

Why You Need to Trust Your Kids With More Responsibility

Kids need experiences that stretch them, reveal their talents and develop their shape for ministry. They need challenges where they develop responsibility. One of the most important life skills all of us have to learn is responsibility.

How do you teach responsibility to your children? There's only one way: Give them the opportunity. Trust them with responsibility. Will they make mistakes? Absolutely. You did, too, when you were growing up. Will they sometimes be irresponsible? Yes. But if you hold on to responsibility, you're actually hurting your children. The goal of parenting from the moment your kids are born is to move them from parent control in the early years to self-control in the middle years to God's control over their lives.

That means you have to give up control! When we take responsibility *for* people, we take it away *from* people. If you treat your children as babies and don't let them grow up, you'll have to diaper them the rest of your life. And you're filling the world with another codependent person.

Many parents have said, "If I had it all to do over again, I'd do less for my children and teach them to do more for themselves." The only way we grow is by being given challenges that stretch us, develop us, and build responsibility in our lives.

The Bible says, "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much. And he who is dishonest in the least is dishonest also in much" (Luke 16:10).

Kids respond to responsibility. Having talked to many parents over the years and seen this in my own life, I believe that it's far better to err on the side of giving too much

responsibility than not trusting your kids enough. They're going to make mistakes either way! Your goal is to produce a person who walks not just under his own self-control but also under God's control.

Talk It Over

- What is the difference between what you trust your kids with and what you were trusted with at their age?
- What about society keeps us from more easily trusting our kids with responsibility?
- How do you teach responsibility and God's sovereignty at the same time? {eoa}

Rick Warren *is the founding pastor of Saddleback Church. His book, The Purpose Driven Church, was named one of the 100 Christian books that changed the 20th century. He is also founder of , a global internet community for pastors.*

This article originally appeared at .