

SESSION SIX: ACCEPTING RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR ACTIONS

SESSION SIX OVERVIEW	
GOALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and teens learn how to share responsibilities • Parents and teens will learn how identify realistic, appropriate, and reasonable consequences for noncompliance or rule breaking
CORE PRINCIPLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing responsibilities helps reduce stress in the house and builds confidence • Give your teen privileges as a reward for accepting more responsibilities • Consequences should be realistic, immediate, consistent, and reasonable • Use your I Feel Statements and Take A Pause before reacting to a negative behaviour of your teen/parent
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance register, name tags, temporary adhesive, pens, paper, flipchart, refreshments for the break • House of Support poster
PREPARATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up the room with chairs in a circle. • Prepare materials for name tags and refreshments for break
WELCOME (20 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Take a Pause • Emotional Check-In • Physical exercise
HOME ACTIVITY DISCUSSION (40 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind parents/teens of core home activity • Ask parents/teens to share highlights and challenges • Discuss solutions to challenges and practice solutions
BREAK (5 Minutes)	
CORE LESSON – SHARING RESPONSIBILITIES AS A FAMILY (20 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-play: Teens Helping Out • Discussion: Sharing responsibilities as a family • Practice: Ways to accept more responsibilities • Review: Sharing responsibilities as a family
CORE LESSON – REASONABLE AND FAIR CONSEQUENCES (25 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-play: Consequences for not following rules • Role-play: Unreasonable consequences • Discussion: Accepting responsibility for our actions • Activity: Identifying appropriate consequences for not following through with responsibilities
ASSIGN HOME ACTIVITIES (10 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with your parent/teen about how s/he can share responsibilities • Discuss with your parent/teen appropriate consequences for not following through with responsibilities or forgetting household rules • Spend 15 minutes each day in One-on-One Time with your parent/teen • Take a Pause whenever you are feeling stressed or upset • Other activities from previous sessions • Meet with, or contact, your PLH Buddy once during the week
CLOSING (5 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing one thing you learned with your parent/teen • Compliment Circle • Take a Pause • Emotional check-out • Remind families about next session and home activities • Thank and praise families

1 NOTES FOR SESSION SIX

Read this in preparation for delivering the session.

1.1 Overview

Session Six is focused on helping teens learn responsibility for their own actions. The main focus is on sharing responsibilities as a family and identifying appropriate consequences for misbehaviour.

Session Six focuses on the following core skills and principles:

- Sharing responsibilities helps reduce stress in the house and builds confidence
- Give your teen privileges as a reward for accepting more responsibilities
- Consequences should be realistic, immediate, consistent, and reasonable
- Use your I Feel Statements and Take A Pause before reacting to a negative behaviour of your parent/teen

1.2 Sharing responsibilities as a family

In a family, sharing responsibilities is very important. As teens get older, they are more able to accept responsibility for their own actions. They can also take on more responsibilities around the house.

While a 10-year-old child may need more supervision and limit setting, an older adolescent may have more freedom to make his or her own decisions. Older teens are also more able to help out with the caring of other siblings and other household chores, as well as responsibilities around schooling.

Parents should also remember to praise their teens for helping out – even when it is expected! Teens feel good about being recognized for contributing to the welfare of the family. It becomes an important part of their identity.

It is also important that parents understand that their teens also need time to study, play and have fun socially. If they give their teens too much responsibility, their teens may rebel or feel overwhelmed.

During this session, parents and teens explore positive consequences that may result when teens fulfil their responsibilities.

Possible positive consequences can range from teens simply feeling good about themselves, doing well in school, or the fact that their parents trust them with more responsibilities, to extra

privileges like a later bedtime, to knowing that they are helping to make a more peaceful and happy home environment.

1.3 Negative consequences to support compliance

During this session, we will also discuss how parents and teens can discuss appropriate consequences when their teens forget rules or responsibilities.

When parents involve their teens in discussing consequences, it is more likely that their teens will a) follow the agreed upon rules, and b) accept the consequences for their actions.

It is important that you continue to emphasize the core building blocks for these skills and to also remind participants to focus on the walls of the House of Support:

- Spending One-on-One Time Together
- Talking about Emotions
- Praising Positive Behaviour
- Using Positive Instructions
- Discussing Rules Together as a Family

The more parents are able to avoid difficult behaviours by supporting the positive opposite behaviours, the less likely their teens will disobey them meaning they will not have to use consequences.

Avoiding the problem

It is important to emphasize that the first thing to do to try to avoid having to give a consequence is in the first place.

