## Crimes In The Millions

Crimes have become so commonplace in our society that people have become desensitized to it and its effects. In other words, people do not always react with shock, outrage and disgust when they hear about crime. They just accept it as a normal way of life.

The following is a chart of the number of arrests in the United States during the year 1997.

<b>CRIME</b>	<b>NUMBER OF ARRESTS</b>
Drug abuse violations.....	1,583,600
<b>Driving under the influence</b> .....	<b>1,477,300</b>
Larceny-theft.....	1,472,600
<b>Assault</b> .....	<b>1,395,800</b>
Disorderly conduct.....	811,100
<b>Drunkenness</b> .....	<b>636,400</b>
Fraud .....	414,600
<b>Weapons: carrying, possessing, etc.</b> .....	<b>218,900</b>
Runaways.....	196,100
<b>Curfew and loitering law violations</b> .....	<b>182,700</b>
Motor vehicle theft .....	167,000
<b>Sex offenses</b> .....	<b>101,900</b>
Arson .....	20,000
<b>Murder and manslaughter</b> .....	<b>18,290</b>

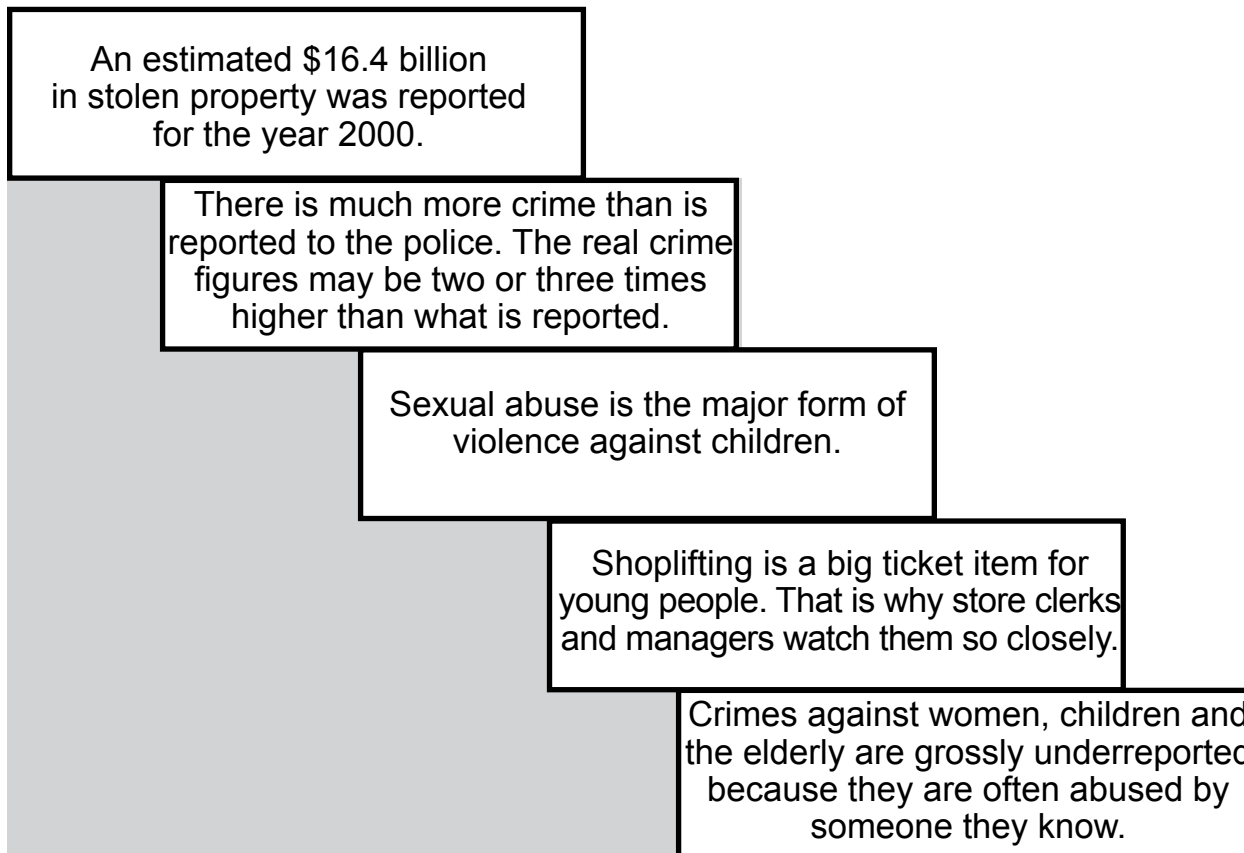
*Note: Data are for 1997. Arrest totals are based on reporting agencies and estimates for unreported areas. Because of rounding, figures may not add up to totals.*  
*Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Report*

Keep in mind that many criminals escape arrest, and many more crimes go unreported and unsolved each year. Hence, the figures reported in this chart of arrests in the United States represent a fraction of the actual crimes that occurred that year.

# Critical Thinking

Use the information from the chart to answer the following questions.

1. How many types of arrests could be due to lack of self-control or discipline? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(All of them could be attributed to lack of self-control or discipline.)*
2. How many of these crimes are a form of theft? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Larceny, fraud, and motor vehicle thefts are crimes that are forms of theft.)*
3. List four crimes that are a form of risky behavior? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Drug abuse violations, assault, drunkenness and sex offenses are forms of risky behavior.)*
4. Why do you think breaking curfew and loitering are against the law? *(Answers may vary, but should include: breaking curfew and loitering are often a pre-cursor for other types of criminal activities and risky behaviors, such as selling drugs, drunkenness and prostitution.)*



# Society's Response To Crime

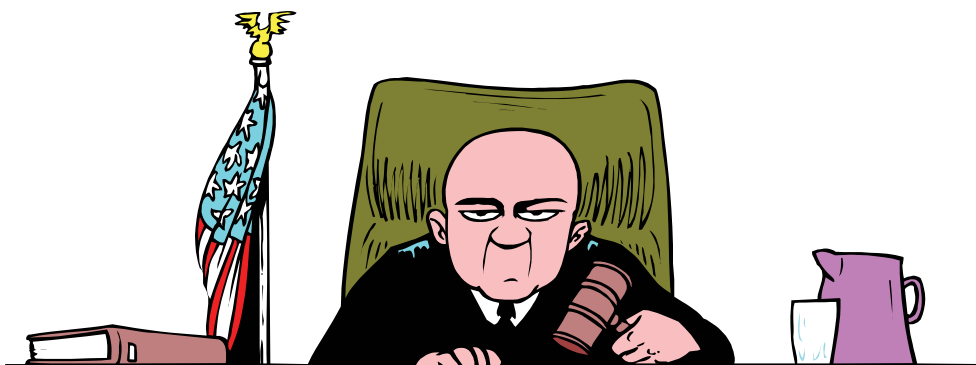
Historically, society's response to criminals has been to incarcerate those who break the law in order to protect law-abiding citizens and reduce the number of crimes. Once a person is found guilty of a crime, he or she can be placed in either jail or prison, based on the seriousness of the crime, and the duration of the sentence.

Prisons and jails are different. Jails are mainly used for short-term sentences of usually one year or less. They are also used to house people in protective custody and juveniles who are waiting to be transferred to a detention center. Prisons, on the other hand, are for long-term offenders. They offer educational and vocational training, as well as counseling in an effort to help inmates change their lives. As of 1998, in the United States, there were 93 federal prisons and 1,430 state prisons.

Because children also commit criminal acts, society has had to make special arrangements for offenders under the age of 18. Children cannot be placed in adult prisons even though they have committed the same crimes because they would be at greater risk for all forms of abuse. They are often placed in Juvenile Correctional Institutions. A more common name is "Kiddie Jail."

## The main purpose of prisons or jails is to:

- ▶ Protect Society
- ▶ Prevent crime
- ▶ Rehabilitate



# Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Prisons... But Were Afraid To Ask

There are three different classes of prisons—minimum, medium and maximum-security.

**1. Minimum-security prisons:**

- Can be mistaken for college campuses.
- Inmates are first time offenders convicted of non-violent crimes.
- Inmates are given a fair amount of trust that they will obey the rules.
- Inmates are given some freedom to move about the property.

**2. Medium-security prisons:**

- Frequently house inmates convicted of crimes that are both violent and non-violent.
- Inmates often share the same living areas.
- Security guards monitor the movements of the prisoners.
- Freedom is severely limited.

**3. Maximum-security prisons:**

- House the most violent criminals.
- Inmates are isolated from one another in single cells.
- Inmates are confined to their cells for 23 hours a day, coming out for one hour only to exercise and shower.

Prison life in general is violent and unpredictable. Prisoners routinely abuse one another physically, verbally, emotionally and sexually. The United States Correction Officials reported that there were over 30,000 inmate assaults on other inmates. There is a high rate of crime even within the prisons. Inmate's belongings are routinely stolen; some are forced to give up their belongings, such as soap, toilet paper and food. In addition, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, are prevalent in prison.

Due to overcrowding, which exists in most U.S prisons, prisons are constantly being built to accommodate the ever-increasing number of people convicted of crimes. The overcrowded prisons and jails add to the violence and abuse that already exist.

In an effort to rehabilitate inmates, prisons offer educational and vocational programs. A vocational program teaches skills related to a specific job or trade. Although these programs are available, only 20-25 percent of prisoners are motivated to participate.



## Do Not Steal

Have you ever been angry?  
 Have you ever been sad?  
 Because somebody took away  
 Something that you had  
 Was it a loved one or something you worked for  
 In any case its time to say no more, no more

No need that you have  
 Is worth stealing from another man  
 When you take without permission  
 You've made the wrong decision  
 The consequences of those that use no self-control  
 Oh, are felt by all the world, all the world

I have seen children with no fathers  
 And fathers' sons and daughters stripped away  
 And I saw their pain  
 I've seen people with no water  
 And for the food they had they were slaughtered  
 All this is a shame, oh a shame

### CHORUS

Do not steal  
 Do not take what is not yours  
 Can't you see that that's what war and suffering come from  
 You will not be ashamed  
 If you do not use others for your gain  
 If you do not steal  
 Do not steal in any way

There are things that we can and should not do  
 And everything—it must be guided by rules *[sic]*  
 We must respect all authority and never endanger another's safety  
 When we set and live by all these honest goals  
 We are always showing proper self-control

### CHORUS

Do not steal  
 Do not take what is not yours  
 Can't you see that that's what war and suffering come from  
 You will not be ashamed  
 If you do not use others for your gain  
 If you do not steal  
 Do not steal in any way

# Juvenile Delinquents

Young people who are morally irresponsible towards others and commit crimes also suffer the consequences of their actions. Those who break the law are called juvenile delinquents. A **juvenile delinquent** is a *minor* (someone who has not yet reached the age of 18) *who has committed a crime*. Recent studies indicate that almost one fifth of the arrests made yearly are of minors.

Minors are most frequently arrested for crimes such as, vandalism, arson, truancy (missing school), running away, breaking curfew, shoplifting, and underage drinking. In addition, an increasing number of minors are also being



arrested for crimes such as rape, robbery, and murder. The seriousness of many of these crimes has caused many juvenile courts to lower the age of accountability and punish minors as they do adults.

Since minors cannot be housed with adult prisoners, special arrangements for their confinement must be provided. Correctional Institutions for minors can be either secure (meaning locked) or nonsecure (meaning unlocked). Some nonsecure institutions are similar to minimum-security prisons. The rooms are set up like dormitory rooms and the grounds are like college campuses. Others resemble camps or ranches.

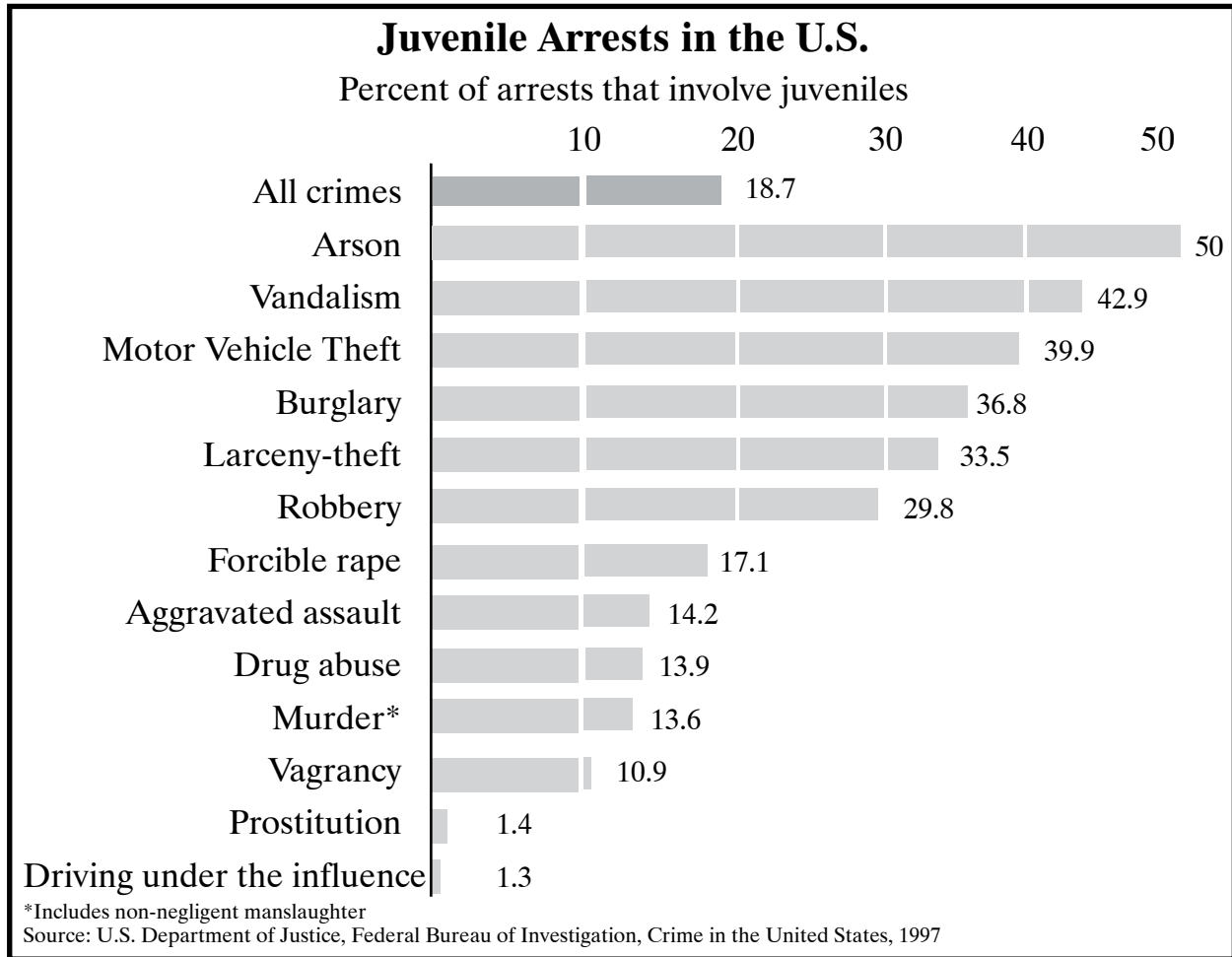
But don't let this fool you; being a juvenile delinquent confined to a correctional facility, even if it is a nonsecure one, is no walk in the park. These offenders are closely watched and must follow all rules in order to be released. On the other hand, secure institutions are similar to medium-security prisons; juveniles have single cells and their freedom is severely restricted.

