

## Habit 1-Be Proactive

Tired of reminding your child ... Homework? Cleaning their room? Picking up?

Wouldn't it be great if they just did it on their own?

**Habit 1 is Be Proactive-** "I am in charge of me." This Habit is the key to moving from dependence to personal responsibility. This means the child is in charge of their choices, the consequences of those choices, how they respond in every situation, and their personal belongings. Do not feel like you need to "water it down" for younger children. They *can* understand and often will surprise you how eager they are to take charge of some of their own life.

### Ways to apply at home:

Allow choices: would they like the blue plate or the yellow, would they like to go to bed now or in 10 minutes, would they like to read or do a puzzle. It doesn't matter how large or small the choice, practice matters. They can begin to take charge of what is going on in their own life.

Set clear expectations, then let them succeed. Have you ever been frustrated by an assignment you were expected to complete without clear instructions? It can feel the same to your kids. Even if you have done this before, review and clarify. Where does their backpack go when they get home? Shoes? Coat? When you talk about a clean room, what does that look like? Just toys put away? Bed made? Laundry? (Make sure your expectations are appropriate for your child's skill level.) When does the task have to be completed by? This should always be discussed in a calm tone and in a co-operative manner. If the child forgets the first few times, resist the urge to remind them, wait until the agreed upon completion time then ask if they forgot the agreement? Remind them at *that* time that they are in charge of their item/space and you are counting on them to take responsibility for that- to Be Proactive.

Let them be Center Stage of their own life. Each of us is writing the script of our life. Role-play with your kids: They don't get to do something they want. Someone calls them a name or teases them. They forgot their homework. What words or actions can the child choose to use? Explore both positive and negative and talk about likely outcomes of both choices.

### Words to use:

"Would you like \_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_? Good choice."

"Thank you for being proactive and putting your coat away."

"Did you remember to 'stop and think' before you responded that way? What might have been a better way to respond?"

"We agreed your room needed to be clean before you could go to your friend's house. It does not look like what I picture a clean room to be. Were my expectations unclear?"

"That sounds like you have a problem. What do you think you could do about that?"

"Tell me what you are thinking here."

## **Habit 2- Begin with the End in Mind**

Would you start a trip without knowing where you are going?  
Knowing what you trying to accomplish directs all the choices on the way.

**Habit 2 is Begin with the End in Mind** - Think about how you want something to turn out before you start it. Goal setting is an important skill for success. Set a goal. Then, break it down into small manageable pieces. A great example is a puzzle. You study the picture. Then, you sort pieces. Perhaps you'll do the edge first. Next, you may find all the pieces of one color, and so on step-by-step until it is complete.

### **Ways to apply at home:**

**Point out examples:** Share stories from your life, or even your day at work, where you had a goal or task that you accomplished. What steps did you take to accomplish it? How did breaking it down make it easier? Point out examples from your child's life such as riding a bike, tying shoes, or another skill.

**Create a goal:** Is there something your child wants that he/she can work for? Better reading skills, a day with a parent, a new toy or game? Help your child set the goal and define steps they can take to achieve it. Make sure it is attainable to create a positive experience.

**Look to the future:** From the time they are small, adults ask kids, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Help your child identify an interest and then encourage activities, skills, books, or other opportunities that support that interest. Show them how these little steps can lead them to greater opportunities to use this interest in a variety ways or careers in their adult life. They very well may change their mind, but they will know you support them.

**Family Mission Statement:** What kind of family do you want to have? What does your family value? What is your ultimate goal? Discussing it as a family and putting it in writing can help lead the whole family in a more positive direction. It can be simple: "We are kind to each other all the time so everyone will always like coming to our home." Or it can be a paragraph. Whatever sums up your family and creates a positive picture everyone can feel a part of. Be sure to include everyone in your family in the process of creating the mission statement.

**Words to use:** Reminder: It is important to use a non-judgmental tone. You are inviting your child to think for themselves and share their ideas, views and conclusions with you.  
"What do you plan on this being when you are finished?"  
"Can we break this into more manageable steps?"  
"Do you need anything from me in order for you to be successful?"  
"What other steps do we need to take to reach this goal?"  
"Well, what do you want more, this (immediate) or your goal of (child's goal?)"

# My 7 Habits



## **I am in charge of me.**

I take responsibility for my choices and my things.  
I can choose how I react. I like me!

## **Begin with the End in Mind**

I can make a plan.  
I make choices to meet my goals.

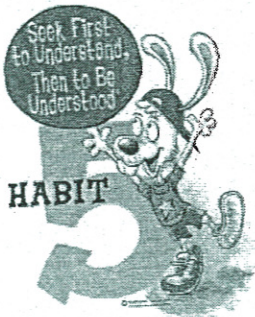


## **Put First Things First**

I pay attention to what is most important.  
I do my work and then play.

## **Think Win-Win**

I care about myself and others.  
We can both succeed.

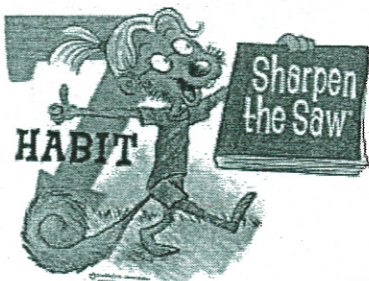


## **Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood**

I listen with kindness first.  
Then, I calmly share.

## **Synergize**

Celebrating our differences and  
working together we can find  
new and better ways.



## **Sharpen the Saw**

Balance is better.  
I take care of my mind, body,  
heart, and soul.