

Lindon
CHARACTER
Connection

Accountability

March 2010

**Accountability: accepting responsibility and answering for one's choices.
"Good men prefer to be accountable."**

—Michael Edwardes

What is Accountability? I am sure you can probably think of a great definition off the top of your head. It may be something similar to what I found in the dictionary, "the state of being accountable, liable, or answerable." Or "The quality or state of being accountable." That is an obvious answer to the question. I asked a couple of different people and these were some responses I got, "People can depend on you," or "I don't know," or "you take the blame." Accountability can be summed up as a promise to yourself and others to deliver specific, defined results, with consequences. Or this definition, "The responsibility of someone for his or her actions." That can be illustrated by this short story: (adapted from W.J. Cameron) A ranch hand is hired whose only recommendation is that he can sleep through a windy night. During fair weather he does his job well enough. Finally a very windy night arrives. The farmer calls the ranch hand to get up and help tie down the hay and latch the barn doors tightly. The farmer is unable to arouse the ranch hand. Finally he goes outside to "batten down the hatches" himself. He finds all in order. The ranch hand had already prepared for a storm. To whom was the ranch hand accountable? How had he fulfilled his responsibility?

What are we accountable for? As parents, neighbors, and teachers we need to teach our children that they are accountable/responsible for EVERY outcome. It is important to distinguish between responsibility for activities and accountability for results.

What are the consequences? Accountability is meaningless without consequences, positive or negative. We have everyday decisions to make with consequences. Some choices will result in wonderful consequences; this makes me think of the hundreds of athletes that completed in the Olympic Winter Games. They are the one solely responsible for their outcome. They all made a promise to themselves to deliver specific, defined results. These athletes give their all in every training exercise, workout routine and racing event. On the flip side some of our choices result in negative consequences. But we need to accept the responsibility and make it right. This makes me think of recent news events of a particular sports figure who had to publicly apologize for his recent behavior. He was a role model to many young kids and just because of his popularity, fame and fortune he thought that he was above the standard. He still needed to be accountable for his actions because he was wrong.

"We are free up to the point of choice, then the choice controls the chooser" - Mary Crowley. Great strength comes to those that recognize the things they are accountable for and to be responsible and dependable. May we make good choices everyday that will further our progress on getting the desired results that we want to obtain.

*Shauna Carter
Lindon Resident*



"Your life is the sum result of all the choices you make, both consciously and unconsciously. If you control the process of choosing, you can take control of all aspects of your life. You can find the freedom that comes from being in charge of yourself."
--Robert F. Bennett

"What kind of school would my school be if all of its students were just like me?"

"We must reject the idea that every time a law's broken, society is guilty rather than the lawbreaker. It is time to restore the American precept that each individual is accountable for his actions."
—Ronald Reagan

Book List

"All By Myself"

by Mercer Mayer

"Strega Nona's Magic Lessons"

by Tomie De Paola

"Bedtime for Frances"

by Russell Hoban

"The Berenstain Bears Don't Pollute (anymore)"

by Stan and Jan Berenstain

"Muppet Kids in Piggy Gets the Jitters"

by Louise Gikow



Family Activities

-Albert Einstein was born March 14, 1879 in Germany. Later he moved to America and received the Nobel peace prize. Said Elsa Einstein, "No, I don't understand my husband's theory of relativity, but I know my husband, and I know he can be trusted." *Why are accountability and trust important traits in public and private life?"*

-Talk about the consequences of actions when one is in a position of responsibility, such as in charge of a family meal or taking care of a family pet. (One end of a stick cannot be lifted up without lifting the other end.)

-Make cookies together. Have each child responsible for a certain ingredient. Talk about how leaving out only one ingredient changes the final product. Carrying out responsibilities insures a good product for all.

-Play a circle game such as Looby Lou. As members of the circle hold hands, note how the movements of one person also affect the person next to him. The way we fulfill our obligations also touches the lives of those around us, especially family members.

Laura Clement

Kid's Corner

Reprint of Article from March 2006

Recently, I talked to some neighborhood kids. Here's what they had to say about being dependable:

"Being dependable means someone can count on you."

"It means that others can trust that you will do what you say. "

"It means living up to your parents' expectations of you."

"It seems easier for some people, but most of us have to work on being dependable."

"It seems to take a lifetime to learn."

What are some ways kids show dependability?

"Caring for my pets each day."

"Practicing piano for reals before your mom gets home."

"Doing your homework."

"Coming home when you are supposed to."

"Facing a tardy for sleeping in without your mom making excuses for you."

"Getting to bed on time."

"Getting good grades."

"Getting chores done everyday."

"When you are partners at school for a project, one can't do all the work. You both have to do your fair share."

"Owning up to your mistakes."

"When I am dependable, it makes me feel great inside. I like myself more!"

-Kevin, Jacob, Matt and Laura

We, at Character Connection, would like to focus on helping parents access character materials by using the web site located at www.lindoncharacterconnection.com.

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Character Connection is a not-for-profit organization encouraging the enhancement of character development in our community. We are accepting financial support. If you can help please send contributions to:

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