Generally speaking, juveniles spend less time incarcerated than adults convicted for the same crime. They are usually released when they reach adulthood. There are circumstances where this is not always the case. For example, if the victim of a juvenile crime was seriously injured or killed, the juvenile can remain imprisoned for life.



Studies indicate that juveniles usually commit crimes as a means of fitting in with their friends. Usually more than one person at a time is arrested for crimes such as arson, vandalism and burglary. These crimes are often done out of boredom or as a way to have fun.

The following is a graph of the types of crimes for which juveniles are arrested.



## Challenge Question

Do you think negative conformity and peer pressure might influence juveniles to commit crimes? Explain your response on the lines below.

*(Answers may vary, but should include: yes, negative conformity and peer pressure contribute to crimes among juveniles. Many of the crimes that juveniles are charged with are committed in groups. Instead of making morally responsible choices and encouraging each other to build positive character traits, they, instead, dare each other to make poor choices.)*

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## STRAIGHT TALK

If your friends try to talk you into committing a crime for excitement or fun, then consider if it will also be fun to get arrested, convicted and jailed. There are many ways to have fun, and committing crimes isn't one of them. Try starting a business together; you could mow lawns in your neighborhood or learn how to fix cars. You could even start a reading club; the positive possibilities are endless. The bottom line is, you can behave responsibly, stay out of trouble and still have fun!



List some other positive, moral ways you and your friends could have fun.

*(Answers may vary, but should include: study together; learn to sew; play board games; start a hobby together like gardening, singing, or playing instruments; talk about what you want to be when you become an adult; go fishing.)*

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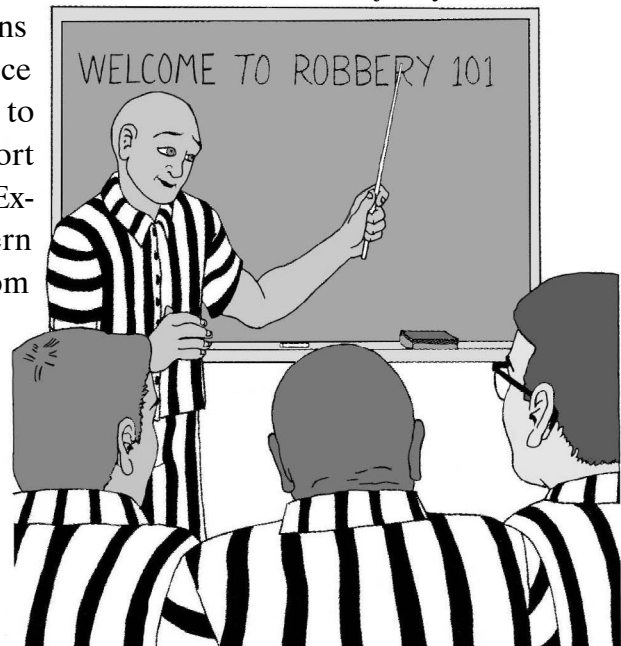
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“Life is a journey that we are privileged to take; full of treasures, dreams and friends we make.”

## *Do prisons or correctional institutions help to stop crime and teach people to be morally responsible?*

Being in prison is not a walk in the park. Prison life is dangerous and unpredictable. Once a person serves time, you would also think he would have learned his lesson and dedicate himself to never committing another crime. *The reality, however, is that sixty-five percent of those released from prison commit more crimes and return to prison within a short period of time.* This is called **recidivism** and it is an excellent way to measure how well the prison system is working in regards to rehabilitating its inmates. Although 35% of inmates do not return to prison once they have served their time, 65% is too large a number to ignore.

Some experts believe that prisons do not rehabilitate the majority of their inmates. They feel that prisons are a breeding ground for violence and disease. Inmates are confined to overcrowded cells and very little effort is made to change their behavior. Experts also agree that the way modern prisons are set-up, inmates learn from each other how to gain more skills in their criminal behavior. As a result, inmates usually leave prison worse than when they went in. For instance, thieves have boasted that while in prison they met with other prisoners and shared information on how to become better thieves.



## **Can Anything Else Be Done?**

Because the prison system has not been very successful in reducing crime, other measures to deal with crime and reduce overcrowding in prisons have been implemented.

**Front Door Solutions.** This intervention was designed to help offenders take responsibility for their crimes. For example, they must make restitution to the victim for any loss or injuries they may have suffered as a result of the crime. If the perpetrator is unemployed or on drugs, he must find a job and stop using drugs. If he can comply with these conditions, then he can avoid serving time or have his sentence reduced.

**Boot camp.** Boot camp is similar to basic training in the military. It basically targets young people and teaches, through strict physical training and hard labor, the importance of making responsible choices. The Georgia Correctional Institute established the first boot camp in 1983. By 1989, thirty-two U.S. states were operating fifty-six boot camps.

Although both of these interventions have had some success, neither have significantly reduced the rate of crime. The problem with prisons, boot camps, and Front Door Solutions is that society intervenes after the crime has been committed. The lives of the victims and perpetrators have already been changed forever.

Our current system deals with the lack of moral responsibility after the damage has already been done. What do you think would be a better way to deal with crime in society?

Write a brief description of what you think could be done to deter crime.

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### Did You Know That...

Every year in the United States alone, over 18,000 people are murdered. There are also over 32,000 rapes, and 300,000 homes and businesses are vandalized.

**“No amount of punishment or intervention can change the outcome after the crime has already been committed and the damage done.”**

~ The Peaceful Solution

*If prisons and correctional institutions do not teach people to be morally responsible to each other, what does?*

## **Education Is The Answer**

The key word in this question is the word **teach**. Remember, responsibility is developed through instruction and practice. By studying the *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* you are learning the value of being responsible to yourself and others. In order to improve our society, each individual, including prisoners, must be taught to be responsible for his or her own thoughts, actions, and attitudes.

Character education must be taught at home, at school, and in prisons. In the same manner that prisoners are taught vocational skills and are allowed to earn high school diplomas and college degrees, they can also be taught character education. By eliminating negative character traits such as violence, aggression, selfishness, and greed, while developing positive traits like respect, self-control, and compassion, prisoners, and everyone else in society, can learn the value of being morally responsible toward others and themselves. When correctional institutions combine vocational and educational skills along with character education they can teach inmates to become morally responsible.

## **How Are You Being Influenced?**

In addition to getting an education in positive character, people must also be aware of how they are being influenced. Television, movies, songs and other forms of entertainment that portray violent acts and sexually explicit material can influence people to see violence as a way to solve problems, and sexually promiscuous behavior as normal. In fact, behavior that society deems as unlawful and dangerous is glorified on screen. For example, in some movies the “bad guy” is actually the hero who gets away with stealing a million dollars, murdering all the cops, and then gets the girl of his dreams.

Did you know that if you continue to watch violent movies, by the time you are 18 you would have witnessed over 200,000 acts of violence? This figure does not include other forms of hostility you will see in real life.

It is up to you to be aware of how you are being influenced. If you respond with violence to situations that upset or anger you, recognize

that this is not normal and could lead to you or someone else getting hurt. Make responsible choices in regards to managing your emotions. Do not make the same mistake that so many others have made and be influenced to handle frustrations with violence and aggression. By handling anger and frustration in non-violent ways, you can keep yourself and others safe. Remember, we are all morally responsible to each other.

Being a positive moral example to others is one way to change society. What are some other ways you can help educate others about the importance of a positive character and how to be morally responsible to others?

1. *(Examples include: write your congressman and ask that Character Education be a mandatory part of every school's curriculum.)*

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2. *(Mandate character education in prisons.)*

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3. *(Offer character education as parenting classes.)*

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4. *(Volunteer to teach children in community programs, summer camps, after-school programs, and daycare centers.)*

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5. *(Advertise the Peaceful Solution on bulletin boards, infomercials, television programs, and other media tools.)*

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**A solid education must include how to develop a positive character.**

## What I Have Learned

- ☑ Although technology has increased by leaps and bounds, morally responsible behavior has not increased at the same rate.
- ☑ Moral responsibility in society is measured by the rate of crime and number of arrests.
- ☑ A high rate of crime indicates that, as a society, many people do not value having positive moral character.
- ☑ Negative character traits such as greed, aggression, selfishness and lack of self-control, along with lack of moral responsibility to others, can lead to crime.
- ☑ Society deals with criminals by imprisoning them as a means to stop crime, keep society safe, and to rehabilitate.
- ☑ Although prisons deter some from committing more crimes, prisons, in general, do not successfully rehabilitate their inmates. Sixty-five percent of inmates released from prison commit additional crimes and return to prison within a short period of time.
- ☑ Education plays a major role in teaching people the value of obtaining positive character and being morally responsible toward each other.
- ☑ If each individual values positive character and learns to be morally responsible toward others, we will have a morally responsible society.

**If you maintain a positive character  
and are morally responsible to others,  
you can make a difference in society.**

## Enrichment Activities

1. Read the article, “**Any Mother’s Loss Deserves Our Attention,**” on **page 118.**
2. Read the narrative in the Additional Reading section on **pages 119-125,** “**The Letter.**”
3. Complete the activity sheet, “**Benefits To Society,**” found on **page 126.**
4. Complete the “**Just For Fun**” activity on **page 127.**



# Any Mother's Loss Deserves Our Attention

Elaine Soerens

February 4, 1997

The coffee shop in the hotel was nearly deserted Saturday morning, as I hoped it would be. I supposed other conference guests who bothered to get up for breakfast were taking advantage of free doughnuts and coffee served in the atrium.

My seminar the night before, an hour of guided discussion on issues of personal loss, had gone well, I thought, but I still felt drained, and I sought a quiet place to read the morning paper and sip my tea.

Virginia walked in, a tall woman, slender, dignified. I remembered seeing her at the seminar and noting her elegant beauty. Without asking, she ignored empty tables all around, pulled out a chair at my table and sat across from me. The waitress took her order and we exchanged the usual pleasantries: The conference was great, the keynote speaker wonderful, we both enjoyed the delicious banquet.

I'm not sure when it started, but between bites of bagel and sips of tea I noticed tears sliding down her cheeks.

She answered my questioning look with a nod, acknowledging that, yes, she was dealing with loss. She told how in her inner-city neighborhood, news flashed from house to house, like a forest fire.

## Two lives lost.

She told of the afternoon when the news was of another murder and how she recognized the name of the young victim as one of her son Christopher's friends, "one of the boys he hung with." She said her first thought was of Christopher, and how he would handle hearing the news.

When she heard him come home in the middle of the day, run into his room and slam the door, she hurried to comfort him.

"I walked in and saw him, sitting on his bed, staring at the floor," she went on, tears running in a steady stream now. "When I looked at his tennis shoes, I knew."

Neither of us spoke for a moment.

"His shoes . . .," she whispered. "Blood . . . on his tennis shoes."

Virginia said she no longer knew her son. He was serving a life sentence in a federal penitentiary. "Drugs took him," she said.

We sat together silently, lost in our own thoughts, for a long time.

The newspaper was still on the table, and I remembered what I was reading when Virginia came in. I'd scanned the front page when the big story, right under the latest ball game results, was about a kid shot because another kid wanted his expensive athletic shoes. I'd noted the area where the murder had taken place, and after ascertaining that it was in the inner city and not likely anybody important, I'd flipped to the comics.

Between the second and third frames of Dilbert, it hit me that in a few seconds' time I'd dismissed the murder of some mother's child as just another case of one punk shooting another. Robberies and murders are so commonplace in our cities today that many of us don't bother reading more than the first paragraph...

Somewhere in Virginia's neighborhood, another mother grieves her loss. Her son is dead. Two women, grieving the loss of their sons, and of course, no comfort to one another.

I can't get Virginia out of my mind. Her son committed murder. Nobody is saying otherwise. But he is only 20 years old. He is still somebody's kid.

