



## 02 Nourish our children to be able to under take responsibilities

Some parents reflected to me that the children of this present age were too reliant, grew to be the fondling in the family and inclined to be self-centred. They found that the younger generation was too weak to meet adversities and lacked the resolution to solve problems. These made people worry if they could undertake responsibilities.

All parents wish their offspring to be able to make decisions, be accountable, independent and being capable of taking care of others. To actualize all these, some effective measures have to be adopted in order to offer to the young ones a systematic formation. There are two reasons for little children to be reliant:

- (I) Little children are basically in the position of being taken care of and being reliant is an innate tendency;
- (II) Parents offer too much protection or enjoy having a dependant. Problemsoften arise from the father's or mother's over supply of protection or forcing too many limitations hindering the opportunity of the self-reliance development. This clogs the cultivation of the quality of being able to shoulder responsibilities. Parents have to see that reliance is never a type of personality but imperfection. All families have to provide sufficient learning situations to allow their children to acquire the capability of being able to take responsibilities.

How can it be actualized?

Here are some of the strategies which we may start with:


- (1) Conduct appropriate training in accordance with the children's psychological development: Though young children are regarded to be in the position of needing to be taken care of, they manifest different demands for independence at different ages. The prerequisite for being granted the privilege of exerting their autonomy is their capacity of shouldering the responsibility. Should the parents be able to grasp the significance and conduct the relevant training, they would achieve maximum results without much effort. The quest for independence starts at the

age of two to four. If this pursuit is suitably satisfied by being allowed the chance of competency manifestation, their ability of self-reliance will surely be promoted. Children from four to six are said to be in the phase of query raising at every minute. Should the parents well handle this thirst for knowledge of their kids and nurture their spirit of searching for answers to various matters and incidents, they are offering the opportunity to their offspring to acquire the capability of overcoming difficulties. When children are six years old, adults should help them to develop their personal specialty and skill which they can be proud of. All these concrete capability cultivation

is an important foundation for the establishment of self-reliance.

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- (2) Offer to the children options, respect and delegate to them certain power: In the process of child growth, most of the decisions are made by adults and children have to accept everything in a negative manner, making it difficult to nurture persons of resolution. Being able to make a wise decision is a personal capacity as it requires consideration to balance various possibilities. A person who has never been trained for this practice will incline to be self-centred. Therefore, parents have to help their children to learn to make decisions when they were small. We can start with easy options at the beginning. For example: choosing the clothes to put on, or selecting the food for dinner. As they grow older, allow the kids to choose their Sunday TV Programs, to have the freedom of spending their pocket money, to arrange their own day schedule, etc. It is not too wise to begin with open-type modes but put to them three to four options for their choice. For example: invite them to select one from two or three winter coats so that they would not catch cold no matter which one is taken.
- (3) Let them learn from their mistakes: Once the children are given the chance to make decision, they may make the wrong choice. Parents should first estimate the seriousness of the result before permitting them to have the possibilities of making a "mistake". This is an important process of training. Tactful and prudent choices are the terminal assessment of the final decision. Should children never have the chance to make any "mistake" from small to big, they will never value any consequences. The strong or weak virtue of being

able to shoulder responsibilities comes not only from the level of self-reliance but also the preciseness of decision making and the willingness of bearing the outcome of it.

- (4) Cultivate "accountability" through negotiation: For any request raised by the children, discuss the matter through negotiation. For example: If a child would like to lengthen the play time before doing his/her assignment, the parents may negotiate by discussing the possible atonement of the choice in case the assigned work not being finished in time. If the child is able to keep his/her promise, it will be fine. However, if he/she fails to keep to the previous agreement, then the adults have to take their measures to implement what was mutually consented to. This helps the kid to learn never make any empty promise and to bear in mind that what is said has to be done.

Furthermore, allow the children to deal with interpersonal conflicts by themselves. Establish an atmosphere of mutual support and sharing of responsibilities in the family. Encourage the children to take up some important roles such as prefects or monitors in class and try to listen to their feedback about the posts. This enables the parents to comprehend their capacity for the role. Bear deep in mind that the capability to shoulder job responsibility is not an innate quality but has to be acquired through training and experiencing.

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Excerpted from "Teacher's Magazine," 13<sup>th</sup> Issue, Marck, 2005