

RESPONSIBILITY: SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

Large Group Activity (5 Minutes)

Ask students to think of the most responsible person they know, and why they consider them to be responsible. Write down their answers on the board, especially the reasons they feel makes a person responsible (for example: Mom is never late. You would write “Never Late” on the board).

After 5 minutes, ask students to reflect silently on the following questions (allow 30 seconds for each question):

- Do you consider yourself a responsible person?
- To what extent do you show all the listed traits in your personal life?
- Are you motivated to have more of these characteristics, and why or why not?

SHOW THE VIDEO (16 Minutes)

Small Group Questions (10 Minutes - 5 per group, assign 3 questions)

Assign each group one of the following topics: “School,” “Home,” “Work,” and “Sports or Other Extra-Curricular Activities.” Students will make a list of responses to this question: **In the topic chosen, what are specific actions you can show to demonstrate responsibility?** Student groups should then respond to three of the following questions that you assign to them:

1. Why don't more people show responsibility in your chosen topic?
2. What are some of the benefits of being a responsible person at home, school and work?
3. Is responsibility motivated externally or internally, and which is better? (For example: A person might throw away a piece of trash because someone is watching them, but they would throw it on the ground if no one were looking.)
4. What are 5 areas in which students need to show more responsibility?
5. If everyone was responsible for themselves in our society, would there be any problems? Why or why not?
6. What steps can you take to become responsible?
7. Are there benefits to being irresponsible? What are they?
8. What are some examples of when it might not pay to be responsible?

Group Activity (10 Minutes)

Have each group share their top three actions that demonstrate responsibility within the topic they were assigned. Write these responses on the board in one column. Then have the class discuss important questions, such as #s 2,4,5 & 6.

WRAP-UP: RESPONSIBILITY

YOU CAN BE RESPONSIBLE AT ANY AGE.

- You don't have to wait until you are older to be responsible.
- The sooner you learn to be responsible, the easier it will be when you are an adult.
- Responsibility is a choice you make. It's not something that comes with age.

RESPONSIBILITY MEANS OWNING UP TO YOUR ACTIONS.

- When you make a mistake, accept the consequences. Don't blame others for the things you did.
- Just because family or friends are irresponsible doesn't mean you have to be that way. You can decide to be responsible in your own life. It's your decision.
- Being honest about things you've done against your parents or friends will enable those relationships to survive. Being dishonest will break them up.

A RESPONSIBLE PERSON EARNS TRUST AND FREEDOM.

- If you want to be respected and treated like an adult, then be responsible and you will gain trust and respect from peers, teachers, and parents.
- Always arriving on time, and being consistent, diligent, and honest can lead to earning more money and better hours at work.
- Responsible people are more likely to get promoted at work, get more breaks at home, and get leadership positions in school.

START BECOMING RESPONSIBLE TODAY.

- Talk to a counselor, youth leader, older friend, or even your parents to make a plan to start becoming responsible.
- Set up a reward system for yourself so you can start being the person you really want to be! If you make failures along the way, don't give up!

HOMework: RESPONSIBILITY

HOMework Project: You can make a difference!

Below are two fictitious stories that might sound familiar. Read each story, and creatively finish them in two different ways. Have the characters respond in the most irresponsible way and then in a responsible way.

Story #1: "Cheating"

After graduation, Jamie found herself at a big university. Her parents were so proud. She was looking forward to four years of undergrad in the pre-med program, followed by med school, and then a career as a doctor. The first classes were brutally tough. Then came her first mid-term exam! She read the first question of the exam, and her mind went blank. She looked at the second question. She didn't know the answer. As she wiped the tears from her eyes, she tried to concentrate. She looked up, and there it was: an answer sheet in plain view, right on the desk in front of her...

(You finish the story from here)

When you're done writing the endings to the story, answer these questions:

1. What were the consequences for those who made irresponsible decisions?
2. What were the benefits to the characters that made the responsible decisions?
3. Why is it that we often know what it takes to be responsible, and yet we don't always make the right decisions?
4. What is the best way to teach teens responsibility? Does someone always have to experience the negatives of a situation in order to learn responsibility?
5. What five things need to happen for you to be more responsible in your own life?
6. Why would cheating never prosper someone (list at least five reasons)?
7. How is cheating related to personal integrity?

Story #2: "Who Is To Blame?"

Jenny doesn't come from a family that anyone would call "ideal." Her mom is an alcoholic, her father beats her mother, and the family never has any money. Jenny's never done very well in school; she feels there's nothing to motivate her to do a good job. No one at home cares what grades she gets, except when they are embarrassed by getting more than one call from the same teacher. So it wasn't a big deal when Jenny started partying, forging absence notes, and ditching. Her GPA dropped below a 1.0. For a while, no one seemed to notice that things were going downhill. Then Jenny's counselor called her in and informed her that she wasn't going to graduate. "What's the problem, Jenny?" asked the counselor. "I can't believe it," said Jenny...

(You finish the story from here)

When you're done writing the endings to the story, answer questions #1-5 from the section above, then answer these questions:

1. At what point in your life are you willing to take the blame for your actions?
2. How is personal responsibility related to integrity?
3. When are you old enough to take control and determine your own direction?
4. At what point in life are you able to overcome the influences around you?