*The Dallas Morning News*

## **Additional Reading**

### **The Letter**

**E**ven in her dreams, Katrina could still hear the screech of the tires and feel her body slam against the passenger door as her sister, Paula, cut the wheel hard to the right to avoid the truck that seemed to suddenly materialize from out of the darkness.

One minute, there was nothing there; the next minute, the truck was coming towards them. At first, Katrina didn't know she was in danger. She was reaching for her report card to show her sister how many A's she had gotten for her first semester at Wilson Middle School. Her father had promised her that if she received all A's that term, he would allow her to take care of her own horse on their family ranch. She had done it! There were many times during the semester that she sacrificed fun in order to study. She had never worked so hard for anything in her eleven years of life. She had her head down, looking in her bag to get the report card, when her sister's gasp made her look up.

Like watching a movie, the time between seeing the truck and feeling the impact, occurred in slow motion. At the time, fright had rendered her unable to scream, but in her dreams she would scream. Her screams would wake her night after night. While she was still in the hospital, the nurse, and then when she came home, her mother, would rush to her side to assure her that it was only a dream and that she was safe.

Her dreams made her feel as if she was reliving the most frightening and painful time of her life, over and over again. Now, three months after the accident, the dreams no longer occurred nightly and she had learned to resist the urge to scream out loud, but they would still awaken her with a startle. She would lay in the darkness, too frightened to go back to sleep, and would listen to the crickets chirp outside her window while waiting for her heartbeat to return to normal. In those moments, she would recall the first few weeks after the accident.

She vaguely remembered when she first woke up in the hospital after the accident. She could hear a murmur of voices, and feel a dull pain in her head and right ankle. At first she didn't understand where she was and had no memory of the accident. Slowly, as the memory of the accident came back in bits and pieces, she understood that she was in a hospital. In a short time, the voices that were a murmur became familiar to her and she realized that they belonged to her parents. Still unable to speak, she laid motionless, listening to her mother.

“She’s going to make it, Marvin. I know she is. She’s going to pull through this.”

“Of course she is, Sarah, but be prepared, it might take a while,” her father responded in a soothing tone.

She wanted to tell them that she was going to make it, but she couldn’t speak and couldn’t move. Frustrated with her inability to communicate, she drifted back into sleep.

She was awakened again, but this time by the sound of a strange voice. Her physician, Dr. Winston, was saying, “Mr. and Mrs. Fraser, there really hasn’t been much change in the last four days. We are still optimistic because her vital signs are strong. She received a severe head injury, and it is always difficult to predict the outcome of those. Much of her recovery will depend on her will to live.”

She wanted so badly to tell them that she was going to be alright. She reached deep within herself and found the strength to speak. The only words that would come out, in barely more than a dry whisper, were “Mom, Dad?”

All three adults looked with surprise and then with joy at the bed where Katrina laid.

“Katrina!” her parents exclaimed at the same time.

All three rushed towards the bed, her parents to hold her hands and comfort her, the doctor to check her pulse and other vital signs. It took every ounce of strength for Katrina to keep her eyes open and focus on her parents.

“Paula,” Katrina whispered. “Where’s Paula?”

Her parents looked at each other. Her father shook his head slightly and then looking back at Katrina, said with a sad smile, “It’s okay, honey. Don’t try to talk too much right now. Everything is going to be okay.” Once she had regained consciousness, her strength came back quickly, surprising Dr. Winston, her parents and the nurses who cared for her. It was then that her parents told her more about the accident and about Paula; they could no longer evade her questions. As her mother helped her to sit up, Katrina again asked, “Mom, where is Paula? Please tell me she’s okay.”

Her mother took an extra second or two to fluff the pillows so that Katrina would have enough support for her head. Sitting down at the edge of the bed, and taking her daughter’s hand in hers, Mrs. Fraser gently told Katrina that Paula had died the day of the accident.

“Paula’s gone? Mom, she was only eighteen! How can she be dead? There must be some kind of mistake. It’s not fair.” The full weight of her

mother's words settled like a stone on her heart. She turned away from her mother and started to cry.

Katrina asked her mother, "How is it that I survived? We were sitting right next to each other."

"The truck hit the driver's side," her mother explained, as tears filled her own eyes.

"I don't understand, Mom," Katrina said as she turned to face her mother. "Why did the accident even occur? Paula is -- was a safe driver, you and Dad always say so."

Overcome by grief, Mrs. Fraser was unable to answer right away. Finally she responded to Katrina's question. In a voice choked by tears she whispered, "because the driver of the truck was drunk. He was only a 16-year-old boy. The police said he was driving over the speed limit on the wrong side of the road, with no headlights on."

"Did he die too?" Katrina asked.

"No," answered Mrs. Fraser. After a long pause she continued, "He broke his arm and had some bruises, but he walked away from the accident."

Shaking her head in disbelief, Katrina replied, "He got a broken arm and Paula is dead? It's not fair Mom, it's not fair."

Three months later, Katrina remembered the day she learned of Paula's death as the worst day of her life. The memory of that day still brought her to tears.

One morning, Katrina awoke to her mother calling her from her doorway. "Katrina, you overslept again. Wake up, or you're going to be late for school."

"Okay, Mom," Katrina replied. She didn't tell her mother that she had been awake half of the night, because of another bad dream. Instead, she hurriedly prepared for school. She had to run to the bus stop to avoid missing the bus.

While in homeroom, Katrina realized that she had, for the second time that week, forgotten her homework. During fourth period she was asked twice to stop daydreaming. She knew that she was not putting forth any effort in her classes and her teachers were becoming concerned. Mrs. Hamilton, her English teacher, asked to speak with her after class while the rest of the class went to lunch.

"Katrina," Mrs. Hamilton began, "I can only imagine how hard it has been on you and your family these last few months. I realize that you must still be having a hard time adjusting because your schoolwork is really suffering. Is there anything I can do to help you?"

“I’ll try harder, Mrs. Hamilton,” Katrina said.

Mrs. Hamilton replied, “I know the work that you are capable of doing and I don’t want to see you give up on yourself. If you feel you need to talk, I’ll be glad to listen.”

Katrina mumbled, “Thank you,” and asked if she could go to lunch. Walking down the hall towards the cafeteria, Katrina thought about all the things she wanted to tell her teacher. She wanted to tell her how angry she had been since the accident. She was angry with herself, because she had called her sister to pick her up from band practice and she was angry with 16-year-old Josh Stellar of Avondale Road, as the news described him, for drinking and driving.

She also wanted to explain how different life at home had become. Where there had been laughter, there was now silence. Her mother was also angry because of the loss of her daughter and the potential dreams that died with her. Paula had so much potential. She was smart, responsible and caring. She would have started college in the fall. When asked what she would major in, Paula would say that she still wasn’t sure, but she knew she wanted to make a difference in the lives of others.

That evening, while they were sitting down to supper, Mr. Fraser said that he had something very important that he wanted to talk to them about. He started off by saying, “Well, ladies, things have been rough lately and it has taken a toll on all of us.” Looking directly at Katrina he said, “Your English teacher called today. She said that she is very concerned about you. You are showing no interest in her class or your other classes and both your classwork and homework are being poorly done.”

Katrina hung her head. Looking up, she said, “But Dad, it’s been so hard to care about the things I used to care about, now that life is so different.”

“Yes, Katrina,” her father replied. “It is hard, it’s been hard on all of us, but it is not impossible to learn to care again.” After a short pause, he continued in a gentle voice, “I believe we have forgotten what it means to be responsible to ourselves and to each other as a family. We have been so sad and so angry that we have stopped caring about the things that make us a family. We have an obligation to continue living, to reach our full potentials, and to find joy in life.” As Mr. Fraser spoke, a single tear rolled down his cheek. Unashamed, he did not try to conceal his emotions.

Pulling a letter out of his shirt pocket, he continued, “I was reminded of the importance of responsibility when I read this letter that came in

the mail today.” Putting on his glasses and opening the envelope he continued, “It’s from Josh Stellar.”

Both Katrina and her mother looked at him with shocked expressions. “Josh Stellar?” Mrs. Fraser exclaimed. “You don’t mean the Josh Stellar who killed our daughter.”

“Yes,” Mr. Fraser replied. “That Josh Stellar. I want both of you to listen with an open mind as I read.” Looking up at both his wife and daughter he asked, “Will you do that for me?” They replied by nodding their heads. Clearing his throat, Mr. Fraser began reading:

To the Fraser family:

My name is Josh Stellar; I am sure that you know who I am. I hope that this letter will not add to your grief. I know that words are not enough to tell you how sorry I am for all of the pain that my actions have caused all of you.

I wanted you to know that I take full responsibility for my actions that day. I can’t blame it on my friends, nor is it my parents’ fault, because my parents taught me right from wrong. I chose to drink and drive and by doing so, I took your daughter’s life and changed yours forever. Everyday I live with the knowledge that because of my irresponsible and foolish behavior, I caused the death of another human being. I know that I do not have the right to ask you to forgive me; I don’t deserve it. I just wanted you to know how sorry I am.

As part of my sentence, I must speak to other teenagers, telling them about the choices I made, and the consequences of my actions. Even if it was not part of my sentence, talking to others about my choices, in hopes that they will learn from them, is something I would choose to do. I know that this will never make up for the wrong that I have done, but I hope that others will learn from my actions and make better choices.

Sincerely,  
Josh Stellar

After Mr. Fraser had finished reading, all three sat in silence for several moments. Katrina broke the silence first, “I’m glad that he wrote and that he is sorry for what he did. Even though it won’t change the fact that Paula is gone, I feel better knowing that he cares.”

“I feel better, too,” said Mrs. Fraser. “I guess all of us have learned a valuable lesson. I realized that I have been holding on to a lot of anger.”

“Me too,” said Katrina. After a moment she continued, “Paula always

wanted to make a difference in the lives of others, and now, because of what occurred to her, people will learn that they should be responsible for their actions and that drinking and driving is wrong.”

“I can tell that Josh’s letter had the same effect on you that it had on me. I hope some day we will be able to write him back.” said Mr. Fraser. That night was the first time in months Katrina slept without dreaming. The next morning she remembered to take her homework to school and during class, she paid attention and participated in the discussion. By the end of the week, Mrs. Hamilton again asked to speak to her. Katrina nervously wondered what she had done wrong.

“Katrina,” said Mrs. Hamilton after the class had left the room, “I just wanted to tell you that I can see how much effort you are putting into your school work. I know that it’s not easy, but if you continue to try, it will get easier.”

“I’m trying to remember how to be my old self, Mrs. Hamilton,” answered Katrina, “But, at the same time, I know I’ll never be the same again.” After a short pause Katrina continued, “I’ll always miss Paula. I looked up to her for so long, and now that she’s gone, well... it’s really different. I’m still trying to get used to it.”

“Hang in there, Katrina and don’t give up. I just wanted you to know that I noticed how much you’re trying and if you ever need a listening ear, remember I’m here.”

“Thank you for caring, Mrs. Hamilton.” Katrina said.

It took a month before Katrina found the courage within herself to talk to her parents about Josh Stellar’s letter. She asked if she could write a letter to him. Her father gave her permission, but asked to read the letter when she had completed it.

Sitting at her desk Katrina thought for a while, then she started to write:

Josh Stellar,

My name is Katrina Fraser. I was in the car the day my sister died. You are right, your actions have changed my life, the life of my family, and most of all, everything my sister ever dreamed of or hoped for.

I am glad, however, that you wrote to say how sorry you are, and that you accept responsibility for your actions. My father has always told me that people can change for the better, if they can admit their mistakes, are accountable for their actions, and then set their minds in advance not to make the same mistakes again.

I hope that you are determined to make better choices and to help others do the same. I hope that you teach others that we are all responsible for each other, and that our actions affect other people's lives.

Katrina Fraser

Both Mr. and Mrs. Fraser said the letter was fine. They were relieved that Katrina had found a positive way to express the anger she had held onto since the accident. They were also surprised at the maturity their daughter showed in expressing the words they were still finding the courage to say.

Katrina and her mother walked down the path to put the letter in the mailbox. Katrina reflected on what she had written to Josh Stellar. She had never really thought about it before, but she knew she was right. We are responsible for each other and we should never make choices that could harm someone else. Dropping the letter into the mailbox, she smiled at her mother and said, "It's strange, that even in the most difficult times, there are lessons to be learned. I think it's going to start getting a little better now."

"I think so too," answered Mrs. Fraser. "I think so too."

# Benefits To Society

The following is a list of words that identify a morally responsible person. Match each word to the correct definition.

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>  d  </u> Compassionate     | a. Not proud or arrogant.   |
| 2. <u>  c  </u> Respects all life | b. To refrain from holding anger or resentment towards someone who has wronged you. |
| 3. <u>  g  </u> Considerate       | c. To value and esteem all living things.   |
| 4. <u>  e  </u> Honest            | d. To care about the needs of others.   |
| 5. <u>  f  </u> Accountable       | e. To be fair, straightforward and sincere.   |
| 6. <u>  h  </u> Dependable        | f. Accept responsibility for one's actions.   |
| 7. <u>  a  </u> Humble            | g. Thoughtful of the rights and feelings of others.                                 |
| 8. <u>  b  </u> Forgiving         | h. To place reliance and trust.   |

Using as many of the words listed above, write a short paragraph describing how a morally responsible person would behave in society.

*(A morally responsible person would certainly value and respect the lives of all living things, while caring about the needs of others. Since that person would be accountable for his/her actions, he/she would be considerate, honest and dependable. It also takes humility to be morally responsible. And let us not forget that a morally responsible person would be forgiving.)*

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# Just For Fun

Find the words from the word list in the puzzle below.

