

- ✱ **Community responsibility.** Unless you're a hermit who lives in a cave, you're part of a community. As such, you're responsible for treating others as you want to be treated, for participating in community activities and decisions, and for being an active, contributing citizen.<sup>3</sup> If your neighborhood park is full of trash, don't wait for someone else to pick it up. You can read local and community newspapers to stay informed. When you're old enough, vote in elections. If you're feeling *really* responsible, you might even decide to run for office.
- ✱ **Responsibility to customs, traditions, beliefs, and rules.** These might come from your family, your community, your heritage, or your faith. Learn what they are and do your best to respect and follow them.
- ✱ **Personal responsibility.** It's up to you to become a person of good character. Your parents, teachers, religious leaders, scout leaders, and other caring adults will guide you, but only you can determine the kind of person you are and ultimately become.

"Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands."

*Anne Frank*

"But wait!" you might say. "This is a free country! Nobody can force me to accept all those responsibilities." In fact, freedom is meaningless without responsibility—and vice versa. Life is a balance between the two. Freedom without responsibility means that everyone does what they want, when they want, with no regard for anyone or anything but themselves. Responsibility without freedom means that everyone is forced to do the same things with no regard for individual wants and needs. You might think of freedom and responsibility as a matched pair of shoes. If you try to hop only on freedom's shoe, you'll be reckless and out of control. If you try to hop only on responsibility's shoe, you'll feel like a drone. You

need both shoes to move through life with confidence, grace, and strength.

How can you become more responsible? You can start by **getting organized**. Buy or make a daily planner and learn to use it.<sup>4</sup> There are many student planners available, and they often come with instructions. Once you form the habit of using a daily planner effectively—jotting down important notes, marking due dates, keeping to-do lists, writing down goals<sup>5</sup>—you'll find that you no longer "forget" about upcoming tests or long-term assignments. When you note important appointments in your planner, you're less likely to miss them (or to show up late). Other people will appreciate you for **being punctual** and **honoring your commitments**. They will respect you more and your self-esteem will grow. It's a win-win situation all around.



And speaking of commitments: You can make a *personal commitment* to start being more responsible *today*. Tell yourself that this is the kind of person you want to be. Then be it.

"The ultimate responsibility always lies within you, and opportunities are the ones you create."

*Melissa Poe*

<sup>3</sup> See "Citizenship," pages 35–43.

<sup>4</sup> See page 231 for a related activity.

<sup>5</sup> See "Purpose," pages 195–197, for goal-setting steps.

## CHECK IT OUT



Visit your local office supplies store to find a daily planner. Or order a special student planner from:

### Day-Timer

One Willow Lane  
East Texas, PA 18046  
1-800-225-5005  
[www.daytimer.com](http://www.daytimer.com)

The Day-Timer student planners are binders with multiple features including monthly calendars, class schedule sheets, monthly planning sheets, project planning forms, inspiring monthly success messages, grade tracking sheets, and study tips.

### Franklin Covey

2200 West Parkway Boulevard  
Salt Lake City, UT 84119  
1-800-819-1812  
[www.franklincovey.com](http://www.franklincovey.com)

Franklin Covey offers all types of planners, calendars, and bags to help students organize, prioritize, keep track of assignments and goals, and take responsibility for their classwork and schedules.

## How to Plan

Whether you use a daily planner or not, you need to know *how to plan*. Planning is different from problem solving,<sup>6</sup> although you might use problem solving if you encounter obstacles while trying to make and carry out a plan. You can use planning in every area of your life, from deciding what to eat for breakfast to arranging a party for your friends, from tackling a chore around the house to approaching a science project. Simply put, planning means figuring out ahead of time how to do something so you can proceed efficiently. Planning is purposeful and deliberate.

Sometimes planning can be done in your head. ("Will I wear the blue sweater tomorrow or the red sweater? The blue one has spaghetti on it, so I'll wear the red one.") Sometimes you need to think through a plan and all of the steps involved. You might even want to write them down. The more detailed your plan is, the more likely it is to succeed.

Here's how to go about making a plan:

1. **Write a list of all the things you need to do this week.** Then prioritize your list. Put a "1" by the most important task or job, a "2" by the next important one, and so on down your list.
2. **Write down when each task or job needs to be done.** These "deadlines" might be imposed by other people (your mom wants you to clean your room by Sunday), or they might be self-imposed (you want to clean your room by Friday so you won't have to do it on the weekend).
3. **Write down what you'll need to accomplish each task or job.** Any special materials, equipment, or resources? Tools? Books? Other people to help you? This way, you won't start something (like a homework assignment) and suddenly discover that you're missing an essential component (like your book, which you left at school).
4. **Always have a backup plan—a "plan B."** Try to predict any problems that might arise and prevent you from carrying out your plan. Ask yourself some "What if. . . ?" questions: "What if it rains on the day I want to mow the lawn?" "What if I don't have time to finish a homework assignment on the night before it's due?" Then come up with answers.

You might want to write your plan on a chart. Then you can see at a glance how the parts fit together and whether there are any problems or conflicts. You can also use your chart to make notes and changes as the week progresses. You'll find an example of a planning chart at the top of page 228.

The more carefully you plan, the more organized you are. The more organized you are, the more responsible you become. The more responsible you become, the more your parents (and other people) trust you. Planning definitely has its rewards.

<sup>6</sup> See "Problem Solving," pages 184–193.

JOB OR TASK (list, then prioritize)	WHAT I NEED TO DO IT	DONE BY WHEN?	BACKUP PLAN
4. Mow lawn	Gas (ask Dad to buy some), trash bags	Saturday noon	If it rains on Saturday, do Sunday afternoon
2. Read story for English class	English book (bring home Tuesday)	Wednesday morning by 10:30 class	Read in study hall before class on Wednesday
1. Buy school supplies	Ask Mom to drive me to the store. Buy 1) notebook 2) paper 3) pencils	Monday night	Ask Dad or Megan to drive me, or walk there on my way home from school
3. Clean my room	Pick up clothes, wash clothes, vacuum, dust, change sheets	Thursday night	If someone else is using the washing machine, wash clothes on Friday night

## Character Dilemmas

*For journaling or writing essays, discussion, debate, role-playing, reflection*

Suppose that . . .

