Tips for Raising a Responsible Child

Empowering Children to Reach Their Full Potential

The Message:

If we do too much for children, we communicate that they are not capable of handling the many responsibilities that life gives them.

* If children are rescued every time they make a mistake, they will never learn responsibility
* Painful lessons typically lead to real learning and changed behavior
* Making excuses for children teaches them that it is ok to keep doing things the same way, which leads to more irresponsible choices and disrespect
* Irresponsible children may be a reflection of parental over-responsibility

What can you do?

* Provide children experiences that will help them feel capable and that help the life skills of self-discipline, responsibility, and problem solving
* Send the message early and often that “you are a capable person”
* Expect responsibility-it shows them that you believe in them and then they will believe in themselves
* Walk away when it is time for them to work. Do not hover to make sure they get things done and get them done right
* Assign chores to your child

Natural Consequences-Things that happen in response to a child’s behavior without parental involvement. Allow your child to experience the natural consequences of their choices. This will help them develop personal responsibility as a result of their experience and consequences.

* Have your child repair or replace lost or broken items. Do not go buy new items immediately for your child
* Miss opportunities where planning was needed or not done
* Eat school lunch when lunch box was forgotten on counter
* Face teacher when homework is incomplete or forgotten
* Ask teacher himself/herself when help is needed

School Smart Parenting Tips

* Celebrate the effort rather than picking at the results
* Validate effort, initiative and persistence rather than ability
* Homework is the child’s responsibility, not the parent’s
* Walk the talk. Model the behaviors you want your children to learn

If you want children to keep their feet on the ground, put some responsibility on their shoulders.

Abigail Van Buren

Responsibility is the price of greatness. Winston Churchill

Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him, and to let him know that you trust him.

Booker T Washington

The willingness to accept responsibility for one’s life is the source from which self-respect springs.

Joan Didion