K	T	B	J	L	A	N	I	M	I	R	C	Y	R	J
I	R	R	E	S	P	O	N	S	I	B	L	E	O	D
H	U	N	I	D	P	F	J	J	S	R	C	V	T	E
H	T	P	L	R	Q	A	R	Q	R	I	F	Y	A	L
Z	T	H	N	W	I	E	V	E	D	E	W	B	R	I
M	Y	Y	D	L	D	A	B	I	Q	K	E	P	T	N
Y	B	T	N	N	J	U	V	E	N	I	L	E	E	Q
X	G	V	E	O	W	I	G	P	E	X	A	Q	P	U
F	I	F	K	I	S	A	D	T	J	B	K	X	R	E
N	F	H	L	M	C	I	S	A	N	R	I	J	E	N
O	W	D	E	I	M	O	R	A	L	E	O	O	P	T
R	D	Y	C	T	K	B	S	P	G	L	L	P	W	E
Z	V	W	I	C	N	V	I	Q	X	E	Z	O	M	L
E	J	C	R	I	M	E	N	O	V	C	M	L	I	Y
P	A	P	R	V	R	P	X	A	Y	V	C	Q	N	V

## Word List

crime  
delinquent  
juvenile  
moral  
offender

perpetrator  
prison  
recidivism  
society

victim  
jail  
violent  
criminal  
irresponsible



# Chapter Seven

## You Can Be Responsible For Your Safety

### Note To The Teacher

**H**urricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes and terrorist attacks are only some of the disasters that can threaten our safety and security. As devastating as these natural and man-made disasters can be, we do not have to sit idly by powerless to protect our lives and property. We can accept responsibility for our safety, health and well-being by taking the time to prepare before disaster strikes. We can educate ourselves on what to expect from these disasters and then prepare ourselves and our families. This is a responsibility that all people are encouraged to embrace.

Because the threat of danger, from both natural and man-made disasters, dominates the headlines, even children are being taught how they can take responsibility for their safety and to share their knowledge of disaster preparedness with their families. This final lesson is designed to help students become familiar with various types of disasters and the best way to respond in order to save their lives.

Concepts that will be covered in this lesson are:

- Basic necessities and their importance to our survival.
- The importance of being informed about changing conditions.
- The extent of damages that can be expected from both natural and man-made disasters.
- How to prepare an emergency kit.
- The importance of storing nonperishable food and non-food items.

It is a fact that we are living in uncertain times, but we can take responsibility for our safety and teach our children to do the same.



# Lesson Plan

## You Can Be Responsible For Your Safety

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will explore examples of both natural and man-made disasters. They will learn ways they can be responsible for their safety during a disaster.

### MATERIALS

- Students' handbooks

### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson, “**Responsibility And Society,**” by asking students to list some ways that irresponsible choices or acts can affect our society. *(Answers may vary, but should include: Risky behavior, such as drinking and driving, theft, and sex offenses, make negative changes in people’s lives. They can cause sickness, pain, suffering, death and a higher cost of living. Many prisons, jails, boot camps, etc. must be built and ran in order to curb the constant rising crime rate.)*
2. Inform students that in today’s lesson they will learn how they can be responsible for their safety when disaster strikes. Explain that we are living in a time when weather patterns across our country can be extreme. These extreme changes in the weather have resulted in dangerous tropical storms, tornadoes, tsunamis, and flooding. In addition to these natural disasters, we are also faced with the threat of man-made disasters in the form of terrorism. Instruct students to turn to **page 129** in their handbooks and read the “**Introduction.**”
3. Have students complete the quiz, “**Test Your Disaster Knowledge,**” found on **page 130**, and to analyze their choices on **page 131**. Tell students that each individual has a responsibility

to learn about conditions in his environment that can affect his safety, security and well-being. Assign **pages 132-134** for homework.

4. Have students turn to the sections, **“When The Environment Turns Against Us”** and **“What You Should Know,”** found on **pages 135-136** and choose students to read the text. Explain that the high winds and rain that accompany hurricanes affect not only coastal towns, but towns several hundred miles inland as well, causing flooding, and loss of life and property. Emphasize that a responsible person will listen carefully to weather reports, especially if they live on or near the coast, and take all warnings seriously.

5. Tell students that unlike hurricanes that can be detected by the weather bureaus days in advance, tornadoes can occur unexpectedly, or with very little warning. Guide class feedback by asking the following questions:

- a. Can anyone guess the speed of the winds in a tornado? (*Winds have been clocked in a tornado between 300-500 mph.*)
- b. Who knows which country has the most tornadoes annually worldwide? (*The United States has approximately 800 tornadoes per year.*)

Read the section, **“Tornadoes,”** found on **pages 137-140**. Stress that tornadoes are dangerous. If they are warned that one is in the area where they live, they should seek appropriate, safe shelter immediately.

6. Inform students that earthquakes are another dangerous and often unpredictable disaster that cause the deaths of thousands of people each year worldwide. Ask students to name the three main types of earthquakes. (*Tectonic, volcanic, and artificial*) Tell students that of the three, tectonic is by far the most destructive and deadly. Have students read the section, **“Earthquakes,”** on **pages 141-143**. Emphasize that although earthquakes can be unpredictable, finding out if you live in an earthquake prone area and then taking precautions, are just some of the ways you can take responsibility for your safety.

7. Inform students that terrorism, a man made disaster, can also result in catastrophic loss of life and property. Explain that terrorism is a result of hate, aggression, and violence. Emphasize that hate and aggression are negative character traits that can be controlled if we can learn to be morally responsible to others. Have students turn to **pages 144-145**

and read the section, “**Terrorism.**” Assign **page 147** for homework. Tell students that one form of terrorism is called Germ or Biological Warfare. Have students take turns reading, “**Germ Warfare,**” on **pages 148-149**. Emphasize that terrorism in any form demonstrates a lack of moral responsibility towards others.

8. Tell students that another way they can be responsible for their safety, is to have an emergency kit with items that can help them survive, such as non-perishable food, as well as non-food items. Suggest that students read the section, “**Do You Have An Emergency Kit?,**” on **page 150** at home. Encourage them to prepare an emergency kit of their own. Refer them to **pages 151-152** for suggestions.

9. Conclude the lesson by reminding students that they have learned how responsibility is developed, the important role it plays in how we interact with others, how responsible choices can help us avoid risky behavior, and how to be responsible for their safety. Emphasize that responsibility is a positive character trait that is important in the lives of each individual and society as a whole.



**The time to plan is not in the middle of a disaster.  
~The Peaceful Solution**

# Chapter Seven

## You Can Be Responsible For Your Safety

### Introduction

September 11, 2001 was a tragic day in American history. It was the day two commercial jets crashed into the World Trade Towers and another plane crashed into the Pentagon, killing many innocent people. Since that day, Americans have been encouraged to be safety minded and alert, because the threat of more tragedies like these loom in the future. Tom Ridge, former Secretary of the Homeland Security Department, an organization that was started in response to these catastrophes, stated on a public service announcement: “It is no longer *if* terrorists will plan another attack on American soil, but *when*.” In other words, another attack can occur without warning, at any time, in any city, town, or state.

As if the threat of terrorism is not enough, there are also natural disasters in the form of hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and tornadoes. These natural disasters could also strike with very little warning, damaging property and taking lives, like the tsunami that struck the Asian coast in December of 2004. A tsunami is a very large ocean wave caused by an underwater earthquake or volcanic eruption.

In this chapter, you will explore ways you can be responsible for your safety in times of disaster, because whether natural or man-made, disasters can be frightening and devastating. Do you know what you should do in the event of a hurricane, earthquake, or terrorist’s attack? If you answered “no,” then it is very important that you learn how to take responsibility for your own safety to avoid a tragedy.

# Test Your Disaster Knowledge

**How much do you know about safety in times of disaster? Take the following quiz to test your knowledge.**

1. If you are at home when an earthquake starts you should:
  - a. Run outside.
  - b. Get underneath a sturdy piece of furniture, like a dining table.
  - c. Stay in bed and pull the covers over your head.
2. During a lightning storm you should:
  - a. Talk on the phone.
  - b. Go swimming.
  - c. Neither of the above.
3. The Emergency Broadcasting System is:
  - a. A warning system that lets people know that there is possible danger.
  - b. A loud beep that comes on the radio or TV.
  - c. Both of the above.
4. During a hurricane you should:
  - a. Get into a closet or interior room and stay there until the hurricane has passed.
  - b. Quickly run outside to put away your bike.
  - c. Look out the windows to see what is going on.
5. Biological warfare is when:
  - a. Certain diseases affect man, animals and plants at the same time.
  - b. Biologists get really angry.
  - c. Germs that cause diseases are used as weapons.
6. If there was a power outage, I would:
  - a. Stumble around in the dark.
  - b. Play blind man's bluff.
  - c. Know exactly where my candles, matches, and flashlight are located.
7. Anthrax is:
  - a. The name of a foreign toothpaste.
  - b. A deadly bacteria used in biological warfare.
  - c. Another name for an erupting volcano.
8. A terrorist is a:
  - a. Really mean person.
  - b. Any person who uses terror as a way to force others to do his/her will.
  - c. Person from another country studying the effects of terror.
9. When you get scared you:
  - a. Freeze like a deer caught in the headlights of a car.
  - b. Scream hysterically and run as fast as you can.
  - c. Remain calm so that you can think clearly.
10. You are alone in an elevator and suddenly it stops between floors. You:
  - a. Start screaming and banging on the doors
  - b. Stay calm and read the sign that explains what to do in case of an emergency.
  - c. Try to pry open the doors.

# Analyze Your Answers

So, how did you do? This questionnaire is designed to test your knowledge of disaster preparedness, as well as how you might react in times of crisis. If you answered A to question 4, B to questions 1, 7, 8 and 10 and C to questions 2, 3, 5, 6, and 9: Congratulations! You have a great deal of disaster savvy. If you answered any of these incorrectly, then realize that a lack of knowledge in times of disaster could result in tragedy.

Questions 9 and 10 are designed to gauge your response to stressful situations. When frightened or anxious, as is common in times of disaster, it is natural to cry, scream or go into shock, but these reactions could be dangerous for you and others with you. Even in the middle of a crisis, it is best to remain calm and level headed, as difficult as that may be. The only way to stay in control, when the natural tendency is to lose it, is to be prepared.

You can be responsible for your safety during times of disaster if you are knowledgeable and have a plan of action.

## How can I be responsible for my safety when disasters are usually unexpected?

The key word in the question is *usually*. Usually does not mean *always*. In other words, not every disaster is unexpected. You can be given advanced warning, but, it is up to you to pay attention to the warnings and take them seriously. For example, the weather bureaus often know days in advance when a dangerous storm is approaching an area. Having a plan and being prepared can make a big difference to your survival. In the event that you are in an unexpected disaster, knowing what to do, being prepared, and having a plan is still the best way to avoid tragedy.

### Here's A **Cold** Hard Fact...

We are living in uncertain times. This means that with the invention of weapons of mass destruction, coupled with disease epidemics, civil unrest, distrust and anger between nations, inactive volcanoes suddenly becoming active, and unpredictable weather patterns, it is wise to expect the unexpected.

---

# A DOSE OF REALITY

You say you have never experienced either a natural or man-made disaster? Great! Hopefully, you will always remain one step ahead of calamity. Many people, however, have experienced disaster in one form or another. In fact, at any given time, somewhere in the world, there could be a hurricane, flood, earthquake or tornado.

Read the following articles of recent natural disasters around the world.

## **Tsunami toll could top 100,000, Red Cross says**

The death toll from the earthquake and tsunamis that devastated coastal areas in southern Asia soared to nearly 77,000 on Wednesday, and the Red Cross said it feared that it could exceed 100,000 once bodies buried in the mud and wreckage are counted.

With tens of thousands of people still missing three days after the magnitude 9.0 quake and tsunami it triggered swept the region, Peter Ress, operations support chief for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, said the eventual death toll would be “absolutely enormous.”

“The damage is truly devastating,” said Maj. Gen. Endang Suwarya, military commander for Aceh province.

[msnbc.com](http://msnbc.com)

## **At least 18 dead as Ivan hits US**

Hurricane Ivan slammed into the United States in the early hours, killing at least 18 people and pummeling a broad swath of coastline from Louisiana to Florida with severe winds, torrential rain and waves as high as 25 ft. Coastal homes were destroyed and one-and-a-half million people were still without electricity...In Alabama alligators were seen swimming in the streets after a zoo was flooded.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk>

## **Afghan quake kills 2,000**

More than 2,000 people are feared dead after a series of earthquakes struck Afghanistan's remote northern province of Baghlan.

The Afghan Interior Minister, Yunus Qanuni, who traveled to the area, said up to 20,000 had been left homeless.

Afghan officials estimated that about 4,000 people had been injured. The quakes began in the Hindu Kush mountains on Monday rocking the Nahrin and Burqa districts of Baghlan.

Mr. Qanuni said that the bodies of at least 1,800 had been pulled from the rubbles so far.

[News.bbc.co.uk](http://News.bbc.co.uk)

## **Tornado Kills 3 in Missouri**

Three people were killed by a tornado in Missouri while twisters and heavy rain elsewhere in the South caused significant damage, officials said Tuesday.

