# **Smart Parenting: A Step-by-Step Guide to Raising a Responsible Citizen**

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## Parenting can be a challenging yet rewarding experience. This guide provides step-by-step tips to raise responsible, respectful, and compassionate children.

It's not easy to be a [parent](https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/relationships/tips-for-parents-and-teachers-on-educating-children-to-self-protect-against-bullying-101683558142034.html)in today's world. Children have so many distractions that as a parent, you need to be smart, which effectively means that your approach towards [parenting](https://www.hindustantimes.com/photos/lifestyle/5-best-parenting-styles-from-around-the-world-101683098698068.html)and your child needs to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely with situations that you face. Smart parenting helps parents to raise [children](https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/music-therapy-may-help-children-with-brain-injuries-study-101682750802852.html) who are responsible and accountable and they grow up to be responsible citizens. A responsible citizen is one who is committed, dedicated, and honourable and helps others in the community to bring about upliftment to all sections of society. It is up to the parents to inculcate smart parenting techniques which will enable their children to be responsible.

## **Tips to teach your child to be a responsible citizen:**

As a parent, raising a responsible citizen is one of the most important tasks you will undertake.

Dr. Paula Goel, paediatrician and adolescent specialist, shared with HT Lifestyle, a step-by-step guide to help you navigate the journey of parenting and raising a child who is responsible, independent, and contributing to society.

**1. Set up routine and structure:** Encouraging your child to follow rules and routines helps them to comprehend boundaries and recognize acceptable behavior. By managing their own tasks and adhering to schedules for meals, sleep, and academic work, they will develop effective study habits.

**2. Accepting responsibilty:**Teach your children to be responsible for their own actions and not blame others. Accepting responsibility is a very important part of growing up and needs to be repeatedly inculcated as a family. Owing responsibility allows children and adolescents to be more forgiving and not hold grudges. It sets the basis for future healthy relationships.

**3. Communication is the key:** Effective communication plays a crucial role in building happier relationships, be it with your partner, family, friends, or even your children. Remember children are very astute and they are capable of sensing your moods and emotions. If you do not keep your channels of communication open, you will find that your child also does not open up to you. So it is important to keep conversations going both ways from childhood. Communication is 7 % verbal and 93% non-verbal, so be aware of your body language while communicating with your child.

**4. Let your children clean their own mess:**Children can be really messy at times and there will be objects and toys, books, and clothes strewn around the house. It is important to remember that you have to let your child clear their things up. Occasionally you may help them out, but doing it on a regular basis is something which is not desirable as your child will expect you to do everything. Many parents do not understand this and feel guilty if they expect their child to clean their rooms. Believe me, your child will become more responsible and will eventually take accountability for cleaning up their rooms and your work will also decrease.

**5. Encourage your children to participate in household chores:** Asking children to contribute to household chores can make some parents feel guilty and ashamed. However, it's important to explain the concept of family to children and how helping each other is part of it. Doing chores instills positive traits such as discipline, respect, empathy, and compassion. The focus is not just on completing the task, but on raising a child who takes pride in being responsible and contributing to the family. Make the chore enjoyable and provide assistance and guidance as needed to create a positive experience.

**6. Allow your child to deal with his/her problems:**Mothers have always advised not to get involved in their children's problems and this advice holds true. When parents interfere in their children's issues, they may create more conflicts with other parents and adults. They may also be seen as biased and judgmental towards other children. It's better to listen to your child's perspective of what happened and offer an impartial opinion. Encourage your child to deal with the problem, apologize if necessary, and make up with their friends. This helps them to learn accountability, responsibility, and independence. Avoid being judgmental and help them become more resilient in dealing with life's challenges.

**7. Never label or judge your child:**This is very important. Labelling or judging your child or comparing them with other children destroys their self-esteem, self-worth and confidence. They are no longer motivated to achieve and move forward. Learning to praise your child for simple things in life, may not be some big award. Learn to celebrate together and enjoy your time. Try to always be appreciative.

**8. Providing unconditional love and support:** As parents, we should all provide unconditional love and support to our children instead of having unrealistic expectations and resorting to bribes with gifts. Using gifts to achieve objectives teaches children to equate material rewards with success, which can lead to disappointment and pain when it is not possible to provide them. Instead, we should be present in our child's life, offer guidance and support when needed, without forcing them into activities or careers they don't enjoy. Parental presence and support are invaluable and cannot be replaced by material gifts.

**9. Involve your children in community service and activities:** Getting involved in community service and helping others can greatly enhance positive psychology. Studies indicate that community engagement and altruistic behavior stimulate the release of endorphins or "happy hormones" leading to feelings of joy and contentment not only for those receiving help but also for those giving it. This instills a sense of responsibility and obligation, providing individuals with a sense of direction and meaning in their lives.