



# PEN Notes: Fact Sheet #8

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## Responsibility

**Responsibility** is respect and compassion for others through honesty, courage, self-control, and self-respect. Parents can teach responsibility through daily and weekly routines, personal hygiene, and life skills.

### Six principles in teaching children responsibilities:

1. Each child is unique and reacts to stimuli in different ways. Some require different motivation such as punishment, while others respond to sensitivity.
2. Children do exactly what is really expected of them---no faking.
3. Setting an example is the best teacher. If you show respect, the child watching will do the same.
4. Consistency and follow through are a must, and probably the hardest part of teaching responsibility.
5. We must teach principles and then give initiative and responsibility to our children instead of manipulating children. We must be genuine ourselves!
6. Children learn responsibility through pride in themselves and in their maturity and individuality. A parent's praise can lead a child to pride.



### Children should be responsible to

**Parents** for 1) obedience, 2) things they have received, and 3) work because they are part of the family.

**Society** for their actions, talents, and attitudes.

**Self** for inner motivation and strength of self-discipline.

**Others** as in caring for small children, being dependable, and contributing to the world around them.

Instead of being told what to think, kids need lots of information about themselves and the world around them, and the opportunity to make decisions based on that information.

Kids need support, explanations, opportunities to be responsible, and invitations to think for themselves.

We must treat our children in a way we ourselves would want to be treated. Use responsible, effective alternatives to threatening, hitting, psychologically or verbally abusing, neglecting or abandoning our children.

### **If it works and leaves a child's and your own dignity intact, do it!**

To feel responsible to parents and authority figures, and later to self, is obedience and maturity, but to feel responsible to others is love—responsibility of the purest form and the highest dimension. ("Teaching Your Child Responsibility" by Linda and Richard Eyre)

