

# Habit 1: Help for Parents 😊

## Be Proactive: You're in Charge

### Understanding *The Habit of Choice*

To be proactive means to take responsibility for your choices and behaviors.

"I am a responsible person. I take initiative. I choose my actions, attitudes, and moods. I do not blame others for my wrong actions. I do the right thing without being asked, **even when no one is looking.**"

**Key Concepts** Stop & Think, Use Proactive Language, Freedom to Choose, Accountability for Choices, Circle of Influence/Circle of Concern, Being a *Transition Person*, Carrying Your Own Weather, Filling Others' Buckets, Emotional Bank Accounts

### Future skills that can be learned by being proactive:

1. Develop motivation; take pride in work
2. Act responsible toward self, family, school, community, nation, and world
3. Show initiative and entrepreneurship
4. Use unique talents and abilities to their fullest
5. Think about choices, be accountable and responsible for actions and results, understand that choices affect others

"Some people make things happen, some watch things happen, while others wonder what has happened." --- Proverb

### Putting the Habit Into Practice

#### Ideas for Getting Started

- Read the first story from *The 7 Habits of Happy Kids, Bored! Bored! Bored!*  
Points to Ponder, thanks to Sammy Squirrel:  
The next time you are bored, do something nice for someone else.  
Try doing something today that you've always been scared to do. Make a new friend, raise your hand in class, or clean the toilet.  
The next time you get mad and want to say something mean or rude, bite your tongue instead and don't say it.  
If you do something wrong, say you're sorry before someone asks you to apologize.
- **Introduce the habit with an object**  
Caution cone- Use with the book, *The Dog Poop Initiative* by Kirk Weisler  
Mirror- "Look at ourselves first", "It begins with me"  
Umbrella- The umbrella represents carrying your own weather. This means not allowing what is going on around you to affect your mood or attitude. You consciously make a choice to be positive and happy.

A small black box- The box can represent the tiny place in our mind where we put thoughts about ourselves and our abilities. What we tell ourselves is what we believe. If we think we are amazing and beautiful, or smart and witty then no matter what anyone else says..it's true.

A bottle of bubbles- These are self-control bubbles. As you blow them, ask yourself: *How can I show self-control? When I show self-control, I feel...*

## Activity #1: Soda Pop Head

Read the book *Soda Pop Head* by Julia Cook. Demonstrate the difference between a Proactive Person and a Reactive Person using bottles of water and soda.



### Proactive People

- Take responsibility for their choices
- Take initiative to make positive things happen
- Stay calm when things don't go their way, even if they feel angry



### Reactive People

- Make choices based on feelings, moods & emotions
- Wait for something to happen to them
- Explode when things don't go as planned

## Activity #2: Being a Transition Person

Watch the following video with your child: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-DIsWkaDJo>

Who is a Transition Person? Someone who is proactive and focuses on improving themselves, and inspires other to do the same. A Transition Person leads others to a more positive way of thinking.

Discussion Points”

Who has been a Transition Person in your life; someone who was a “Change Agent” for you?

List the reasons why...

Consider a way to recognize/honor this person.

How can you be a Transition Person?

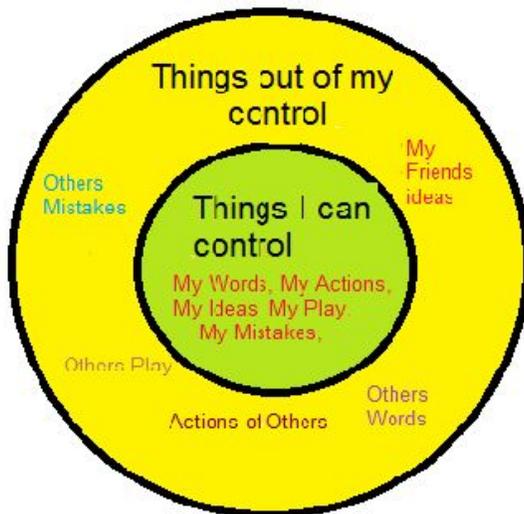
## Activity #3: Choose Your Own Weather

Use the book or movie, *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* as an example of Carrying Your Own Weather. If you choose to have a sunny day, don't allow others to turn it into a cloudy or stormy day.