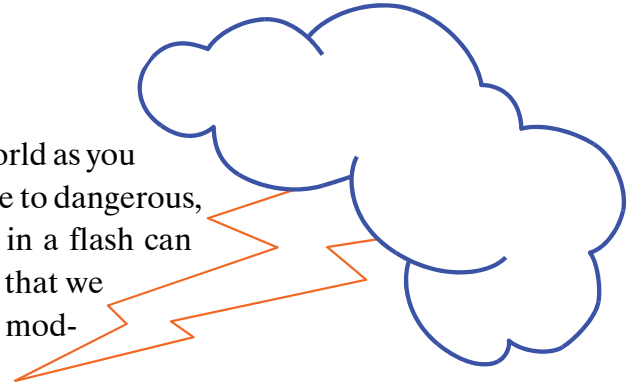
In Florence, Ala., Tim Hart was watching from his front door when a tornado flipped his neighbors' mobile home. It picked the trailer up off the ground and started to twist it like a washcloth.

In Arkansas, two tornadoes injured at least 11 people and damaged dozens of homes and other buildings. Electrical service was knocked out for more than 7,000 customers.

<http://msnbc.msn.com>

## Gone In A Flash

In what can seem like a flash, the world as you know it can change from safe and secure to dangerous, unpredictable and frightening. Gone in a flash can be many of the basic necessities of life that we depend on for survival, as well as many modern conveniences that we have grown to rely upon.



When you think of basic necessities and modern conveniences, what are some things that come to mind?

**List three basic necessities in Column I and three modern conveniences in Column II.**

### Column I

*food/water*

*clothing*

*shelter*

### Column II

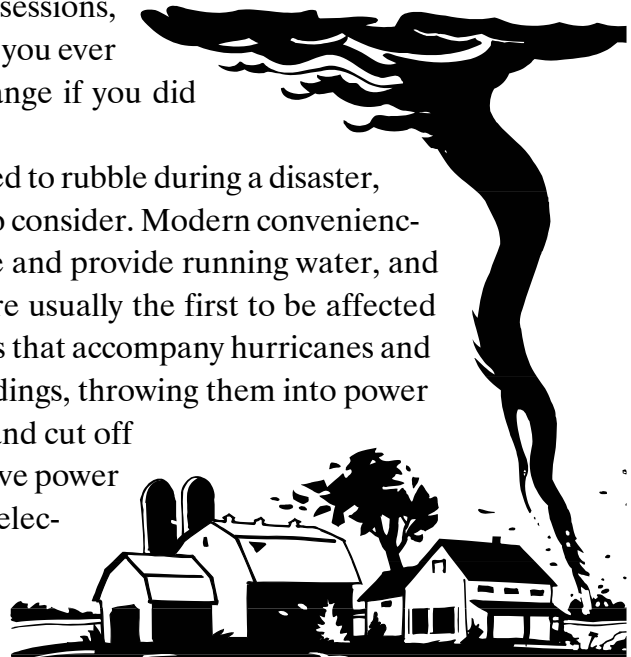
*electricity*

*phone*

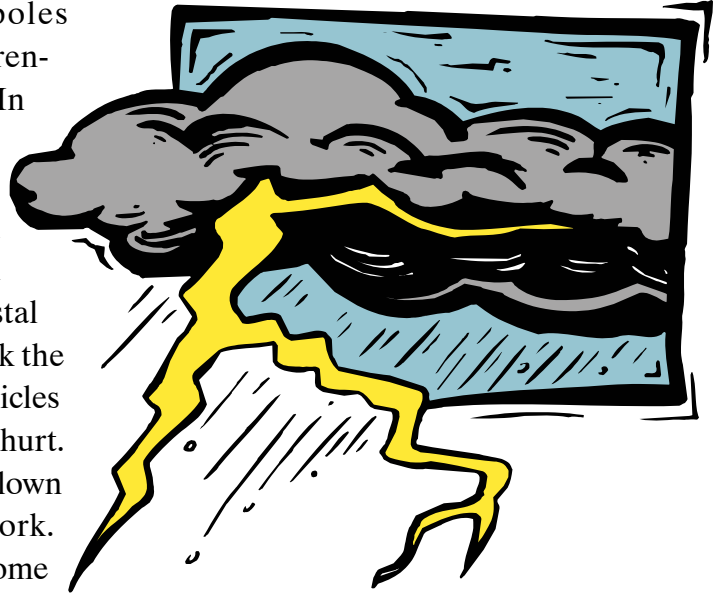
*transportation*

When disaster strikes, the bare necessities that we now take for granted, like food, water, clothing, and shelter, are often seriously affected. Survivors of natural disasters often return to the sight of their homes to find only rubble—all of their possessions, including food, gone in a flash. Have you ever considered how your life would change if you did not have these basic necessities?

Even if your home was not reduced to rubble during a disaster, there would be many other aspects to consider. Modern conveniences, like electricity to light your home and provide running water, and gas to cook and heat homes with, are usually the first to be affected when disaster strikes. The high winds that accompany hurricanes and tornadoes can uproot trees and buildings, throwing them into power lines, causing the lines to fall down and cut off electricity to thousands of people. Live power lines carrying thousands of volts of electricity then lay exposed in the streets, and people run the risk of electrical shock.



Telephone lines and poles could also be blown down rendering your phone useless. In addition to this, water lines could be broken, contaminating drinking water. High waves and heavy rains often cause flooding in many coastal areas. Fallen trees could block the streets so that emergency vehicles can't get to those who may be hurt. Because electrical lines are blown down, traffic lights don't work. The streets and roadways become dangerous, unpredictable and deadly.



If this were to occur in your town, would you be ready? If you answered “no,” then it’s time to take responsibility for your safety and to get prepared. In fact, being prepared for disaster is a family affair. So take what you learn from this chapter and be sure to share it with your family.

**The first step in being prepared is to become informed.**

- ▶ Watch the news and pay close attention to what is going on in the world around you.
- ▶ Pay attention to weather reports, especially those that warn of dangerous weather conditions. Knowing the difference between a thunderstorm and a hurricane, or high winds and a tornado, could mean the difference between life and death.

**Then you must take responsibility and:**

- ▶ Make preparations for what to do in case of disaster, because knowing that you should prepare and actually preparing are two different things.

## When The Environment Turns Against Us

Regardless of whether a hurricane, tornado or flood strikes, for it to be classified as a disaster, there must be catastrophic damage to property and possible loss of life.

### Let's Take A Closer Look

When does a storm become a hurricane?



A tropical storm becomes a hurricane when it has swirling winds of 74 miles per hour (mph) or more, with rain, thunder, and lightning.

Hurricanes are powerful, whirling storms that develop from warm easterly waves in tropical regions in either the North Atlantic Ocean or eastern North Pacific Ocean. Such a storm in the Pacific Ocean is called a typhoon, and one in the Indian Ocean is called a cyclone. Hurricane winds swirl around the eye, which is a calm area in the center of the storm that can measure about 20 miles in diameter, having few winds or clouds. The entire diameter of a hurricane can measure 200-300 miles.

The strength of a hurricane is rated from 1-5. The mildest, Category 1, has winds of 74 mph. The strongest, Category 5, has winds that exceed 155 mph. Hurricanes can cause major damage to towns and cities near the coastline and several hundred miles inland. The torrential rains and ocean surges can cause flooding, killing or injuring hundreds of people and livestock.

Did you know that a system for tracking hurricanes was developed in the mid 1950's? The National Hurricane Center in Florida follows each storm as they arise, from beginning to end, and has been able to minimize loss of life by warning people to prepare for disaster.

### QUICK FACTS:

- ↳ A hurricane weakens as it moves over land because it needs the warm sea to supply energy by evaporation. The land itself slows the wind.
- ↳ Hurricanes are given alphabetical names as they develop, like, Andrew, Betty, and Charlie. One of the strongest hurricanes was named Gilbert. Gilbert had winds in excess of 218 mph.

## **What You Should Know**

Do you know what you should do if a dangerous hurricane is expected to pass where you live? First, there must be specific weather conditions for a hurricane to be born. These conditions usually occur only at certain times of the year. Hurricane season lasts from late June to early November, but hurricanes occur most often in September.

Listening to weather reports is the first way to make preparations for you and your property to survive the rain and high winds that characterize a hurricane. Remember, hurricanes hit hardest near the coast, but can affect areas hundreds of miles inland, as well. If you live in a town on or near the coast, pay attention to weather reports, especially during hurricane season.

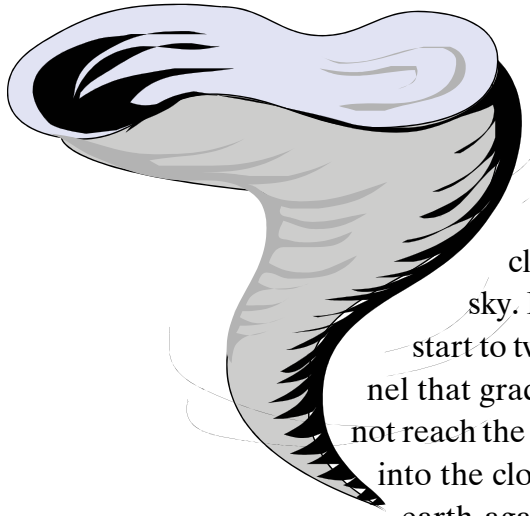
The National Weather Service knows days in advance:

- When a hurricane poses a threat
- What towns it may affect
- How fierce it may be
- How long it may last

The weather bureaus are able to warn those in regions that will be most affected at least 24 to 36 hours before the storm hits land. Weather bureaus can advise those in the path of the hurricane to nail boards over their windows, shut off gas, electricity, and water, and evacuate the area, if necessary. This advanced warning may be the only opportunity to avoid loss of life. Those who are responsible act upon these warnings immediately.

With winds in excess of 155 miles per hour, you will need all the warning you can get to avoid a potentially life threatening situation.





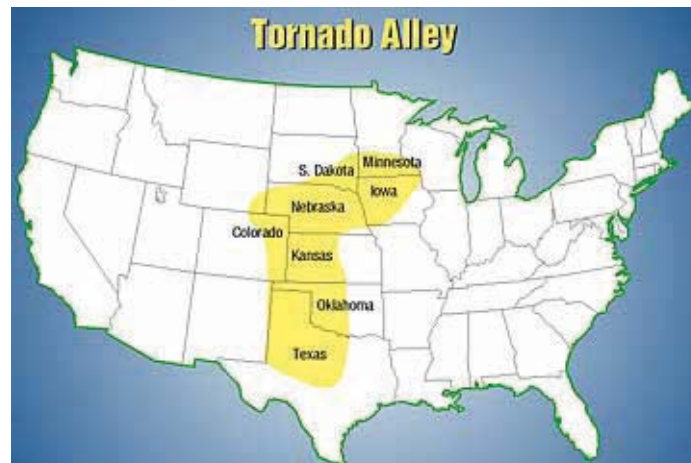
# Tornadoes

The word **tornado** means *to thunder*. A tornado is a rotating funnel cloud that extends downward from a mass of dark clouds. Large thunderstorms appear in the sky. Rounded masses at the bottom of the cloud start to twist. One of the twisting masses forms a funnel that gradually extends downward. Some funnels do not reach the earth; others may touch down and withdraw into the clouds above, only to dip down and strike the earth again. Tornadoes move over land, sometimes over short distances, sometimes miles at a time. Whatever is in their paths can run the risk of much damage and destruction.

The strongest tornadoes can lift houses from their foundations, flip cars, trucks or school buses over, pick up people, cows and other animals, and pick up railroad cars from their tracks, and whirl them away to another location. The high winds and pressure in the center of the funnel can also cause buildings and other structures to explode if they are not properly ventilated.

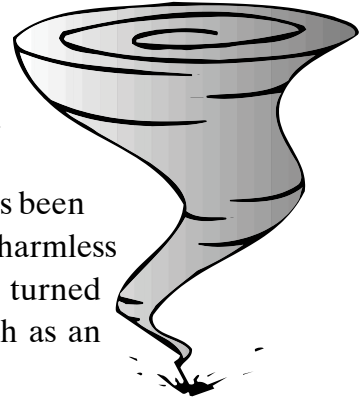
Tornadoes occur in many parts of the world. Australia, China, England, Russia, India and Germany have all had their share of tornadoes, resulting in loss of life and property damage. However, with an average of 800 tornadoes a year, resulting in 80 deaths and over 1,500 injuries yearly, the United States has the highest annual average of tornadoes in the world.

Most tornadoes in the United States occur east of the Rocky Mountain region, known as Tornado Alley. Although tornadoes are most likely to occur in these states, all other states have experienced at least one tornado. Texas holds the record for the most tornadoes.



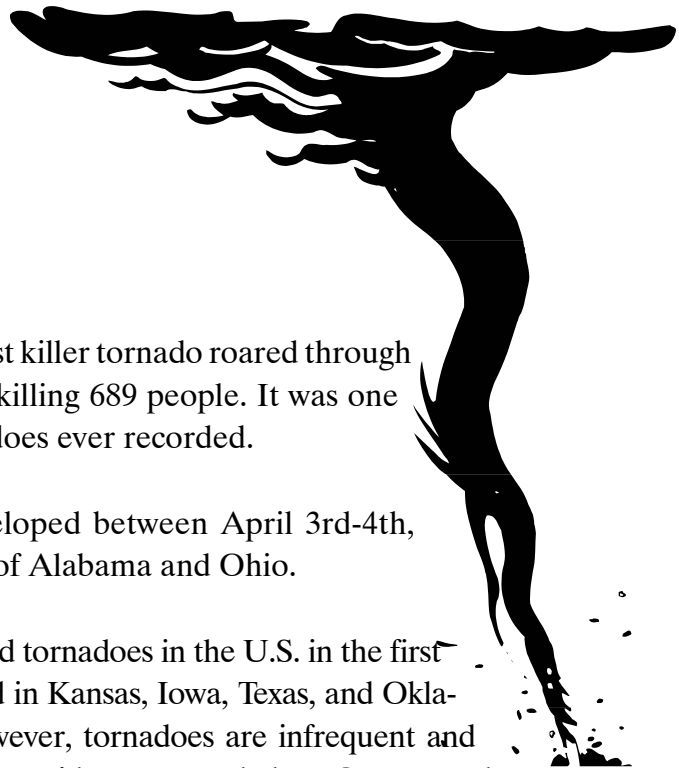
## QUICK FACTS:

- Tornadoes produce the most powerful winds on earth.
- The speed at which the wind whirls in a tornado has been clocked between 300-500 mph. These winds can turn harmless objects into dangerous missiles. Straws of wheat are turned into arrows, and have been found embedded as much as an inch deep into tree trunks.
- Most tornadoes spin counterclockwise in the Northern hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern hemisphere.
- Most tornadoes occur between 3 o'clock in the afternoon and 7 o'clock in the evening, and in the spring and summer months on a hot, humid day.
- Tornadoes can reach heights of 60,000 feet.