- 1** You're a recent immigrant to the United States (or the country you now live in). Are you responsible for obeying the laws if you don't know what they are? If you unknowingly break a law, should you be held accountable?
- 2** You have a real talent for gymnastics, but your parents can't afford to pay for lessons. Are they responsible for finding ways to support and encourage your talent? If they aren't responsible, who is?
- 3** You're a parent whose child was caught painting graffiti on a school building. Are you responsible for the damage your child has done? If not, why not?
- 4** Someone who lives in your neighborhood accidentally broke a water pipe while planting a tree on the boulevard. The boulevard is public property. Who should pay for repairing the damage? The person who broke the pipe? The city? The neighborhood organization? Would it make a difference if you knew that the person was a single parent with several children and a very limited income?
- 5** Your school has a "closed campus" rule, meaning that students aren't allowed to leave the school grounds during school hours. A group of your friends regularly eats lunch at a nearby fast-food restaurant. Do you have any responsibility in this situation? If so, what is it? If not, why not?
- 6** You read in the newspaper that many preschoolers in your town haven't been immunized against childhood diseases. Their families don't believe in immunizing children. Should the children be immunized anyway? If so, who's responsible for seeing that it's done? Your town, state, or federal government? The police? Health officials? School officials? Other parents? You? No one? Would it make a difference if you knew that the families were objecting to the immunizations for religious reasons?
- 7** You overhear your aunt and uncle telling your parents that they have no savings. They assume that after they retire, they'll be able to live on their Social Security. Meanwhile, they're spending the money they earn on travel, fancy cars, and other luxuries. You've been hearing on the news that the Social Security reserves might not be sufficient when "baby boomers" like your aunt and uncle reach retirement

age. Who should be responsible for taking care of seniors who don't have enough money to live on? The government? The children of the "baby boomers"? All of society? Religious organizations? No one?

## Activities

**TELL ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU** unknowingly broke a rule in your classroom or family, or a law in your community, and got caught. What happened to you? How did you feel?

*Variation:* Write in your journal<sup>7</sup> about a time when you knowingly broke a rule and didn't get caught. What, if anything, happened? How did you feel? Would you do it again? Why or why not?

**THINK OF A NEW TALENT OR SKILL** you'd like to develop. Then:

1. Brainstorm all of the things you could do to develop that talent. *Examples:* Take classes at school or a community center; read books; watch videos.
2. Make a list of all the people you might ask for help. Write down their names and telephone numbers. Go down your list and contact people until you find someone who's willing to help you and has the time. (Check with your parents or guardians before contacting other adults.)
3. Create a schedule outlining the things you'll learn and do. Give yourself a deadline for each one.
4. Practice at least one-half hour each day, or an hour or two several times each week.
5. Perform your talent or share it with your family, class, or club.

**WRITE A POEM, JINGLE, PARAGRAPH,** or saying about responsibility. If you do this as a class (or even as a school), you might start each day by reading one over the PA system. Or create a Responsibility Bulletin Board to display students' thoughts and writings about responsibility.

**RESEARCH DISCOVERIES AND INVENTIONS** that have had both positive and negative consequences. *Examples:* In 1884, an anesthetic was developed that included cocaine as one of its ingredients. Cocaine has since

been found to be highly addictive. In 1939, the pesticide DDT was developed to control insects that spread malaria. For years, it was used widely on farms and in homes; later it was discovered to be very harmful to the environment. If you make a discovery or create an invention, do you have a responsibility to share it with the world? Afterward, are you responsible for how your discovery or invention is used? Debate these questions with your friends, class, family, or club.

**CONSIDER WHETHER MATH** makes you more responsible. Does studying math have any effect on your organization or perseverance? Can the benefits of learning logic skills and analytical thinking spill over into other areas of your life? Draw a chart, graph, or mind map showing all of the connections you can think of between math and. . . ?

**RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITY IN ADVERTISING.** Suppose that an advertiser of a popular breakfast cereal claims that "Crunchie Critters" gives you more pep and energy than other breakfast foods. What if it isn't true? Are advertisers responsible for telling the truth? Watch a week's worth of television commercials and keep a record of any that seem to be exaggerations, unproved claims, or outright lies. Keep track of the TV stations that air the commercials. Afterward, write to your local stations and complain about any commercials that appear to be irresponsible.<sup>8</sup>

*Variations:* Listen to radio commercials or clip advertisements out of magazines or newspapers. Or study advertisements you see on the World Wide Web.

**RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITY** toward indigenous peoples. Choose a country that was taken from an indigenous population by invaders, settlers, or foreign governments. *Examples:* Australia (its indigenous people are the Aborigines); the United States (the Native Americans); various countries in Africa. Did the "outsiders" behave responsibly or irresponsibly toward the indigenous peoples? Give examples to support your answer. Do you think that when one nation conquers another (as in a war), the conquering nation has a responsibility to treat the conquered peoples justly and fairly? Or is this a matter of "might makes right"? Give reasons

<sup>7</sup> See "Endurance," pages 88, 89, and 92, for journaling resources.

<sup>8</sup> See "Honesty," page 120, for resources on advertising.

for your answer. TIPS: If you decide to study the Native Americans, find out about the following:

- ◆ the false stereotypes of Native Americans that were spread by European settlers
- ◆ the Treaty of Greenville
- ◆ the Dawes Act (or General Allotment Act) of 1887
- ◆ the Indian Removal Act of 1830 (and the forced marches that resulted from it)
- ◆ the concepts of “reservations” and “assimilation”
- ◆ Wounded Knee
- ◆ the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934
- ◆ the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act of 1971

**ORGANIZE A GRAFFITI REMOVAL PROGRAM.** Look around your neighborhood for graffiti. If you find some, contact your local police or city officials and ask whether there are any graffiti removal programs in place. If there aren't, start one. Ask for donations of paint and brushes, and invite the police to chaperon. Organize your friends, classmates, and families to wipe out graffiti.

**SURVEY YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD** and find out if there are any seniors who need help with such things as repairing fences, shopping for groceries, painting, doing minor repairs, lawn care, pet care, etc. Take responsibility and either do it yourself or get others to help you. Be sure to take an adult chaperon along (a parent or guardian) both when you survey your neighborhood and when you do your good deeds.

**WRITE A SKIT THAT DEMONSTRATES** your school's rules. Present it to the first all-school assembly in the fall. Don't forget to include humor in your skit; people remember things better when they can laugh. But don't make your skit *too* funny or people might miss the message.

**FIND A JOB OR START YOUR OWN BUSINESS.**<sup>9</sup> *Example:* Are you good at doing yard work? Collect names of neighborhood kids who do yard work. Make a one-page flyer describing the kinds of work you and the

other kids can do. Decide how much you'll charge to do certain kinds of jobs, and include that information on your flyer. Distribute copies of your flyer around the neighborhood.

