

When my elementary school first implemented the *Raise Responsibility System*, I was somewhat apprehensive about how such a program would work in my classroom. I have always felt that I created a positive learning environment in my class and frankly, this system seemed like just one more passing fad to add to our classroom management file.

However, after reading Dr. Marshall's book, "*Discipline Without Stress, Punishments or Rewards*," I realized that if I was going to use this in my classroom, I should try it at home first. As a mother of two teenagers, creating an environment that was stress-free really appealed to me. I talked to my children about how stressful things had been at home and shared with them a little bit about the program that I was "trying out" on them.

Later that day, I heard my daughter slamming doors and screaming at the top of her lungs at her brother. Before, I would have stormed in to intervene and quickly reacted to the situation without even thinking. Instead, I calmly began using such questions as: "Is what you are doing something that is beneficial?" My daughter stopped and looked at me and said, "Oh, this is that discipline thing you are using at school, right? Okay, so, no! No, it is not." I asked, "Is what you are doing something that falls in line with the standards of our family?" She sighed, "No." I said, "Would you tell me what our family rule is regarding yelling?" She relayed to me that yelling was not allowed and that if we had anything to say we could say it in a calm manner. Finally, I said, "Well, what do you think we should do about this?"

I told her to go to her room and reflect on what we should do about what had happened between her and her brother. A little while later, she came back in and asked to talk to her brother. She apologized for yelling at him and proceeded to give us a list of consequences that she had decided on. "I guess I should not use the computer for three weeks, or talk on the phone, or go to the movies with my friends," she began to list. We were stunned!

Honestly, this was the first time that she had really accepted responsibility for something so calmly. The next three weeks were very interesting. She answered the phone and we could hear her explain, "I can't talk on the phone right now because my parents...I mean, I have restricted myself."

Since using this in our home, life seems so much more enjoyable. The truth is that our children do know what is expected of them. Holding them to a higher level of responsibility has made all of our lives more peaceful.

Thank you.

—Wendi Hall, Vestavia Hills, Alabama