## Amazing Tornado History

- On March 18, 1925 the greatest killer tornado roared through Illinois, Missouri and Indiana, killing 689 people. It was one of the largest and fastest tornadoes ever recorded.
- In 1974, 148 tornadoes developed between April 3rd-4th, killing 315 people in the states of Alabama and Ohio.
- The largest number of observed tornadoes in the U.S. in the first half of the 20th century occurred in Kansas, Iowa, Texas, and Oklahoma. West of the Rockies, however, tornadoes are infrequent and generally small compared with the midwest. Nonetheless, Oregon and other western states have experienced tornadoes on occasion, many of them producing significant damage, and occasionally causing injury or death.



The following is a true story of one young man's experience in a tornado.

On May 6, 2003 my parents and I had just got home from my baseball practice. It was real windy. We went inside. We got a phone call and were told there was a tornado heading toward us. We went into the bathroom. Then the tornado picked up the house and slammed it down. It was hard to breathe because we were in the eye of the tornado. Then the tornado slammed down again and carried our house over a field about 150 yards. Then it sucked us out. We landed in a field...I broke my leg in two places and my arm. My mom and dad were not hurt. Our house was totally destroyed except for the roof and it landed in the lake behind our house.

...The tornado was an F4 and it traveled over 30 miles with the wind over 250 miles per hour. There were two people who were killed because of the tornado. One of them was a lady who was our neighbor who was thrown from her trailer into a pond and another was a man who lived up the road, a chimney fell on him while he was protecting his son.

Travis 10-years-old  
Metropolis, Illinois

[http://www.fema.gov/kids/torn\\_travis.htm](http://www.fema.gov/kids/torn_travis.htm)

## Advanced Warning Is Your Best Defense

As you can see from Travis's story, tornadoes can be very dangerous. This is why being responsible to learn all you can about them, and what you and your family can do to survive if one were to hit where you live is so important. Once again, the weather bureau's advanced warning is one of the best ways to prepare for and survive a tornado.

A tornado warning is issued if a tornado is detected on radar, or if a responsible person sights a tornado and reports it to the nearest Weather Bureau office or community warning center. Once a tornado is sighted, warnings are sent out quickly over television and radio.

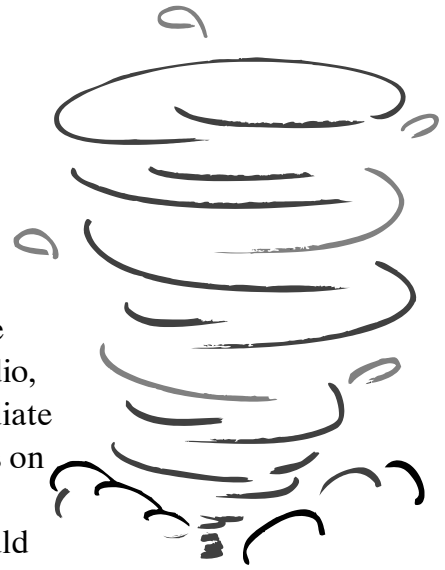


These warnings will tell you:

- When the tornado was first detected.
- The area through which it is expected to move.
- The time it is most likely to strike.

Many towns also have sirens that sound in case of emergency. In case you are not near a TV or radio, the sound of the siren will warn those in the immediate vicinity that a life-threatening storm or tornado is on the way.

People in the direct path of a tornado should consider that their lives are at risk and should seek shelter immediately. If you are at home, a basement, bathroom, closet or interior hallway will offer you the best protection. Time permitting, you should shut off the electricity, water and gas and open some windows to avoid the destructive pressure that builds up in tightly closed buildings during a tornado. It is this pressure-build-up that causes houses to explode. So, if you can, open a few windows, but do not try to do this if the tornado is very close. People have been literally sucked out of windows and killed during tornadoes because they didn't seek shelter soon enough.



## How To Act Responsibly During A Tornado

If you are in a car or mobile home, get out, find a ditch and lay flat in it. Cover your head with your arms to protect yourself from flying debris. Remember, tornadoes can produce the strongest winds on the planet. These winds can rip concrete surfaces from off highways, peel bark off trees, and roll cars, buses, trains, and mobile homes. If you hear that a tornado is in your area think safety first, and seek shelter immediately.

---

### Do you know what a tornado sounds like?

When a tornado is high in the air, observers have reported that it sounds like the buzzing of millions of bees. The shrill high-pitch shriek may change to a deafening roar like a train when the cloud dips to the ground and starts churning up the earth.



# Earth Quakes

Earthquakes can also cause great loss of life and property by destroying buildings, bridges, and dams. The power of an earthquake can cause telephone and power lines to fall, fires, explosions and landslides.

Generally, there are three classes of earthquakes: tectonic, volcanic, and artificial. Tectonic is by far the most damaging and devastating of the three. Tectonic quakes are caused when the plates that make up the earth's surface slide and bump against each other. Where these plates meet are called fault lines. When these plates slide against each other they cause the earth to vibrate. Many of these vibrations are barely noticeable, but others are so strong they cause the earth to split, and buildings to collapse resulting in thousands of people dying. There are many countries that are located over the earth's fault lines, for example, Portugal, Morocco, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Iran and India.

## Did You Know...

***The state of California is located over a fault line?  
It is called the San Andreas Fault.***

Although earthquakes have been very difficult to predict, in recent years seismologists (scientists who study earthquakes) have had some success in predicting when and where an earthquake will strike. In 1975, the Chinese predicted an earthquake would hit the city of Haicheng. They evacuated 90,000 residents two days before the quake destroyed 90% of the city's buildings.

Most earthquakes, however, are not predicted in time and many people die. In September 1985, a major quake shook Mexico City, Mexico leaving 30,000 people homeless and 7,000 dead. On Friday January 6, 2001 a major earthquake killed 100,000 people in Gujarat, India.

## QUICK FACTS

- Humans can start earthquakes by detonating atomic explosives underground and by pumping fluids deep into the earth through wells.
- A tsunami is a large ocean wave generated by an undersea earthquake. These waves can travel hundreds of miles across the ocean floor and reach speeds of 450-500 mph. By the time it reaches the shore it can be more than 50 feet high, with the potential to wipe out entire coastal towns.

## RESPONSIBLE SURVIVAL TIPS

If you live in an earthquake prone area, being responsible in what you can do could mean the difference between life and death. Remember, earthquakes are often unexpected, so the best thing to do, if you live in an area prone to earthquakes, is to have a plan. Heavy bookcases should be bolted to the wall and heavy books should be placed on the bottom shelves. Heavy objects falling onto someone is often the cause of injury or death. Ask your parents to find out if your home meets all building codes. A house with a weak foundation is more likely to suffer severe damage during an earthquake.

It is also recommended that you sleep with a pair of sturdy shoes and a flashlight near your bed. In that way, if you're in bed when a quake starts, you can roll out of bed, slip on your shoes and grab your flashlight. Broken glass and other debris could make walking on the floor dangerous.



During an earthquake, get in a doorway or under a sturdy object, like the kitchen or dining room table. Don't leave your home during the shaking unless there is a great possibility that your home will collapse. Many injuries occur from falling debris outside such as bricks, shards of glass or tree limbs.

After the initial quake, there may be a few minutes for you and your family to get to a safe place outdoors away from any falling debris if you think your home is in real danger of collapsing. If not, remain inside under sturdy protection until the after-

shocks have stopped or calmed down to a safe level. Keep in mind that aftershocks can be just as dangerous as the initial quake, so if you are in a safe place, stay there.

If your home has lost power and you are left in the dark, use your flashlight to see. Do not light matches or lighters. Broken gas lines could cause explosions.

Be sure to go over these survival tips with your family, so that in the event of an earthquake you will all be prepared by knowing what to do.



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## Think About It...

When it comes to natural disasters, the most responsible thing you can do is follow the emergency personnel's instructions and evacuate the area if you are told to.

# TERRORISM

Unlike natural disasters, terrorism is man-made and deliberate. **Terrorism** is defined as *the use of violence, or the threat of violence, to create a climate of fear in a given population*. Often, terrorist organizations are small and represent the beliefs of only a few within a society. Through fear, generated by aggression and violence, terrorists seek to change governmental policies to their advantage. Terrorists often strike in their own countries, but can also strike in other countries as well.

Unlike natural disasters that can be predicted with highly advanced weather equipment, acts of terrorism are unpredictable, because there is no sure way of determining when one group's hate can turn to violence.

There have been several acts of terrorism against the United States in recent years. In 1993, the World Trade Center in New York City, was bombed. Six people died, and property damage was estimated to be over 600 million dollars. Although this act of terrorism resulted in deaths and property damage, the destruction of this building and its twin tower, on September 11, 2001, along with the damage done to the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, were by far the most devastating acts of terrorism on American soil to date. It is estimated that these disasters caused the deaths of over 3,000 people and billions of dollars in property and economic damages.

If you watch the news, then you are aware that terrorists commonly strike with bombs. Because explosions are sudden and destructive, car bombs and suicide bombers have caused the deaths of hundreds of innocent, unsuspecting people. The force of a bomb can also cause



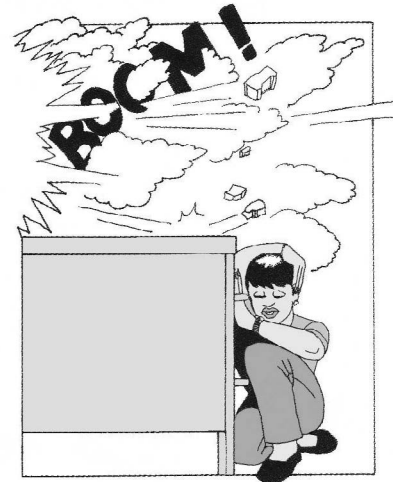
windows to shatter, buildings to collapse and damage to gas, water, and electric lines. People who are close to a bomb when it explodes usually do not survive. However, if a bomb explodes in a building, it can leave many survivors trapped for hours or days in some cases.

Hopefully you, your family and friends will never have to experience the horror of an explosion firsthand, but remember we are living in uncertain times. It is better to have a plan of action that can save your life and the lives of others.

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## A Few Tips To Keep In Mind...

If there is an explosion brace yourself against a desk or sturdy table.



Exit the building as soon as possible. Do not use the elevators.

If there is smoke, drop to the floor and crawl. Cover your nose and mouth with a wet cloth if possible. If you do not have a wet cloth several layers of material will do. This will act as a filter to keep smoke and dust from choking you.



If you or someone else catches on fire, do not run. Instead Stop, Drop and Roll. You want to stop the oxygen from feeding the flames.



If you are trapped in debris, never light a match, cigarette lighter or candle. Broken gas lines could cause an explosion.

Try not to move around too much.

Excessive movement can stir up dust causing you and others to choke.

Tap on a pipe or wall so that rescuers can hear where you are. Shouting can cause the inhalation of dangerous dusts.



# Be Alert!

Be alert when you are in public areas. Take notice of packages or backpacks or other bags that appear to be abandoned, especially on buses, trains or wherever large groups of people are gathered, such as parades or ball games. It might be harmless, but it might also be something more. If you see a suspicious package or bag that appears to have been abandoned, do not ignore it. Get away quickly and tell someone in authority. Your actions could save your life and the lives of many others.

**Read the following article about terrorism in Spain**

## Terror In Madrid

On Thursday, the 11th of March 2004, over 200 people were killed and approximately 1,500 people injured in Madrid, Spain when a total of 10 bombs, nearly all in backpacks, exploded during morning rush hour. The series of explosions hit three train stations along nine miles of the commuter line, running from Santa Eugenia to Atocha. Terrorists packed approximately 22 pounds of explosives into several backpacks and placed them on four different trains. Investigators believe the bombs were detonated by mobile phone. The trains were packed with commuters, office workers, students and school children.

