

7 Habits of Highly Responsible Students

1. They set goals. Goals keep kids focused on the future. That's why they are the foundation of responsible behavior—and success in school. Help your child set goals. Goals help students focus on what's important what's not. If they have a vision of where they want to go, they're more likely to get there. And students with goals find it easier to say “no” to irresponsible behaviors...because they are saying “yes” to their vision of the future.

2. They plan their time. Responsible people meet their obligations—whether it's turning in a paper on the day it's due or having a report on the boss's desk when it's needed. But it takes planning. Help your child use a calendar to organize his or her time. Write down all commitments and use the calendar to plan time for homework each day.

3. They study every day. Learning any subject is like building a brick wall—you do it steadily, one step at a time. Responsible students set aside time for homework or studying every day.

4. They take notes in class. Students who earn all “A”s seem to have one thing in common—they take notes in class. They have learned that teachers will almost always spell out what they think is important. Teach your child to take notes when the teacher is talking. Spend time reviewing them before a test.

5. They have the tools they need. A carpenter wouldn't think of showing up without a hammer. A nurse always has a stethoscope. But some students seem to think they can go to class without the pencils, paper and other tools they need.

6. They keep their commitments. Responsible people honor their commitments—to others and to themselves. They succeed in school by doing their assignments well and on time. They do their share of group projects. You can teach your child about commitments by example. Talk with your child about the commitments you have made and you keep them.

7. They get ready ahead of time. Some students start out every morning in a crisis. They can't find their homework. They don't have time to eat breakfast. The shirt they wanted to wear isn't ironed. Responsible students have learned that being late, or being early, is not something that simply happens to them. It is a choice they can make. Teach your child to take 5 or 10 minutes to get ready for the next day. Have him pack his backpack. Make lunch. Lay out clothes. Your child will soon see that those few minutes will make the morning easier.