## CHECK IT OUT



*Better than a Lemonade Stand: Small Business Ideas for Kids* by Daryl Bernstein (Hillsboro, OR: Beyond Words Publishing, 2012). Describes dozens of money-making ventures including curb address painter, birthday party planner, dog walker, house checker, newsletter publisher, photographer, and sign maker. Daryl was 15 years old when he wrote and published this book. Ages 8–15.

*Kid Cash: Creative Money-Making Ideas* by Joe Lamancusa (New York: Tab Books, 1993). Dozens of concrete, creative suggestions for earning money, samples of advertising flyers, and tips on what to charge for your services, how to keep records, and how to handle your profits. Written by a 14-year-old with firsthand experience running his own business. Ages 9–13.

**MAKE A FAMILY JOBS CHART.** Your chart should have two columns: “Things to Do” and “Things Done.” With your family, brainstorm a list of jobs that need to be done around the home every day or every week. Decide who's responsible for each job. Write each job on a strip of construction paper (you might choose a different color for each family member). Use removable tape to attach each job strip to the “Things to Do” column. Each person is responsible for moving his or her own job strips from the “Things to Do” column into the “Things Done” column. Try this chart for a week or two, then have a family meeting to discuss it. Does it seem to be working? Is everyone being responsible? Dependable? Reliable? Persevering? Organized? Make any necessary changes to the chart so it works well for everyone.

**CREATE A RESPONSIBILITY TREE.** Draw a large tree on poster paper. Find or make symbols that represent your responsibilities and hang them on your tree. *Examples:* a doll's shirt = taking care of your clothing; a small book = learning; a stop sign = obeying laws; a school house = taking care of your brother after school. If you have a small potted tree, you might hang your symbols from it like ornaments.

<sup>9</sup> See “Courage,” pages 74–75, for information and resources on being an entrepreneur and starting your own business.

*Variation:* If everyone in your class makes Responsibility Trees, you can put them together in a Responsibility Forest.

**MAKE YOUR OWN DAILY PLANNER.** Buy a small binder and plenty of paper, or create your own binder using stiff cardboard, a hole punch, and yarn. Include:

- ✓ an identification page with your name and phone number
- ✓ 12 calendar pages, each one showing a full month (you might decorate each calendar page with symbols representing the month)
- ✓ a page for each day of the current month (so you can write down notes, ideas, assignment, appointments, etc.)
- ✓ a list of your classes, room numbers, class times, and teachers' names
- ✓ pages for friends' addresses and phone numbers
- ✓ pages describing upcoming projects or things you want to think about and plan
- ✓ a budget page (list things you want to save money for and how you plan to earn the money)
- ✓ a pocket (fold a piece of card stock or stiff paper and tape the sides) to hold notes, a pencil, and important reminders.

**FIND EXAMPLES OF POPULAR MUSIC** that promote responsibility, dependability, and perseverance. Bring them to school and share them with your class. (Clear them with your teacher first.) Do you think that music has the power to inspire people to be more responsible? Less responsible? Explain your answer.

**EXAMINE THE ROLE OF RESPONSIBILITY** in sports. Compare team sports to individual sports. Which sports seem to demand the most responsibility from the players? Which seem to promote responsibility? Which, if any, seem to promote irresponsible behavior?


*Variations:* Interview coaches and athletes in your school and community. Ask them to tell you their ideas about responsibility in sports. Or write to famous athletes.<sup>10</sup>


Get in touch with famous athletes with help from *The Kid's Address Book*. See "Choice and Accountability," page 32.


**PLAY A "WHAT'S THEIR RESPONSIBILITY?" GAME.** Make a list of roles or careers in society. You can use the example below, add to it, or write your own list. Divide into two or more teams. Give each team the list of roles or careers. The object of the game is to list four different or unusual responsibilities for each role or career. Give a prize for 1) the most answers and 2) the most unusual answers.


artist	mother
bank teller	musician
business executive	news reporter
cafeteria worker	nurse
child	nutritionist
city planner	pilot
club member	plumber
coach	police officer
computer programmer	principal
court justice	psychologist
directory assistance	recreation/resort
telephone operator	manager
doctor	religious leader
electrician	sales person
engineer	scientist
father	student
friend	teacher
governor	trash collector
grandparent	veterinarian
guardian	weather forecaster
landscape architect	writer
legislator	youth group
letter carrier	member
mayor	zoo owner

**READ STORIES ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY,** dependability, reliability, perseverance, being organized, being punctual, and honoring commitments. Look for these books:


 *Dacey's Song* by Cynthia Voigt (New York: Atheneum, 1982). Dacey struggles with school, a job, and responsibility for her brothers and sisters as she adjusts to living with her grandmother. Ages 11-12.

 *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder (New York: HarperCollins, 1990). Young Laura Ingalls describes a year in the life of her pioneer family in the Midwest. Ages 8-12.

 *Malu's Wolf* by Ruth Craig (New York: Orchard Books, 1995). After Malu is permitted to raise a wolf pup, significant changes happen in the lives and traditions of the young girl's Stone Age clan. Ages 9–13.

 *Summer of the Swans* by Betsy Byars (New York: Puffin Books, 1981). A teenage girl gains new insight into herself and her family when

her mentally retarded brother gets lost. Ages 10–14.

 *When the Road Ends* by Jean Thesman (New York: Avon Books, 1993). Sent to spend the summer in the country, three foster children and an older woman recovering from a serious accident are abandoned by a slovenly caretaker and must try to survive on their own. Ages 10–14.

