



# Exploring Leadership

## PERSONAL LEADERSHIP: RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility, ownership, and accountability—these are words we hear often from parents, teachers, bosses, and leaders. They're key to success in relationships, work, and life. This activity will give you a chance to practice taking responsibility for your actions and see how avoiding it can make things worse.

### CONVERSATION STARTER:

Ask: "What does the quote 'With great power comes great responsibility' mean to you?"

We're taught to take ownership, think creatively, and challenge the status quo. But when problems arise, we often ignore the issue, blame others, or avoid the situation. Successful leaders and employees take responsibility for both their actions and mistakes. Responsibility means making decisions, learning from errors, and doing what you say you'll do.

### KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Define and role-play responsible behavior.
- Identify examples and non-examples of responsibility in everyday situations.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Copies of the Responsibility Role Play Scenarios, cut apart (see Appendix)
- Bowl to place scenarios into

## EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

**Responsibility Role Play** - In this activity, you'll practice responsibility by acting out real-life scenarios. You'll learn the difference between making things right and making them worse.

### FACILITATOR TIPS:

- Assign a scenario to each pair. If needed, have participants create additional ones to accommodate a larger group.
- Keep the mini-plays informal and simple, focusing on illustrating one moment of responsible behavior.
- Discuss the Responsibility Guidelines as a group (see Appendix).
- Divide participants into pairs.
- Give each pair a "Responsibility Role Play Scenario" (see Appendix).
- Tell each group to work together to create two mini-plays:
  - Take 1: The WRONG way. Show how a person avoids responsibility, blames others, or makes the situation worse.
  - Take 2: The RIGHT way. Show how a person accepts responsibility and takes appropriate action.
- Perform the mini-plays for the group. Try to cover as many scenarios as possible within the time available.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- How did you decide who would play the responsible character in your mini-play?
- After seeing both examples and non-examples, what conclusions can you draw about how responsibility works in real life?
- What are the benefits of being a responsible person? How do you experience the benefits of others' responsibility in your own life?

## APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- What responsibilities do you have in your life right now? How well are you meeting them?
- Think of someone you know who is very responsible. How do they demonstrate responsibility? Does their behavior earn your respect? Why or why not?
- How does the "Golden Rule" – treating others the way you want to be treated – relate to taking responsibility for your actions?



## CONCLUSION:

There's a saying, "There are no rights without responsibility, and no responsibility without rights." The more responsibility you take in all areas of your life, the more freedom you'll have, and the more respect you'll earn. Owning your actions doesn't just help you grow as a person—it builds trust and creates opportunities for success. Embrace responsibility, and you unlock your true potential for growth and respect.

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## REFERENCES

- Responsibility by ActiveNationUK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-QRqIGznHvU> (1:43 minutes)
- Teaching Responsibility in the Classroom: An Important Task: <https://proudtobepimary.com/teaching-responsibility-in-the-classroom>
- "With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility" | Spider-Man: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ZITJouEeY8> (2:22 minutes)
- 7 social situations to practice with your teen: <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/common-challenges/following-social-rules/social-situations-to-role-play-with-your-high-schooler>



# APPENDIX:

## Responsibility Guidelines

A person who understands responsibility will:

- Acknowledge their role in the event/incident.
- Identify the appropriate behavior.
- Learn from the situation and know what to do next time.
- Accept the consequences.

A person who does NOT understand responsibility will:

- Refuse to admit there's a problem.
- Blame others for the issue.
- Avoid considering their own role in the situation.
- Resist corrective action or consequences.
- Escalate disruptive or hurtful behavior.

**Responsibility Role Play Scenarios** - Cut the scenarios into strips and place them in a bowl.

Each pair or group picks one strip.

- A police officer pulls over a person for speeding.
- A school principal catches a high schooler sneaking into school 30 minutes late.
- A parent is upset with a teenager for not completing a chore they said they would.
- Two 16-year-olds "borrow" their dad's car and sideswipe a garbage can, ruining the paint job. One wants to pretend nothing happened, and the other isn't sure what to do.
- An English teacher wrote an email to the principal that was critical of the school librarian. The principal showed it to the librarian, who was devastated.
- A city pool lifeguard discovers the chlorine level in the pool is dangerously high and clears the pool of swimmers. One lap swimmer (an older person) blames the lifeguard for ruining their workout.
- The night before the ACT test, a high schooler is invited to a once-in-a-lifetime concert. A friend, who was also invited, is considering turning it down because the ACT is important.
- An employee didn't complete their part of a project on time and hears a co-worker being chewed out for missing the deadline.
- A teenager agrees to hang out with a "needy" friend, but moments later, another friend calls and says, "Let's do something."