

Top Ten Ways to

RAISE RESPONSIBLE CHILDREN

In a media culture that doesn't promote responsibility, here are some time-tested ideas on how to raise children to become responsible adults.

- 1. Start them with tasks and chores when they're young.**
Young kids have a strong desire to help out—even as young as age two. They can do a lot more than you think if you have patience and let them do it their way.
- 2. Don't use rewards with your kids.**
If you want your kids to develop an intrinsic sense of responsibility, they need to learn the “big picture” value of the things they do. They won't learn that if they're focused on what they're going to “get.”
- 3. Use natural consequences when they make mistakes.**
If they keep losing their baseball glove, let them deal with the consequences. Perhaps they have to ask to borrow one for the game. Or, perhaps they have to buy a new one if it's lost. If you rescue them every time they screw up, they'll never learn responsibility.
- 4. Let them know when you see them being responsible.**
Specifically point out what you like about their behavior.
This will make it more likely to continue to happen.
- 5. Talk often about responsibility with your kids.**
Make responsibility a family value - let them know it's important.
- 6. Model responsible behavior for your kids.**
They'll learn most of their responsible behavior from you.
Remember that they have a VERY close eye on what you do.
- 7. Give them an allowance early in their life.**
Let them make their own money decisions from an early age.
They'll learn their lessons in a hurry.
- 8. Have a strong, unflinching belief that your kids are responsible.**
They'll pick up on this belief and they'll tend to rise to the level of expectation.
- 9. Train them to be responsible.**
Use role play and talk to them about exactly what kind of behavior you expect from them.
It's hard for kids to be responsible when they don't know what it looks like.
- 10. Get some help and support for your parenting.**
At times it's hard to know whether you're being too controlling or too permissive as a parent. Talk to other parents, read books, or join parent support groups - whatever will help you feel like you're not alone.

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Hawai'i Coalition for Dads

Promoting involved, nurturing, responsible fatherhood

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