## Character in ***ACTION***

### Ellen Bigger: Taking Responsibility

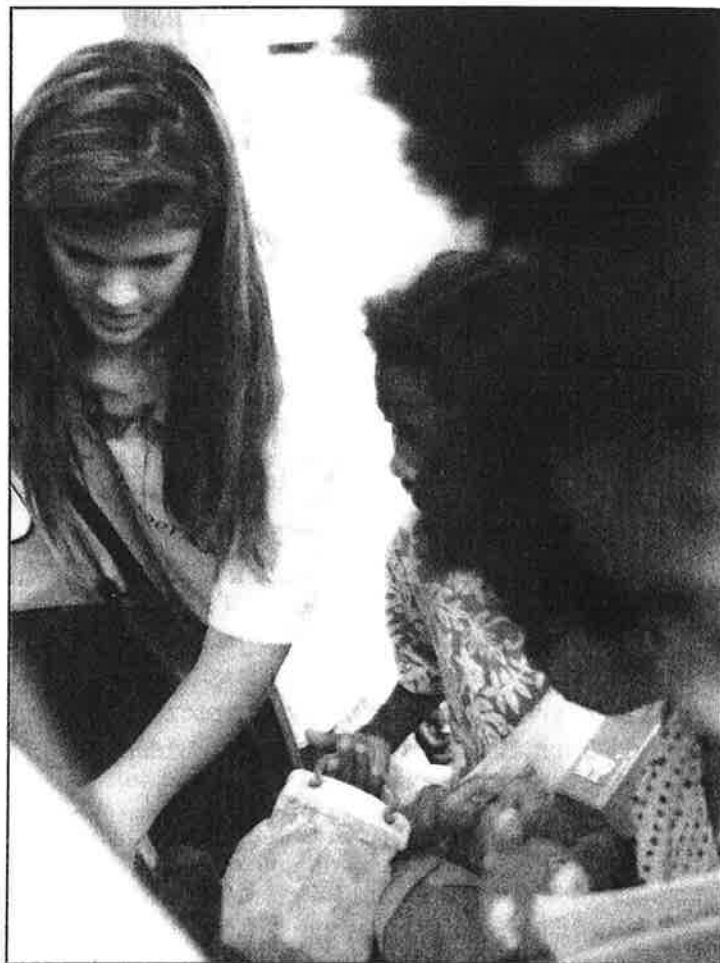
**W**hen Ellen Bigger was in the fifth grade, her former Brownie leader was murdered by her husband, who was on drugs at the time. Ellen had spent many days at her leader's house and was a friend of her daughter. When she heard the news, she was deeply shocked. For a long time, she cried often and had trouble sleeping at night.

In sixth grade, Ellen heard a speech that changed the direction of her life. At the commissioning of the Coast Guard Cutter *Key Largo*, the speaker told the audience of the Coast Guard's efforts to keep drugs from coming into the United States. But the *real* challenge, the speaker emphasized, was for people *at home* to make the effort.

Ellen felt as if a fire had been lit under her. She felt responsible for helping to spread the anti-drugs message and was determined to find a way to do it. Her mom had just bought a computer, so Ellen planted herself in front of the screen that very weekend and designed a brochure. "Drugs can kill and destroy your life, tear apart your family, and break your heart," she wrote. "No matter what age you are, you can help fight the drug problem by pledging a drug-free life." She put a pledge form on the back and promised to send a decal if all the members of a family would take the pledge for a Drug-Free Home.

Ellen had \$500 in savings that she had earned, and she spent all of it on the first printing of her brochure and postage to mail it out. Her family helped her to fold the brochures. The Girl Scout Council in Miami and the United Way printed additional copies and the

decal. Ellen handed out brochures at shopping malls, festivals, churches, schools, and grocery stores. She received many responses in the mail from all over the country. Over the next few years, she would distribute more than 50,000 copies of



Ellen Bigger (left) working with kids

her brochure, finally hearing from places as far away as Brazil and Egypt.

One boy in a detention home wrote her a letter and asked her how he could get off drugs. Ellen worried and stewed over what to say. She finally wrote a message advising him to trust himself and pledge to stay off drugs one day at a time. She watched the mail, but he didn't write back.

She designed a T-shirt and buttons that said "I live in a Drug-Free Home, and I'm proud of it," decorated with a picture of a house tied with a red ribbon. When she was interviewed on television, her program spread across the U.S. She was invited to speak at conferences and workshops in Texas, Ohio, and Georgia.

Meanwhile, her parents still expected her to fulfill her family responsibilities. Ellen did chores, cooked some of the meals, and took care of the family dogs. She also volunteered at the local Red Cross, planted trees, and got involved in other volunteer projects with the Scouts. Her bedroom was a disaster area, piled high with papers, brochures, socks, and T-shirts tossed in corners and under her bed. (Nobody's perfect.)

During the summer after eighth grade, when Ellen was fourteen, she decided to organize another program. She had received many letters from kids who didn't know how to start their own projects. Ellen called her program "Youthwish." Through Youthwish, Ellen encouraged kids to volunteer, gave instructions for how to set up a volunteer fair, and explained how kids could share ideas for networking

with adults. She began a biweekly newsletter and asked a teacher to be her sponsor. The teacher helped Ellen to make Youthwish a nonprofit corporation so it wouldn't be taxed. Shortly after, Ellen won the Noxzema Extraordinary Teen Award for volunteering. She received \$5,000 for her favorite charity. With that money, she set up \$500 grants through Youthwish for kids who wanted to start their own programs.

The real prize came later, though. One day, Ellen was speaking and volunteering at a public event. A young man walked up to her and introduced himself. It was the boy who had written to her long ago from the detention home. He told Ellen that although he'd written to many people when he was imprisoned and alone, asking for help, she was the only one who had responded with a personal letter of encouragement. It had meant a lot to him. He was no longer using drugs, and he thanked her.



Ellen (center) and her friend Naomi delivering emergency supplies to Hurricane Andrew victims



top secret  
service  
mission  
assignment  
for:



special agent



## **MISSION : POSSIBLE**

Your mission is to serve others without being asked and without their knowledge. Select your acts of service from the options contained in this envelope and paste them below. When each mission is completed, leave behind a calling card.



Cut out the ideas below (or fill<sup>2-52</sup> in the empty spaces with your own) and paste them onto your "mission: possible" letter.

<b>Help someone with their homework</b>	<b>Pick up garbage outside</b>	<b>Make a card for someone</b>
<b>Say thank you</b>	<b>Read a book to someone</b>	<b>Draw a picture for someone</b>
<b>Sweep the floor</b>	<b>Clean up a mess</b>	<b>Deliver a treat to someone</b>
		<b>Write a thank you note to someone</b>

## So what are some service activities that would be great for **Random Acts of Kindness for Kids**?

Fill you banner with these ideas:

1. Collect canned goods for the food bank.
2. Pick up trash in the neighborhood.
3. Invite a new friend over for a play date.
4. Send thank you notes to the fire department and police station.
5. Hold the door for someone.
6. Bring in a neighbor's trash cans.
7. Write kind notes for siblings.
8. Put out birdseed for the birds.
9. Bake cookies for a neighbor.
10. Smile and say "Hello!"
11. Deliver flowers to a neighbor you don't know that well.
12. Donate toys.
13. Give outgrown clothing to a smaller friend.
14. Donate books to the library.
15. Wave hello to a neighbor.
16. Shovel snow from a neighbor's walkway.
17. Bring a treat to school for your teacher.
18. Draw a picture for the mailman.
19. Help prepare and deliver a meal for a family with a new baby.
20. Tell the trash collector "Thank You!"
21. Write a note to Grandparents saying why they are special.
22. Give neighbors some candy chocolate "hugs" and a note saying "hugs from your neighbor!"
23. Draw a picture for your librarian with a note saying "Thank YOU!"
24. Bring bubbles to the park and some extras to share with other kids.
25. Write encouraging messages in chalk on the sidewalk to brighten someone's day.