Parents can give their teens a warning before using a consequence. This gives teens the chance to change their behaviour and avoid the consequence.

They should also use plenty of praise when their teens follow instructions and rules to encourage it to happen more often.

Consequences for instructions and household rules

Consequences are most effective when used to support existing issues like following instructions or household rules that have already been discussed with teens.

These should be connected to the instruction and the rule (e.g., doing your schoolwork before watching T.V. or spending time with friends) and enforced as soon as possible.

For example, a consequence for coming home late after dark could be that a teen cannot play with friends the following day.

What is a consequence?

A consequence is the result of an action. They can be either natural or logical.

Natural consequences require no interference from parents. They are a natural result of a child's behaviour. For example: "If you do not do your schoolwork, you will get a bad mark on your test".

Logical consequences are a result of a specific behaviour such as noncompliance. For example: "If you do not help clear the table, you cannot watch T.V. after dinner."

It is important for teenagers to learn that their negative actions have consequences, like not doing the dishes today might mean eating off a dirty plate tomorrow!

It is also important that parents learn the core principles of consequences.

Consequences must be realistic, immediate, reasonable, and consistent.

- Realistic: Parents must be able to follow through with the consequence they give.
- Immediate: Consequences should happen as soon as possible after the negative behaviour.
- Reasonable: Consequences should be related to the behaviour and fair.
- Consistent: Whenever teens break a rule or behave negatively, parents need to be able to use a consequence. If they only do it some of the time, then their teens will think that they can get away with that behaviour some of the time, too.

There may also be situations that call for flexibility and adjustment in the instructions or household guidelines and consequences, especially if teens are growing older. For example, a guideline that may be good for a 10 year-old may not be appropriate for a 16 year-old. Or teens may feel that a guideline is unfairly applied to girls or boys (see Role-play from Session 4 on Guidelines for Boys and Girls).

When teens resist or do not follow guidelines, it may be an opportunity to talk about whether the guideline should be adjusted to meet the teen and parent's needs.

It is also important for parents to continue encouraging teens to behave in a positive way so that they can avoid having to use consequences in the first place. They should be reminded to involve their teens in establishing guidelines and to praise their teens when they behave well.

Consequences are not punishments.

It may be helpful for parents and teens to think of them as opportunities for teens to learn that their actions will have an impact on themselves and others. They help teach teens independence, decision-making, and responsibility.

Consequences also prepare teens to take responsibility for their decisions and actions. Parents should accept responsibility for their actions too!

Teaching teens about responsibility for their actions is an important step for parents to prepare teens for their life outside of the family as they get older.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Welcome

Welcome participants warmly and enthusiastically when they arrive to the session.

2.2 Take a Pause

Take a Pause with the participants. You can make it brief (about a minute):

- Close eyes
- Focus on thoughts, feelings, and body sensations (15 seconds)
- Focus on breath (30 seconds)
- Expand focus to the entire body and sounds (15 seconds)
- Open eyes

Remind participants that they should try to **Take a Pause** before reacting to their parents or teens when they do something that annoys or angers them.

This may help them respond in a less negative and violent way. **Take a Pause** can even be a couple deep breaths!

2.3 Emotional Check-In

Parents and teens check into the group by sharing how they feel at the beginning of the session. They should describe their emotion, where they feel it in their body, and what thoughts are associated with it.

You can model this: "I feel anxious. I feel it in my shoulders. I am worried about having enough money this month for food," or "I feel proud. I feel it in my chest. I did well on my math test."

2.4 Physical Exercises

Ask participants to notice how they feel at the end of the physical exercises, ask participants to notice if they feel any differences in their bodies.

Ask them if they have been doing any of the physical exercises in the morning. Praise and encourage those who are trying!

2.5 Progress on the House of Support

Show participants their progress in building the House of Support.

3 DISCUSSION OF HOME ACTIVITIES

Divide the parents and teens so that both can feel more comfortable talking about their experiences openly.

Home Activities Recap

The core home activities were to:

- **Make a visual budget** with your entire family
- **Make a savings plan** with your entire family

Key points to be aware of during this home activity discussion:

- Explore whether parents and teens were able to involve the entire family in the creating a visual budget
- Explore any challenges regarding choosing an appropriate savings plan for the family

Possible questions for Discussion on Home Activities in Session Five:

- What happened when you tried to make a visual or actual budget with your entire family? What questions or challenges came up during the activity?
- What happened when you tried to make a savings plan with your entire family? What questions or challenges came up during the activity?
- Does anyone want to share a positive experience about spending One-on-One Time with your parent/teen?