## Critical Thinking

How do you think this incident may have affected the people of Madrid, Spain? Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_

*(The people of Madrid, Spain may have been shocked and devastated by the attack, the destruction the explosions caused, the injuries, and the loss of lives. They may live in fear of another attack.)*

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**Don't take your safety for granted. Be responsible. Be aware.**

# Germ Warfare

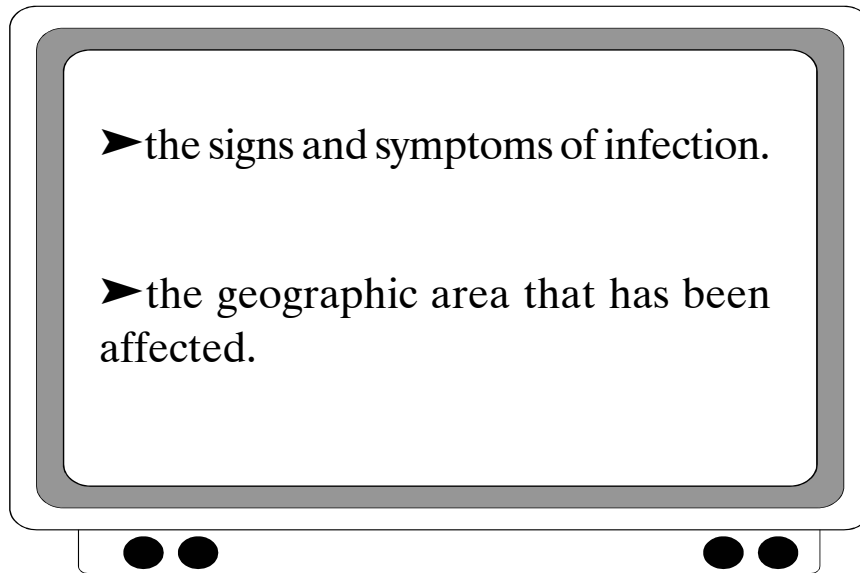
Believe it or not, terrorists can also wage war against innocent people with germs. Yes! That's right, germs! *If someone intentionally releases germs or other biological substances into the air to make people sick*, it is called **germ warfare**. It is also referred to as a biological attack. Some biological agents, such as anthrax, are not contagious and will not spread from one person to the next. When it is released into the air, it affects only those who breathe it in. On the other hand, other biological agents, such as the virus that causes smallpox, and ricin are very contagious and can spread from one person to the next by talking at close range, touching, coughing, and sneezing.

Biological attacks are not as easy to recognize as explosions. People could suddenly become sick, and friends and family members would not know why. Health officials may not realize that germs or other harmful substances have been released into the air until many people exhibit the same symptoms. Once it is determined that there has been a biological attack in an area, there may be emergency news bulletins, or health officials may make telephone calls to people in a specific area warning them of the health risks and what symptoms to look for.

Until health officials determine what type of biological agent was released, they may be unable to provide information on what should be done to alleviate the symptoms. In the meantime, be sure to listen to the news so that as more information is brought out you will be able to help yourself and your family.



## *The News Can Tell You...*



In the event that you are in an area that has been contaminated by a biological agent, the first thing you should do is:

① **Get away from the area as quickly as possible.** Be sure to cover your mouth and nose with several layers of fabric, such as a towel folded several times, a jacket or T-shirt. This will act as a filter.

## **Then:**

② As soon as you are able, put the clothes you are wearing in a plastic bag and tie the bag tightly, then shower. Wash your body from head to toe with soap. Wash and rinse completely at least three times to be sure that there is no residue of the biological agent left on your skin or hair.

③ Contact the authorities. Tell them what occurred, where it occurred, and why you are suspicious of an attack.

④ Listen to the news on TV or radio for official information on what the signs and symptoms of the disease are, what biological agent was released and where you could seek help, if necessary.

Do you have an...

# Emergency Kit

...packed and ready in case of a disaster?

Another important part of preparedness is to have an emergency kit. With an emergency kit, you can have everything you will need in one place, in case disaster strikes. In the middle of a hurricane, tornado, earthquake or terrorist attack is not the time to pack the items you will need in the event you lose power, water, food or are injured. Now is the time to be responsible for your safety and consider what you and your family will need in case disaster strikes. Remember, during a disaster the roads may be impassable and no one may be able to assist you for days or even weeks.

**In column A list what items you would put in your emergency kit. In column B write why you would need the item. The first one has been done for you.**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
<i>flashlight and batteries</i>	<i>To provide light</i>
<i>Food and water</i>	<i>To eat and drink</i>
<i>Extra clothing</i>	<i>Clean clothes to change into</i>
<i>Blankets or sleeping bags</i>	<i>For warmth</i>
<i>First Aid Kit</i>	<i>For medical emergencies</i>
<i>AM/FM/Shortwave Radio</i>	<i>To listen to news reports</i>
<i>Gas Mask</i>	<i>Protection against germ warfare</i>
<i>Chemical Suit</i>	<i>Possible terrorist attack</i>

## Let's Take A Closer Look



It is amazing how many things we use on a daily basis that are vital to our survival. Having electricity and access to the many appliances that run on electricity, such as a refrigerator, as well as gas to cook with, food and water, clothes, and warm blankets are just some of the things we take for granted. In case of a disaster, these things may not be available to us.

We are also accustomed to driving to the local supermarket or convenience store for items when we run out of them, but during a disaster the roads may be blocked, or the car could be trapped inside the garage, or crushed by a tree limb. The likelihood of you getting to a store could be slim, and even if you were to get there, would the store be open for business? If the stores were able to provide emergency supplies, would you have money to buy the things you need? Remember, if power lines are down, banks and cash machines will also be affected by the disaster. It is best to have a little cash on hand, in small bills. The stores may not have money in their registers to give you change, having small bills will enable you to have the correct amount of money for the items you need.

Some of the main things to consider when you prepare your emergency kit are: water, food, heat, light, finance, safety, health, and sanitation.

- ☑ **Bottled water:** A few 20oz bottles of water.
- ☑ **A change of clothes and shoes:** A set for each family member.
- ☑ **Blankets:** You may not have any heat.
- ☑ **Weatherproof matches and candles:** Do not light these until you are sure there are no gas leaks.
- ☑ **Flashlight and batteries:** Can be used for light and also to signal for help.
- ☑ **AM/FM/shortwave radio with batteries:** You will need to keep up with news events and information that could be very important to your survival.

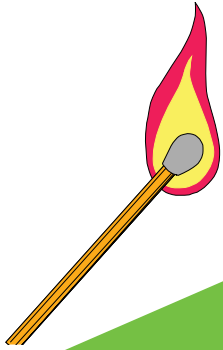
- ☑ **Non-perishable food items:** Canned meats, crackers and other snacks.
- ☑ **A can opener:** For opening any canned foods.
- ☑ **First aid kit:** in case you or someone else is hurt. This kit should have everything you need for minor emergencies.
- ☑ **A sewing kit:** For repairing torn fabric or clothing.
- ☑ **Prescription medications:** If anyone in your family is taking prescription medication, it is wise to have a supply in your emergency kit.
- ☑ **Plastic bags:** These can be used for sanitation.
- ☑ **Toilet paper:** This has a variety of uses.
- ☑ **Hand wipes:** You can keep your hands clean without wasting water.
- ☑ **Money:** The amount depends on how much your family can afford to store away. Be sure to save coins, as well as bills in twenties, tens, fives and ones.
- ☑ **A roll of duck tape and a nylon rope:** You never know when you will need to repair something or tie something together.
- ☑ **Basic tools:** A hammer and nails, screwdrivers and screws could come in handy for repairs.

You can store these supplies in a duffel bag or suitcase. Wrap the bag or suitcase in plastic so that it will be waterproof. Then, put it in a safe place like a closet or under a bed where it can be easily accessible in case of an emergency.

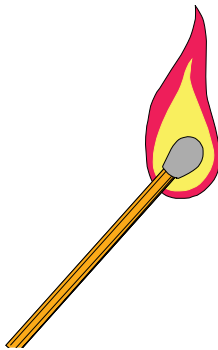
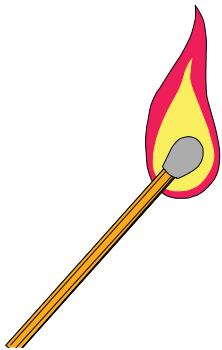
**It is better to have and not need  
than need and not have.**

# Have A Meeting Place

Along with an emergency kit, you should also have a designated area outside of your home where you and your family can meet if there is a disaster. There are many tragic stories of people dying because they went back into a burning house to save a family member who was already outside and in a safe place. If they had planned a designated meeting area, these tragedies could have been avoided.



## HOT TIPS



Put together a miniature emergency kit and carry it with you. In case there is an emergency and you are not at home, you can still be prepared.



Encourage your family to take a course in CPR and First Aid.



Ask your parents if you can learn how to turn off the gas, electricity and water valves at your home.

# Matches



## ...For A Rainy Day

Have you ever heard the saying, “Save some for a rainy day”? Well, disaster preparedness is a great example of this saying. Another important aspect of preparedness is for families to stock up on items they use on a regular basis. In other words, put some away for a rainy day. Keep in mind, supermarkets will not open if there is a power outage. If roads are blocked, delivery trucks with food and other necessities will not be able to reach your town. The supermarkets in your area may sell out of stocked items and may take days or even weeks to get more food and other supplies to restock their shelves. Therefore, during a disaster, people are sometimes unable to get food, water, and other necessities for weeks at a time.

Not having the bare necessities can turn a situation from bad to worse. This can be avoided if everyone took responsibility for their safety and survival by storing nonperishable foods such as canned meats and vegetables, rice, sugar, salt, potato flakes, and so forth. You will also need to store toilet paper, water, baby food and disposable diapers (if there is a baby in the family), matches, candles and even pet food if you have pets. It is recommended that each family stock up on enough supplies to last one to three months.



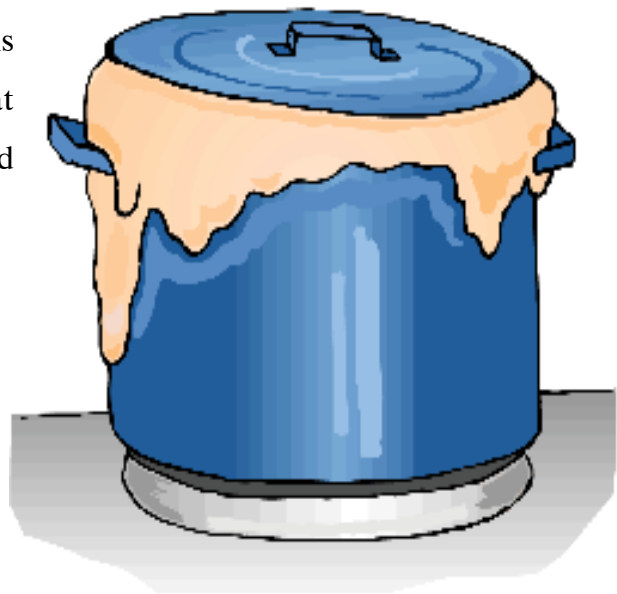
Explain to your parents/guardians that buying food to stock up for disaster would cost less in bulk, than buying one or two at a time. Did you know that most water has a shelf life of only one year? This means that you must replace stored water, so that you will always have a fresh supply. If your stored water is near the expiration date, you can use it for your pets or to water your flowers. Just rinse the bottles out, and refill them with fresh water. You can also use empty soda or juice bottles to store water for bathing purposes.

Store the things you need now, so that if there is a disaster you will have what you need to survive at that time. Let your parents/guardians know that you learned they do not have to buy everything all at once. A few items at a time is a start, and starting is an important part of being prepared.

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## ***Here's What It All Boils Down To...***

Knowing about disasters that could affect you and your family, having a plan, an emergency kit, and stored food, water and other basic necessities are important to your survival. Be responsible for your safety and encourage your family to be responsible for their safety, as well. Share what you have learned in this chapter with your parents/guardians and other family members, so that you and your family can be prepared in case disaster strikes.



## What I Have Learned...

- ☑ I can be responsible for my safety and survival by becoming knowledgeable about the types of disasters that could affect my family and me.
- ☑ Hurricanes, tornadoes, and earthquakes are called natural disasters. Terrorism in the form of bombings or germ warfare are examples of man-made disasters.
- ☑ With an average of 800 tornadoes a year, the United States has the highest annual average of tornadoes in the world.
- ☑ Not every disaster is unexpected. The weather bureaus can give advance warning, but, it is up to me to pay attention to the warnings and take them seriously.
- ☑ The basic necessities of life such as food, water, and shelter can be destroyed in a disaster.
- ☑ A meeting place should be established outside my home, so that all family members can be accounted for in times of disaster.
- ☑ I can be responsible and prepare an emergency kit by storing water, non-perishable food, money, flashlights, blankets, candles, and batteries.
- ☑ I can encourage my parents or guardians to store enough non-perishable food and non-food items such as toilet paper, matches, and so forth to last for one to three months, in case we are unable to go to the supermarkets for an extended period of time.