Have you done any random acts of kindness or acts of service with your children? What kind of activities have you done? Do you have a blog post to share that focuses on love, kindness, an activity you and your child completed together where love was apparent?? Link it up below. We would love to see it!





# MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*Note: Since this lesson is long, you may want to break it up into two meetings. Consider presenting steps 1–13 and closing with steps 16–18 in one meeting. For the second meeting, after a brief review, do the role-play scenarios (step 14); continue with steps 15–18 to complete the lesson.*

## READY

**Summary:** This lesson identifies situations in which people are hurting others. Participants will have discussions and role-play situations to develop strategies to intervene. Participants are challenged to intervene early when others need help.

## SET

**Time Required:** 90 minutes

**Assets Promoted:** Caring School Climate, Community Values Youth, Youth as Resources, Positive Peer Influence, Caring, Service to Others, Resistance Skills, Peaceful Conflict Resolution, Equality and Social Justice, Planning and Decision Making, Personal Power

### Materials Needed:

List or poster of the 40 Developmental Assets  
Display Chart 1: Mission  
Display Chart 2: Agreements  
Display Chart 10: Tips for Intervening

Handout 6: Emily's Story and Sonya's Story  
Handouts 7–12: Role-Play Scenarios A–F

### Preparation:

- Read the lesson and think about how to facilitate it to meet your group's and school's particular needs. Keep in mind that the scripted parts (shown in italics) of the lesson provide only suggested language. Feel free to modify to fit your own style and your group's unique goals.
- Select three students to role-play an unkind act (see 3).
- Select a student, preferably male, to read Emily's Story; select another student, preferably female, to read Sonya's Story.
- Make copies of Handout 6 (see pages 101–102), one for each participant.
- Make copies of Handouts 7–12 (see pages 103–108). Cut sheets in half to create role-play cards, one Role-Play Scenario per group of four.
- Make Display Chart 10 (see page 113), using poster board or flip-chart paper. (Do not display this chart until the appropriate time during the lesson [see 15].)
- Display the 40 Developmental Assets, as well as Display Charts 1 and 2, where all participants can see them.

## Review of Previous Meetings

**1** Welcome participants, thank them for being here, and **REMINDE** them: *We are here today to continue with our efforts to improve our school. What is our mission?*

Refer to Display Chart 1, Mission, and

**SAY** *Our mission is to promote a safer and more supportive school climate, to help build more caring relationships, and to understand the importance of the Developmental Assets.*

**ASK** *What did we discuss at our last meeting?* (Review.)

Explain that the purpose of ongoing meetings is to remind ourselves of the importance of continuing to make a difference in our school.

Refer to Display Chart 2, Agreements, and give a brief review.

## Role-Play Activity

**2** **SAY** *Today we are going to give you an opportunity to discuss some of the mean things that happen in school and how to help stop them.*

**3** **ASK** *Has anyone recently seen or experienced an act of meanness at school?* (Take a few responses.)

Choose one of the experiences and set it up as a role-play scenario or have one prepared before the meeting.

**4** Ask three students to role-play a mean act in which one student is taunted and teased by the others. Allow the role play to go on for 30 to 40 seconds; then freeze the scene.

**5** **ASK** the group: *What's happening here?* (Take several responses.)

Then **ASK** *Is this kind of scenario a rare event in our school?* (Reach a consensus that it happens too often.) *What can we do to make a difference for the person who was being teased?* (Take several responses.)

**6** Then **ASK** *Why even bother to help someone, especially if you don't know that person?* (Take several responses.)

## The Bystander and the Hero

**7** **SAY** *When you witness a situation like this, you have a choice—you can either be a passive bystander or you can stand up, try to stop the unkind act, and become a hero. We will now examine the roles of a bystander and a hero, as well as what it takes to be transformed from a bystander into a hero.*

**8** **ASK** *What is a bystander?* (One who watches and lets things happen.)

**ASK** *What is a hero?* (One who generally acts with courage and in the best interest of others.)

**9** Ask the designated (male) student to read Emily's Story.

When the story is over, **ASK** *What kept this student stuck in the role of a bystander? Why didn't this person act to help Emily?* (He lacked awareness of the situation; he received little or no guidance from peers or adults in his life; he wasn't empowered, guided, or challenged to make a difference; he accepted the social norm of that group.)

**ASK** *Looking back, how does this person feel about the way he acted toward Emily?* (Guilty, ashamed, ignorant.)

**10** **ASK** *What could this student have done to make a positive difference in Emily's life?* (He could have kept Emily as a friend; he could have helped convince his new friends to show more respect to Emily; he could have told others to stop being mean to her; he could have asked for help from adults in the school.)

**11** **SAY** *Now we are going to hear Sonya's Story, which has a different kind of ending.* Ask the designated (female) student to read Sonya's Story.

When the student finishes reading the story, **ASK** *Why did this student move from the role of a bystander to the role of a hero? Why did this person help Sonya?* (She was being true to herself; she could not tolerate the mean acts anymore; she was courageous; she understood what was the right thing to do; she had empathy toward Sonya; she felt guilty for not acting; she understood she had power and was willing to use it.)

**ASK** *What is empathy? (Compassion, sensitivity, feeling someone else's pain.) Did this person feel compassion for Sonya? (Yes.) Did you feel empathy for Sonya?*

**ASK** *How do you feel about Kevin? (Take several responses.) Do you know someone like Kevin? Would you or are you able to stand up against someone like Kevin? (Take several responses.)*

**12 ASK** *Do these kinds of scenarios (Emily's and Sonya's stories) happen in our school? (Reach a consensus that it happens too often.)*

## Strategies to Stop Mean Acts

**13 SAY** to students: *In a moment, we are going to get into groups, and I will give a different scenario to each group. I would like each group to review the scenario and develop a strategy to stop the meanness. Then I would like each group to present a role play that illustrates your plan.*

Form participants into groups of four. Pass out a Role-Play Scenario card to each group.

