

## HELPING CHILDREN LEARN RESPONSIBILITY

A child's drive for independence began in infancy and the process grows with increased responsibility.

## LEARN RESPONSIBILITY

### MAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY MATCH THEIR AGE!

**As children grow, they seek increasing independence. They want to make their own choices and control their own world.**

As parents, we can give our children responsibilities beginning with household chores. Choose chores that are appropriate for your child. Begin with small tasks such as putting away their toys. As they follow through on what you expect them to do, give them more responsibilities (helping to set the table, dusting, folding clothes, etc). Remember the child's abilities and age, praise them for the good job that they are doing, and show or help them if they are having trouble.

### Model responsibility

Children learn from what their parents do. Show your children that you are responsible through your decision making and your daily tasks. It is important that your child sees you take responsibility for your actions and praise family members when they have done something correctly. How do you model responsibility?

### Allow them to fail

Let your child experience the consequences of her or his choices and actions. You were not successful the first time you tried to tie your shoes and they won't be either. Your child should be aware that consequences are connected to their behavior. When your child makes good choices, even small things, notice and encourage.

**Use everyday routines and habits with your young child to foster growth in responsibility. Here are some ideas you can adapt for your child's age.**

- Eating, setting the table, pouring a drink
- Dressing themselves, washing their face, squeezing toothpaste
- Bath time, soaping themselves or their sibling's back
- Potty training, taking off wet clothes and putting in the hamper, taking off own sheets
- Laundry, putting clothes in the hamper, loading/unloading the washer or dryer. Passing a named item to be hung or folded, "Pass me a sock please."
- Cooking, finding, or stirring ingredients (2 eggs), washing or chopping vegetables/fruits