



the family values toolkit

For Children Ages 5 to 7

This Month's Featured Value Is: **Responsibility**

Responsibility is the value that enables us to take care of ourselves, our families, our friends, and the greater community. Being responsible means that others can rely on us to do what we've promised. For kids, taking responsibility may mean doing something difficult or tedious, like studying for a test or doing family chores when they'd rather go out with friends. Or it could take moral strength--such as saying no to drugs. Ultimately, being responsible benefits us all--in terms of health, relationships, work, and building a better world.



What Can Parents Do to Nurture This Important Value?

First, Set Goals:

Help your children see that you value work. Build their competence and show the importance of putting first things first.

Children this age are impelled by a mixture of motives--the need to gain adult approval and avoid punishment, as well as a budding sense of responsibility. Their increased impulse control helps them delay gratification and participate in many more tasks that are important to the family. In the classroom, they have the self-discipline to complete worksheets or read or write independently. Nevertheless, kids this age are still building skills. Parents can't simply assign kids a chore and expect it to be done. Children need help and practice so they can learn from mistakes without feeling ashamed.

Next, Take Action! Try These Activities:

- ✓ **Give kids regular dinnertime responsibilities** such as setting the table or tearing up the lettuce. Emphasize that these tasks help the family enjoy mealtime, and that if they don't do their job, the family won't have salad or a table setting.
- ✓ **When your child starts getting homework, set a regular time and place to do it.** Sit nearby so your child can see you reading or doing your own work--and be available in case he or she needs help.
- ✓ **Plan a family picnic.** Rather than cooking dinner one night, have an indoor picnic where you all sit on the floor. Plan ahead. Let everyone come up with a job he or she wants to do. Young children can spread the blanket, help make sandwiches, bring dessert, and help clean up.

Then, Report Back!

Share your stories of success, your challenges, and overall experiences with others in our community @

responsibilityproject.com/familyvalues