Ask that the groups spread out around the room or to other rooms so that they will not overhear one another. Allow about 15 minutes for the groups to work on their assignments.

**14** When time is up, or when the groups are done, ask one group at a time to present its role play.

Begin with the first role-play scenario. Be ready to record on chart paper the steps that each group went through to solve the problem.

Focus discussion on the benefits of intervening versus doing nothing.

Continue until all role-play scenarios have been performed and discussed.

**15** After all groups are done role playing, show them Display Chart 10, Tips for Intervening.

Be sure to cover the following points:

- Get involved early, before the situation gets out of hand.
- Confront the *behaviors* of the individuals. Reject the behavior, not the person.
- Don't do anything that will put you in harm's way. Remember: Safety first!
- Work one-on-one. Trying to convince a large group is much more difficult.
- Ask adults for help. Find adults you trust and have a relationship with who will help you.
- Don't carry the burden by yourself. Work with this group and others in the school.

**16 ASK** *What did we learn from this activity and what does it have to do with our mission of helping to create a more caring and supportive school climate? (We need to discourage the negative norms and promote the positive norms; we need to be leaders and act to help others; we need to be courageous; if we stand up to people who are unkind to others, they will begin to see that their actions will not be tolerated in our school and they will stop.)*

**17** Thank the group for sharing and for making a difference.

Discuss when and where the next meeting will be. If possible, establish the time and place now.

## Closure

**18** Close with the group standing in a circle, and **ASK** *Would anyone like to share anything with this group (feelings, thoughts, words of encouragement, etc.)?*

Thank the group for its commitment and willingness to help make the school a better place. Once again, state the date, time, and location of the next meeting.



## RESPONSIBILITY

Lawrence  
Champagne III



### Someone Who's Responsible

**Lawrence Champagne III and a Runaway Bus**  
**St. Louis, Missouri**

Lawrence (Larry) Champagne has always taken his responsibility to help other people seriously. His mom says, "He watches out for his brother and sister, and if I need anything, he helps me."

Larry helps his grandmother as well. He lifts heavy things and vacuums and scrubs floors for her. Then he hangs around his grandfather and watches him repair cars. "My grandpa taught me about driving and what to do in emergencies," Larry says. Luckily, he remembered it all, because when Larry was in the fifth grade, he took charge at a dangerous time.

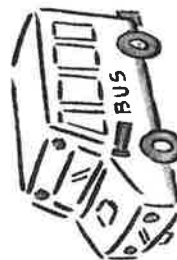
Larry was peacefully sitting on the Mayflower Bus on his way to Bellelve Elementary School. His little brother sat next to him. The bus was filled with about twenty kids, ages five through ten. Larry was gazing straight ahead when he saw the bus driver's head fall to one side. The bus swerved out of control and hit the guardrail. The bus driver toppled out of her seat and landed on the boarding stairs. Larry sprung out of his seat. Kids screamed.

Larry hung onto the seats and fought his way to the front. The bus hit the guardrail again. Then a pick-up truck smashed into it, and Larry banged into a seat. Several kids toppled into the aisle. Still, the bus lurched forward. Larry pulled himself toward the front. He leaped behind the steering wheel. Stretching his foot down, he hit the brakes. The bus slammed to a stop, thrusting kids into the backs of seats. Larry and three other students tried to help the bus driver, who'd had a **stroke**. They opened the emergency exits so the frightened children could leave. Five students were injured, but because of Larry's fast action, no one was killed.

Larry doesn't think he did anything special. "I just did what had to be done," he explains.

His mom says, "Larry's a responsible kid. He's always putting others before himself. Now he wants to install a motion detector light outside our house. I don't think he knows much about electricity," she laughs, "but he promised to find an electrician to teach him. You can count on Larry. That's the way he is."

**A stroke is a sudden loss of blood to the brain.**



Getting Organized

Suppose you know that you're supposed to stop by your piano teacher's after school, pick up some bread at the corner store, read a story, and feed the cat. You'll probably try to do all of those things. But many kids don't complete tasks—not because they don't want to do them but because they *forget*. They need to get organized and make a plan.

How do you make a plan? Follow these steps:

**1. Write a list of all the things you need to do.** (Your list might be a plan for the day, for the week, or for the week-end.) Write all the things you can think of. Then put a "1" by the most important thing. Put a "2" by the next most important thing, and so on. This will help you keep in mind what you *most* need to do. If you only finish part of the things on your list, at least you'll get the most important ones done.

**2. Write down when each task needs to be done.** If you're planning the day, does it need to be done before breakfast? After school? If you're planning the week, does it need to be done Wednesday? Before Friday night? Maybe your dad wants you to wash the kitchen floor by Saturday afternoon. You can do it earlier if you want.

**3. Write down the things you'll need to do each job.** If you have to draw a map for school, you might need a pencil, an eraser, markers, paper, and a ruler. But maybe you don't have markers. So if you write down what you need, you can remember to ask your dad or mom to help you get them.



**4. Make a backup plan.** You need to know ahead what you can do if your first idea doesn't work. What if you wait until Saturday morning to clean the kitchen floor and your grandma is in there making pickles? If you have a backup plan, you'll think ahead about this and maybe wash the floor on Friday afternoon after school.

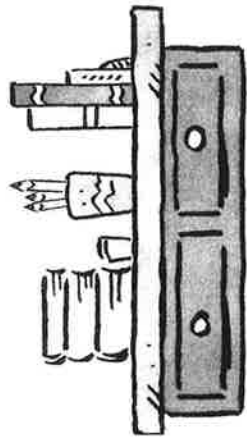
HOW TO PLAN

- 1. Write a list of all the things you need to do.
- 2. Write down when each task needs to be done.
- 3. Write down the things you'll need to do each job.
- 4. Make a backup plan.

Here's an example of a plan you might write for yourself:

Number the items, starting with "1" for what's most important	Job or task	Done by when?	What I need so I can do it	Backup plan
3.	Wash kitchen floor	Saturday afternoon (do that morning)	Bucket, mop, vinegar, clean rags	Ask when Nana needs the kitchen. If Saturday morning won't work, do Friday after school.
1.	Read two chapters	Thursday morning (read Monday night)	Remember to bring home that book!	Read Tuesday night if Monday's game runs late.
2.	Scoop out kitty litter	Monday, Wednesday, Friday (do before school)	Scoop, fresh litter	Do right after school if no time in morning.