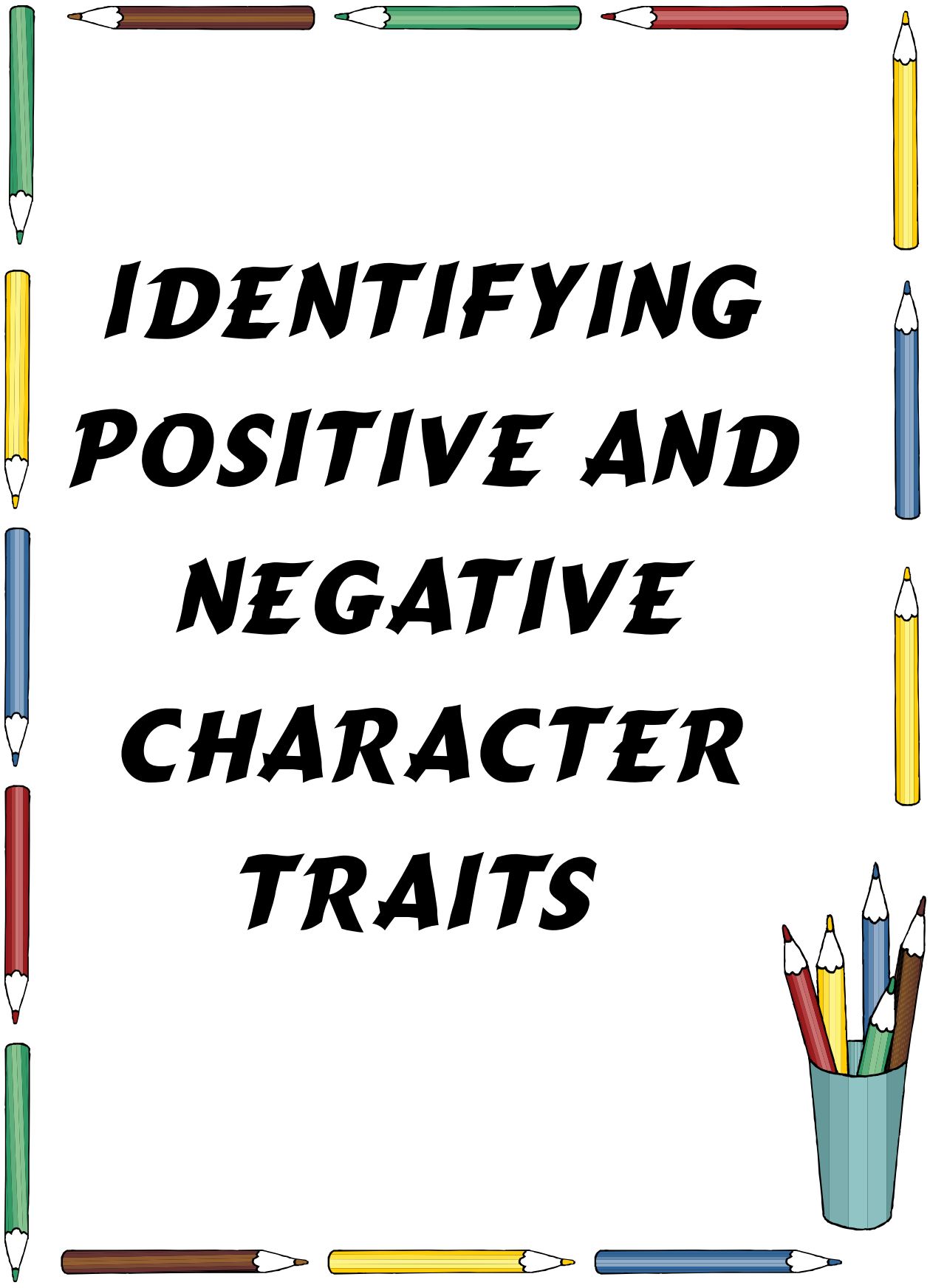
**“BE RESPONSIBLE AND PREPARE YOURSELF FOR  
WHATEVER THE NEW DAY MAY BRING.”**

**—THE PEACEFUL SOLUTION**

## Enrichment Activities

1. Plan a safety day. List what you did to prepare in case disaster strikes and share your information with others.
2. Watch the documentary, *Eye Witness Natural Disasters*, DK Publishing, Inc., 95 Madison Ave, NY, NY 10016. Consider how it could help you become more prepared for disasters.
3. If you could talk to a member of a terrorist organization, what would you say to convince him/her that hurting others is morally irresponsible? Write an essay about it and share it with others.
4. Create a poster about disaster preparedness.



A decorative border of colored pencils surrounds the central text. At the top, three pencils (brown, green, red) are arranged horizontally. On the left and right sides, pencils are arranged vertically: green, yellow, blue, red, and green from top to bottom. At the bottom, three pencils (brown, yellow, blue) are arranged horizontally. In the bottom right corner, a teal pencil holder contains several colored pencils.

***IDENTIFYING  
POSITIVE AND  
NEGATIVE  
CHARACTER  
TRAITS***

# The Positive Side Of Character

Your character is made up of many different qualities. They are called character traits. Character traits can be either positive or negative based on your values, what you have been taught, your choices and your experiences. The key to having moral character is to develop positive, upright character traits. When you demonstrate these traits on a consistent basis, you will be known as a person of integrity. People who have moral character show by their actions and attitude that they care about themselves and others.

Become familiar with the words that describe moral character traits and strive to develop them within yourself.

## Positive Character Traits

**1. Educated**—*Gathering information and making sure it is correct before making a decision.*

For example, your friends offer you some glue to sniff. You had already been researching it and know how damaging that can be to your brain. You tell them “no” and warn them of the dangers as well.

**2. Respectful**—*To value others as important as yourself and to allow that to show through your actions and attitudes.*

For example, your principal directs you to go to class, even though you had a permission slip to go to the nurse’s station. You try to explain but he says, “No back-talking.” You say respectfully, “Yes, sir,” and follow his directions anyway.

**3. Patient**—*Demonstrating self-control and remaining calm through setbacks.*

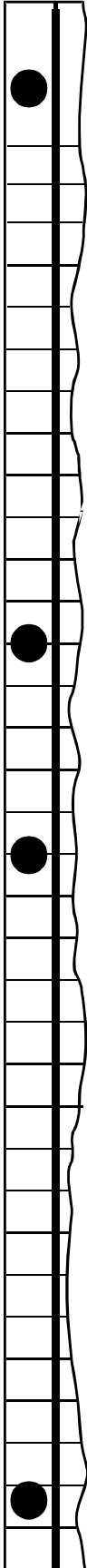
Being patient means not complaining, especially when you have the most to complain about. For example, your father promised to take you camping, but work kept interfering with the trip; you handled it without getting upset.

**4. Honest/Trustworthy**—*Being fair, sincere and straightforward.*

For example, you were playing in the house and unintentionally broke your mother’s new vase. No one saw you break it, but you told her the truth anyway.

**5. Humble**—*Not being proud or arrogant.*

A humble person will not argue, dispute nor disobey set rules. For



example, the bathroom rule is “Clean up after yourself when you use the bathroom.” You don’t like to clean the bathroom, but you obey.

**6. Thankful**—*To be conscious of the benefits that you have received.*

Thankful people find joy in what they have instead of worrying or being upset about what they don’t have. For example, George really wanted a brand name pair of shoes, however his mother could not afford it. She did, however, buy him the best shoes that she could afford. George told his mother thank you. Even though he did not get the pair he wanted, he appreciated the shoes he got.

**7. Forgiving**—*To refrain from holding anger or resentment towards someone who has wronged you.*

For example, your classmate laughed at you when you tripped. Rather than get upset with her or try to get even, you forgive her and laugh with her.

**8. Steadfast/ Persistent**—*You are determined not to give up or change what you have set out to accomplish.*

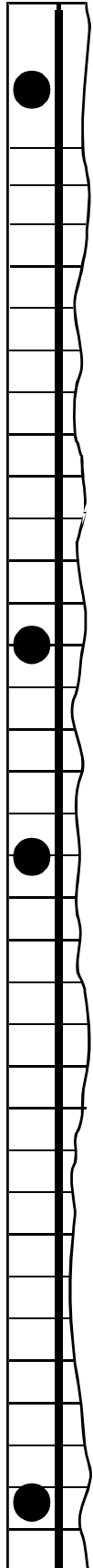
For example, Martha was determined to stop assisting Alicia in stealing school supplies at the mall. Martha had already explained to Alicia that stealing is wrong; so, when Alicia came to pick Martha up, she said “no” and encouraged Alicia not to go either.

**9. Self-Control**—*Not yielding to impulsive thoughts and actions.*

For example, you saw your sister’s letter on her dresser and really wanted to read it. But, because you chose to respect her privacy, you decide not to touch it.

How many of these character traits do you recognize in yourself? How many do you recognize in your family members and friends? When you possess these traits you can feel positive about yourself and your ability to interact with others in a meaningful and caring way. In like manner, when people around you exhibit these same positive character traits, and treat you accordingly, you feel appreciated and respected. In essence, this is The Peaceful Solution. By simply interacting and communicating using these positive character traits, we can avoid hurting and devaluing each other.

If you find that you are lacking any of these positive character traits, then work hard to develop them. You can develop a character trait by first valuing it as important. Begin by evaluating why that character trait is important to you as an individual and how it can benefit yourself and others. For example, let’s say you need to develop the character trait of



being thankful. The first step is to consider why you should be thankful. Being thankful means, you can appreciate what you have. People who are not thankful often feel dissatisfied with what they have and become envious of others.

Next, list all the things you have to be thankful for. Don't forget to include things such as food, clothing, a place to live, your health and so on. Often these things are taken for granted, and we forget to be thankful for them. Then make another list of how being thankful can affect the people you interact with everyday. A thankful person is a bright and optimistic person. He or she encourages and motivates others to be thankful and to improve themselves.

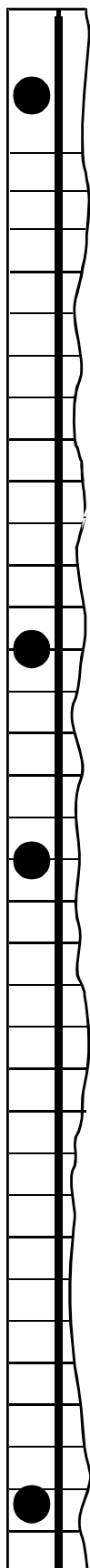
You can use these same steps to develop any character trait that you are lacking. Developing positive character traits takes commitment, dedication and determination. Changing yourself from the inside is not always easy but is well worth the effort.

## What Is A Negative Character?

**N**egative character traits define who you are just as clearly as positive traits. They too are a combination of values, environment and experiences. However, unlike positive character traits, negative traits can lead to behavior that could cause hatred, violence and even wars. If you treat someone dishonestly or show a lack of compassion, you are saying that you do not care about that person. If that person also has a negative character and responds to you in a disrespectful or aggressive way, then you have what is known as a conflict. A conflict that exists without a peaceful solution will result in hatred and violence. Here is another example; let's say someone who is dishonest steals money from someone who is unforgiving. The person who was stolen from will try to retaliate against the one who stole from him. This too can result in hatred and violence. Below are a few negative character traits. Become familiar with them so you can eliminate these traits from your character if you recognize them in yourself.

### Negative Character Traits

1. **Uneducated**—*Making a decision without getting all the facts.*  
For example, your friends offer you some glue to sniff. You ask, "Won't that mess with my head?" Your friend replies, "No, it's safe and just makes you high." Without any further investigation, you agree.

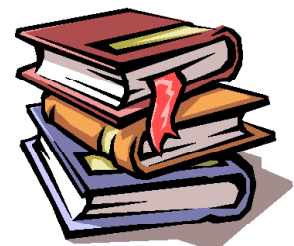


2. **Dishonest**—*To maliciously lie, cheat or steal.*  
For example, you saw Paula take Marco’s dictionary without asking his permission. However, when he asked about it, you said you had no idea who took it, because you just don’t like Marco.
3. **Revengeful/Unforgiving**—*To want to get even or get back at someone; results from not being able to forgive.*  
For example, Sally lent Jen her new pen, but Jen lost it. Jen apologized to Sally and offered to buy her a new pen, but Sally did not accept Jen’s apology. As soon as Jen got a new pen Sally took Jen’s pen when she wasn’t looking and broke it.
4. **Unreliable**—*When someone cannot be depended upon.*  
For example, Jill had promised to assist you on your math project on two previous occasions but never showed up. Therefore, when she volunteered to give you a ride to the library, you nicely refused.
5. **Impatient**—*To be restless or short-tempered and easily aggravated.*  
People who are impatient are not willing to wait. They want everything right away and become frustrated when their desires are not met.
6. **Aggressive**—*Capable of violent physical or verbal outburst.*  
Carlos stepped on Rick’s new shoes by mistake. Instead of waiting for Carlos to apologize, Rick immediately cursed at him and pushed him against the wall.
7. **Disrespectful**—*Lacking care or concern for someone.*  
For example, your dad told you it was time to do your chores. You got mad, went to your room and slammed the door.
8. **Hateful**—*An intense emotion that results in extreme dislike and hostility. Hate is derived from fear, anger or perceived injury.*  
For example, some people are raised to believe that people who have a different skin color should be hated.



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# Glossary

**Arrest:** *To seize and hold under the authority of law; The act of detaining in legal custody; the state of being so detained.*

**Desensitize:** *to make a sensitized or hypersensitive person insensitive or non-reactive.*

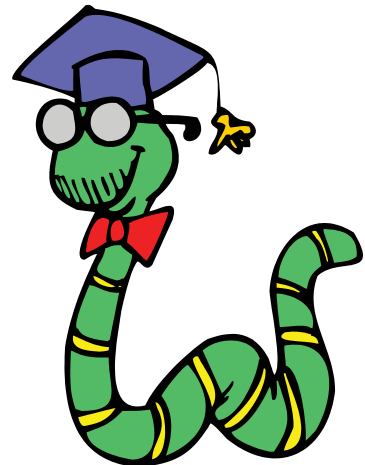
**Incarcerate:** *To put into jail.*

**Obligation:** *(1) The contract, promise, moral responsibility etc., binding one. (2) A duty imposed legally or socially, thing that one is bound to do as a result of contract, promise, or moral responsibility (3) A condition or fact of being indebted to another for a favor or service received. Syn: duty.*

**Preparedness:** *The state of being prepared, of having made things ready beforehand for some purpose, use or activity.*

**Procrastinate:** *To put off doing something, especially out of habitual carelessness or laziness.*

**Terrorism:** *The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons.*

























# History of The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Pioneered by President Yisrayl Hawkins, the Peaceful Solution Character Education Program began in 1994 with parents and teachers who were disturbed that positive character development was rapidly deteriorating in our society. Their concern prompted them to embark on a mission to stop the decline and bring back positive social behaviors to society. President Yisrayl Hawkins, also Curriculum Director and Author of the Peaceful Solution Character Education Program, has been diligently presenting the Peaceful Solution Character Education Program to individuals, community representatives, as well as world leaders through books, forums, conferences, television



*The Peaceful Solution Character Education*  
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