

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION BEING RESPONSIBLE

In this unit, the students will learn what responsible behavior is, to whom they need to feel a responsibility, and the results of their behavior when they act either responsibly or irresponsibly. This unit will also give them specific skills and ideas for developing responsibility as well as give them credit for the level of responsibility they have reached.

Students should realize that being responsible in all aspects of their life is a long range goal. Emphasis should be placed on the concept that being responsible begins at an early age with simple tasks, and must develop one step at a time.

RESPONSIBLE:	Being liable, called on to answer for behavior
RESPONSIBILITY:	What one is responsible for
RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR:	Taking responsibility for one's actions, for belongings, and personal space, and all areas of one's life.

When you are given options, you choose the option that follows your value system, regardless of surrounding pressures.

Being responsible is not a trait we are born with--we learn it a little bit at a time. As preschoolers, we learn to pick up our toys, take a bath, etc. As we get older, generally we learn to take on more responsibilities. If we haven't learned to be somewhat responsible by the time we leave 6th grade, it may be hard to develop these habits and behaviors.

Being responsible means becoming mature in the sense of being responsible to family, to self, and to society. It means being responsible for all aspects of our lives and our situations--not only for our actions and our thoughts, but also for what we do with our free time, how we use our talents, and how we use our potential.

Richard and Linda Eyre say, "Responsibility is not the result of maturity, but the cause of it, and a major responsibility of parents is to teach responsibility. On the lowest level, responsibility is obedience. At its next highest level, it becomes morality, or acknowledging that our actions affect others, and we care about how our actions impact others. At the highest level, we give service to society." (Teaching Children Responsibility, p.5)

Playwright George Bernard Shaw once said, "Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it."

**TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION
BEING RESPONSIBLE - Page 2**

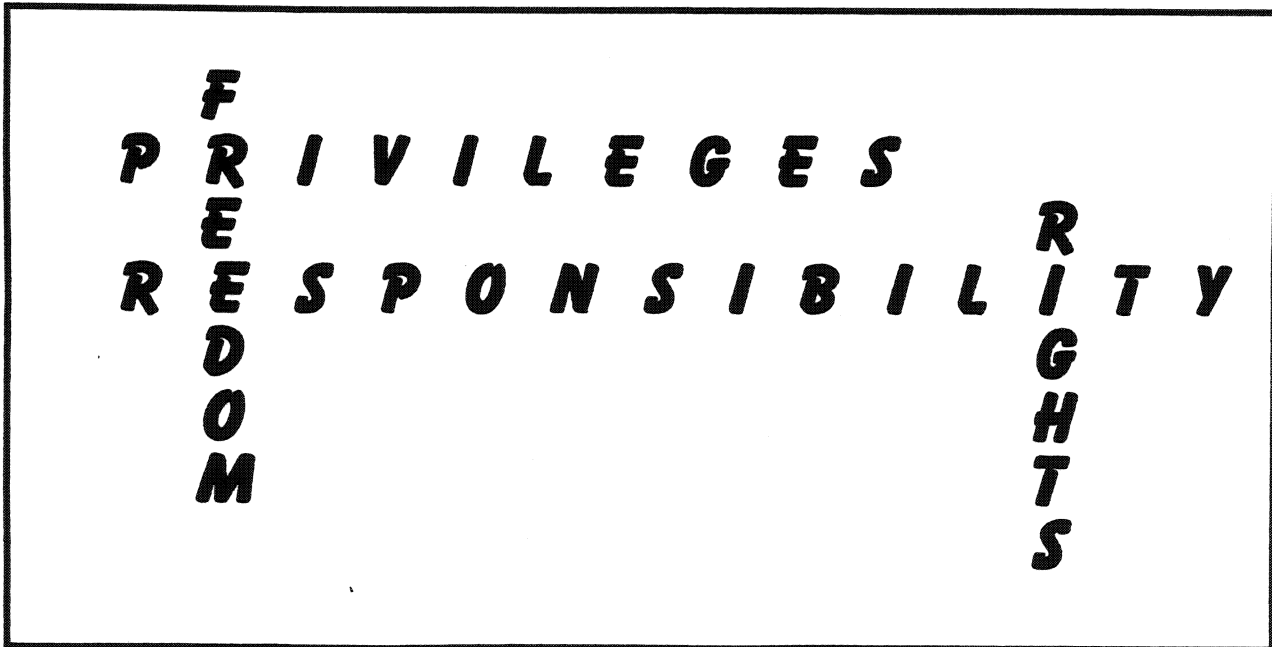
Erick Fromm has said that individuals should not go from being totally dependent on parents to total independence--it's too lonely for most. Instead they should go into interdependence.

Sigmund Freud said that mental health is the "ability to love and to work".

Psychological freedom is as important as physical freedom. Psychological freedom includes:

1. Developing relationships
2. Making a commitment to work
3. Setting goals and achieving them
4. Making important decisions that affect your life.

All of these decisions are everyone's own responsibility. Responsibility means doing what you must do and being accountable for the decisions that you make. It is directly related to freedom: the more you have, the more responsibility you must take. Responsibility is sometimes viewed as the opposite of freedom, but indeed, it is the result of freedom.



ROAD TO RESPONSIBILITY (RESPONSIBILITY TIME LINE)

Just as we grow in stages physically and emotionally,
we learn to be a responsible person in stages.

<i>RESPONSIBILITY TASKS A CHILD SHOULD LEARN--></i>	<i>RESULT IN RESPONSIBLE ADULT BEHAVIOR</i>
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BY 6 YEARS OF AGE,

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To obey parents and other adults- To take care of their belongings- To accept and complete simple household chores | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Is able to take instruction- Respect parents and other adults- Feels a need take care of personal property- Knows the value of sharing workload |
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BY 8 YEARS OF AGE:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Right from wrong- To begin to develop talent(s)- To show a peaceful attitude | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Has well defined values- Has confidence in decisions- Shows respect for the law- Can fit in and find a place in society |
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BY 10 YEARS OF AGE:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To show self-control- To build personal character- To understand potential | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Takes responsibility for own choices and actions (Doesn't blame others) |
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BY 12 YEARS OF AGE:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To give service- To be dependable- To contribute to one's surroundings | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Takes care of family and self- Feels a need to help other members of society- Is dependable |
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