Act out or draw Reactive and Proactive responses to various situations. (See attached)

## Activity #4: Circles of Control

The Circle of Influence (inside circle) and Circle of Concern (outside circle) chart helps children focus on the factors they can control. Create your own chart by listing things you can control within the inner circle of the diagram (Circle of Control). List things you may be concerned about, but which are outside of your control in the outer circle (Circle of No Control). For example, with the situation "Getting to school on time," issues like traffic and weather would be within the Circle of No Control. The Circle of Control might include the time you wake up and getting dressed/ready for school.



These two circles can be used in many difficult situations. They allow a child to think about whether the person/thing/event that is upsetting them is something they can change. If it is, it allows them to think about what their choices might be.

Read *Inch by Inch* by Leo Lionni. This is a story about an inchworm that exemplifies leadership by using what is in his Circle of Control. Although the inchworm is much smaller than the nightingale, he makes choices in his Circle of Control that allow him to escape.

### Book List

**The Dog Poop Initiative** by Kirk Weisler

**Soda Pop Head** by Julia Cook

**Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day** by Judith Vorst

**Alexander Who Used to be Rich Last Sunday** by Judith Vorst

**Inch By Inch** by Leo Lionni

**Thunder Cake** by Patricia Polacco  
**The Little Engine That Could** by Watty Piper  
**Tops and Bottoms** by Janet Stevens  
**The Other Side** by Jacqueline Woodson  
**Pete the Cat** by Eric Litwin  
**King Bidgood's In the Bathtub** by Audrey Wood  
**Amazing Grace** by Mary Hoffman  
**The Very Lonely Firefly** by Eric Carle  
**The Grouchy Ladybug** by Eric Carle  
**The Carrot Seed** by Ruth Krauss  
**Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher** by Bruce Coville  
**On My Honor** by Marion Bauer  
**Someday a Tree** by Eve Bunting  
**Salt in His Shoes, Michael Jordan: In Pursuit of a Dream** by Deloris Jordan  
**The Real McCoy: The Life of an African-American Inventor** by Wendy Towle  
**The Paper Bag Princess** by Robert Munsch  
**I Knew You Could** by Craig Dorfman  
**Just the Way I am** by Sean Covey  
**Mirette on the High Wire** by Emily Arnold McCully

### **Additional Parent/Child Activities**

Most of us react to a situation immediately, without taking time to think about the results of our actions. Part of Being Proactive is being able to stop and think before we act. With your child, do some role-playing to practice the skill of stopping and thinking in different situations. Your goal in these role-plays is to encourage your child to stop and think before reacting.

- In this role-play, parent plays the part of the child's friend. Say that you have a new best friend who lives close to your house and you don't want to play with him/her anymore. Apologize and then wait for your child's reaction.
- In this role-play, parent plays the part of the child's sibling. Tell your child that you broke his/her favorite toy by accident, and that you don't think it's a very big deal because he/she has many toys.
- In this role-play, parent plays the part of the child, and child plays the part of the parent.) Tell your child that you are "sooooo bored" and there is nothing fun to do. Complain that no one wants to play and that he/she (as a parent) needs to entertain you.

Older children begin to rely more and more on their friends. They can allow a rude comment by a friend to ruin their whole day, and are easily led into bad behavior by a peer group. As a parent, it's important to help your child understand the importance of taking responsibility for one's own life and choices.

- Make a pact together with your child to give up an unhealthy habit. Identify the habit you want to stop (smoking, overeating, watching too much TV, not exercising, etc.) Choose start and end dates, and progress check-in dates along the way. Explain to your child that research shows it takes a full 21 days to start a new habit or stop an old one, so it's important not to get discouraged or give up too quickly.
- Have a discussion with your child about the things he/she would be willing to stand up and fight for in the face of peer pressure. Tell your child you don't want him/her to tell you what he/she thinks you want to hear. You might try role-playing this so your child can be prepared to stand up to a friend or group if needed.