Are you responsible about property? Do you vacuum carefully so you don't bang walls and furniture? Do you handle the dishes carefully when you wash them? Do you put away your books and papers so you can find them easily?



## Your Words

Being responsible for your words means that when you *say* you'll do something, you follow up and *do* it. You don't make promises you can't keep. It also means that you think before you speak. You control the words that fly out of your mouth, and you can decide to say something or nothing. You can choose to use kind words or unkind words. You *can't* control the things other people say to you, but you *can* control the things you say back.

## Your Thoughts

You're also responsible for the things you think about. "But wait!" you might say. "Ideas pop into my head all the time. Sometimes the ideas that come are bad ones. I can't control that." This might be true. Still, you *can* decide whether to let a bad idea stay in your mind. What can you do to get rid of it? Try ignoring it. Think about something good instead. Or change your activity. You can switch the TV channel or pick up a good book and read. You can talk to a friend or play a game with your brother or sister. Good things crowd out bad things.



## IMPORTANT!

Sometimes people have so many bad thoughts they don't know what to do. If this happens to you, talk to an adult you trust. Tell the person about the thoughts that won't go away. When you find you can't change something by yourself, the responsible thing to do is get help.

## Making Choices

Here's a story about making choices:

Seth, a fourth-grade boy, chose not to go straight home after school one day. A friend convinced him to stop at the grocery store to buy some soda pop. Seth thought, "It's okay. I'll only be a few minutes late."

At the store, Seth watched as his friend stuffed gum and candy bars into his coat pockets. Then he stuffed some candy into Seth's pocket. Seth started to pull the candy out, but his friend stopped him. "Don't worry," the friend said. "You won't be taking it. You didn't put the candy in your pocket—I did. So you're okay."

Seth thought, "That's right. I didn't take the candy. It's not my fault." Seth wanted to please his friend.

The boys went to leave the store. At the door, a man with a gold "Manager" label on his shirt stopped them. The store's security cameras had caught the boys stealing. Seth tried to explain that he wasn't the one stealing, but the manager didn't believe him. The police didn't either. Seth was sent to juvenile court—a court for young people. He now had a juvenile record with the police, and he had to complete twenty-five hours of community service. Seth learned the hard way that he'd better think about **consequences**—about what might happen—*before* he makes a choice.

Where do you think Seth made his first poor choice? If you answer, "When he didn't go home after school," you're right. Seth's second poor choice was staying and watching



## 6 WAYS TO MAKE RESPONSIBLE CHOICES

**C**onsider what might happen—think before you act.

**H**elp yourself be responsible by getting and staying organized.

**O**bey rules and laws in your home, school, and community.

**I**gnore bad ideas that pop into your head. Change what you're doing or think about something good instead.

**C**hoose the choice that's best for you and for others—the one that feels right inside.

**E**arn people's trust by showing that they can count on you.

## What If?

Here are some situations for you to think about, write about, talk about, or act out.

1. It's your turn to set the table, but you also have two pages of math to do. It's late, and you don't think you have time to do both. Should you ask your little brother to set the table so you can do your math? Should you set the table and forget your math? How would you handle this and be responsible?
2. Your teacher asks you to get a book from the public library to bring to class tomorrow. You say you will, but when you get home, your parents are too busy to drive you to the library. You get angry because you think your parents are making you look like you're not responsible—you don't have the book, and you've become upset. What might

be the responsible thing for you to do? How might you avoid having the same problem again?

**3.** You're walking to a band concert where you're going to play the French horn. It takes about twenty minutes to get from your home to the school. When you're halfway there, you realize that you forgot your music. You promised you'd be on time for the practice before the concert, but you need your music, too. The practice begins in ten minutes. What would be the responsible thing to do?

## More Ways to Be Responsible

Here are some activities you can do to find more ways to be responsible.

### Make a "Who's Responsible?" Chart

Here's what you'll need:

- Chart paper
- Marker
- Self-stick notes

Make a chart of tasks or jobs that need to be done at home. Maybe you'll make a chores chart. Maybe you'll chart who'll do what to get ready for a camping trip or to complete a family project. Across the top, make three columns and write "What?" "Who?" and "Done." On the left side of the chart paper, list the tasks that need to be completed. You can write the family names on self-stick notes and stick them in the spaces to show who'll do which jobs. After finishing a job, the person can move the note with his or her name on it to the "Done" column.

For more ideas on planning choices, see "Make a Cooperative Chores Chart" (page 51) and "Make Family Chores Fair" (pages 61–62).

## Make a Choices Log

Here's what you'll need:

- Notebook and pen or pencil
- *If you wish:* Materials for decorating your notebook (such as paints, markers, colored pencils, pictures cut from magazines, glue stick, ribbon, and stickers)

A log is a kid of list, diary, or journal. When you write in it, you tell the date and describe something that happened. Make a "Choices Log" to keep track of times when you made choices you felt good or not-so-good about. (*Examples:* Maybe you chose a healthy snack instead of a candy bar. Maybe you chose to break a rule during a game at school.) For each entry, think about these questions:

- What happened?
- Did you make the right choice? Explain.
- If you *did* make the right choice, was it hard or easy? Why? If you *didn't*, why did you choose as you did?
- How did you feel about the choice you made? How do you feel about it now?
- What did you learn that will help you in the future?

## Make Your Own Daily Planning Calendar

Here's what you'll need:

- Three-ring notebook or cardboard binder with metal fasteners
- Label and marker
- 12 copies of "My Daily Plan" on page 135 (*Hint:* Copy the form at 110% for the best fit in your three-ring notebook.)
- Hole punch
- Pencil and eraser



- *If you wish:* Materials to decorate the notebook or binder (such as markers, ribbon, glitter glue, buttons, and other items)

1. On the copies of the form, write the name of each month in the space provided. Then number the days from the first day of the month. (Your parent, older brother or sister, or teacher can help you do this.)
2. Put the forms inside the folder or binder. Use a marker to label the outside of the planning calendar.
3. Start with the present month and write the homework, lessons, sports, chores, or other activities you will do each day. Write in pencil so you can erase if something changes.

Make a habit of checking your calendar each day and checking off, adding, or changing items so you'll always be up to date.

## Volunteer with Your Club or Family

One of the best ways to help others is by volunteering to do a job once a week or once a month. This is a great chance to do something with a club or group you're in, or with your family. There are lots of things you could do. How about reading to younger kids for story hour at the library? Serving ice cream or helping with games at a health care center? Handing out or collecting programs for a religious service? To find out how to get started, check with the organization where you want to help (such as the library, senior center, or place of worship). Local newspapers often list volunteer opportunities, too.

When you agree to volunteer on a regular schedule, it's important to go every time and be on time. If you're sick or can't go, call ahead so another volunteer can be found.



**REMINDER:**  
Don't forget to keep track of your progress on the "Building My Character Muscles" chart (page 16).

## Read Stories About Responsibility

*Earthquake Terror* by Peg Kehret (New York: Puffin Books, 1998). When twelve-year-old Jonathan goes camping in northern California, an earthquake hits. Jonathan must find a way to keep his partially paralyzed younger sister, himself, and the dog alive until help arrives. Ages 8–12.

*If You Had to Choose, What Would You Do?* by Sandra McLeod Humphrey (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1995). A good book for figuring out how to make responsible choices. Ages 4-8.

*Jamaica's Find* by Juanita Havill (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987). Jamaica finds a stuffed dog on the playground and has to decide whether to seek out the owner or keep it. Ages 4-8.

*A Promise Is a Promise* by Robert Munsch and Michael Kusugak (Buffalo, NY: Firefly Books, 1988). An Inuit child learns the meaning of the words "A promise is a promise" after she encounters imaginary Arctic creatures under the ice. Ages 4–8.

*Titanic Crossing* by Barbara Williams (New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997). When the *Titanic* hits an iceberg, Albert knows that his first responsibility is to his little sister. He risks his own life to save hers. Ages 8–12.

**"For those who are willing to make an effort,  
great miracles and wonderful treasures are in store."**

—Isaac Bashevis Singer



## My Daily Plan



Year

ЧНО

**Saturday**

Friday

Thursday

Wednesday

**Appendix**

## Appendix

## Appendix

his friend steal. His third was allowing his friend to put stolen candy in his own pocket.

**"No choice is also a choice."**

—Yiddish proverb

It's not always easy to make the right choice. But making good choices is part of being responsible. Here are three steps that can help you make better choices:

**1. Think before you act.** Before you decide to do something, think about what might happen next. Seth could have done this at any point along the way—and stayed out of trouble. He might have thought: "Why is my friend going to the store? What does he need me for? Should I call my mom first? If I don't go straight home, she'll worry about me. She might get mad. She might ground me. Maybe she won't trust me anymore . . . What if I get hurt? No one will know where I am, so no one will come to help me . . . Why is my friend putting candy in his pocket? Maybe he's stealing it . . . What if I leave the store with candy in my pocket? What if someone sees me? Will I get in trouble? Will I feel guilty? Will I respect myself? Will other people respect me?"

**2. Gather the facts.** There are always facts to think about. Seth might have asked: "Where's the store? How long will it take to get there? How long will it take me to walk home from there? Could I check with Mom first? What other choices do I have?" This last question can help you sort out an important fact—the choice itself. Ask yourself, "What are my choices?"

**3. Decide which choice is best for *you* and the right thing to do.** Seth had lots of choices. He chose to go with his friend, but he could have said no. He could have called home first. Maybe he could have asked the friend home instead. Seth wanted to please his friend, though. Because of that, Seth forgot to be responsible to *himself*. The best choice isn't always the easiest one. Still, Seth would have been better off if he'd thought, "My friend might think I'm stupid if I call my mom first, but it will be better for me if I do."



### IMPORTANT!

Even though you can help other people, you are *not* responsible for things that other people say and do. And when there's no choice, you're not responsible. If an adult or someone bigger than you forces you to do something that doesn't feel right to you, you have no choice. Think about a different grown-up who can help. Talk to your dad, mom, another relative, your teacher, the school counselor, or your club, scout, or church leader.

Making good choices can help you feel better about yourself and your life. You'll be happier and healthier. You'll have friends who care about you. Your family, teachers, and other people will trust you.

### 3 STEPS IN MAKING GOOD CHOICES

1. Think *before* you act.
2. Gather the facts.
3. Decide which choice is best for *you* and the right thing to do.



## Responsibility— What Does It Mean?

"I learned the value of hard work and  
persistence from my family."

—Michael Jordan

When I was young, I had a large, black cat, which my sister and I named Sir Blackie Tomcat. Most of the time you think of dogs, not cats, as being animals you can **depend** on (count on). But Sir Blackie the cat was as **dependable** as the best dog. Each day as I returned from school, I would find Sir Blackie waiting patiently for me on the back porch steps. Each morning and evening, he would appear for mealtimes at the very same hour. Blackie must have known that I was dependable, too. He knew he could count on me to feed him at the same time every day.

One day, when the two of us were on the porch, a big angry dog came down our driveway, snarling at Sir Blackie. It was well known that this dog ate cats for dessert. I jumped up, yelling at the dog and waving him away. Sir Blackie never moved from his perch on the porch. He just kept purring. He must have known that he could depend on me again. And he was right. I shooed that mean dog away.

I was **responsible** for Blackie, and he must have known he could always depend on me to care for him and keep him safe.

You need to be responsible, too. A responsible person does what he or she promises to do. In that way, it's like being trustworthy. Your mom needs to know that if you tell her you'll be home at a certain time, you'll be there. If you run into a problem, you'll call her on the phone. When



people know that you're responsible, they don't have to worry so much about you. Parents will usually give you more freedom, and teachers will usually give you more privileges. **Responsibility** helps you learn to be a leader—someone who starts things and keeps them going. It means taking responsibility for *yourself*, too—learning to think about choices and make good decisions about ways to act and things to do. Being responsible helps make the world a better place.

## How Can You Be Responsible?

"I am the maker of my own fortune."

—Tecumseh

Each of us is responsible for our own actions, words, thoughts, and choices. What does this mean for you?

### Your Actions

You're responsible for the good things you choose to do. Do you hand in your homework on time? Do you complete your chores at home when they need to be done? Do you take care of your own clothes or toys? Do you keep yourself healthy by eating good foods? Do you try to keep yourself safe? Do you follow rules at home and at school? Do you obey laws in your community? If you do, you're being responsible.

You also choose the way you treat the environment around you. Do you take care not to litter? Do you stop others from littering? Do you recycle paper, cans, or old socks? Do you treat animals with kindness? If you have a pet, do you feed and care for it?