Please remember: You need to check in with **each participant** to explore his/her experience doing Home Activities:

- Explore solutions to difficulties in doing the Home Activities with parents and teens.
- Encourage parents and teens to offer ways to overcome challenges as a group.
- Choose a strategy from the group's solutions and practice it.
- Then evaluate how it worked and encourage the participant to try it again at home.

BREAK

4 CORE LESSON – SHARING RESPONSIBILITIES AS A FAMILY

4.1 Role-play – Teens Helping Out

Mother: "Faraja, the children were late to school once again today!"

Faraja (*sad, annoyed*): "Mother, I am doing my best!"

Mother: "You know I need your help so I can do my studies, but what use is it if everybody is always late?"

Faraja (*angry*): "They don't listen to me! And Shukuru and Amani are always fighting so they we all lost time. Do you even care that they are making me late to school as well? When will this ever end?"

Mother (*calmer*): "Okay, I can see that we are both upset. Let's take a deep breath and then see what we can do to solve this problem."

Faraja smiles at her mother.

Faraja: "I know you need help in the house because of your own studies, Mother. Is there anything else I can do to help?"

Mother: "Thank you for offering, Faraja. It would be great if you could help the others with their homework. It is important to me that you are also on time for school – I know you work hard and you are doing so well."

Faraja: "I can also help put out their school uniforms in the morning. Maybe that will help everybody get out of the house earlier in the morning?"

Mother: "Great idea. And thank you, Faraja, I appreciate all the help you give. I know it is not easy for you, either."

Questions for Role-play:

1. Why is it important that Faraja helps out with taking care of her younger siblings?
2. Who is angry in the story, and why is she angry?
3. How does Mother reduce the tension in the conversation with Faraja?
4. How do Mother and Faraja resolve the issue?
5. Do you think that their solution is a realistic one? Is it specific enough?
6. What did Mother do to show that she appreciates Faraja? Could she have done more?

BUILDING BLOCKS

Notice when you are feeling angry and Take a Pause!

Listen to what your teen wants and needs. Their needs also change as they grow older.

Involve your teen in solving conflicts and assuming responsibility.

Show your teen that you appreciate it when s/he helps out.

Allow some flexibility when daily situations change.

4.2 Discussion – Sharing Responsibilities As A Family

Lead a discussion about how parents/caregivers can give more responsibilities to their teens. Allow participants to discuss responses while you write them down on the flipchart.

Possible questions include:

- What would be the benefit of giving teens responsibilities? For parents? For teens?
- What kind of responsibilities could teenager have to help out in the house?
- How could teenagers feel appreciated when they accept these responsibilities?

Benefits of giving your teen responsibilities:

- Empowers teen as an individual
- Helps share some of the household chores and tasks
- Teenagers will learn how to be responsible in other situations outside the house
- Being responsible about doing schoolwork will improve performance in school and build good discipline skills for later in life
- Teenagers learn that they are growing more mature and can be trusted
- Strengthens the family
- Accepting responsibility may make teenagers feel useful and important
- When teenagers accept more responsibilities, parents can reward them with more privileges.

Possible responsibilities for teens

- Helping out with caregiving of other children
- Household chores such as cleaning, cooking, taking out rubbish
- Assistance with shopping

- Completing schoolwork before going out to play with friends
- Being on time for school and helping siblings prepare for school too
- Being in charge of planning fun activities for the family to do together

PLEASE NOTE: Allow participants to come up with ideas on their own with gentle prompting from you. They are the experts!

4.3 Practice – Ways to Accept More Responsibilities

1. Make a list with participants what sort of responsibilities they could take on (or want their teens to do) in the house.

Create three columns on the flipchart and write responsibilities in the left column.

2. Ask participants what would be possible positive consequences that might happen when teens follow through with these responsibilities.

Write these in the middle column of the flipchart.

- a. Increased privileges such as a later bedtime or more autonomy
 - b. A simple reward if the responsibility is extra difficult
(make sure these are FREE like extra One-on-One Time!)
 - c. Increased sense of maturity and self-esteem knowing that you are helping out
 - d. A more happy and peaceful home environment
 - e. Completing schoolwork so that you do well in school and can spend time playing with friends
 - f. Appreciation and praise from their parents
3. Parents and teens discuss in pairs existing responsibilities that teens already are doing, and what privilege they could receive (if they are not already being rewarded for following through with the task).
 4. Parents and teens also decide on ONE new responsibility the teens can do to help out in the house. Discuss what privilege they could receive.
 5. Review tips for sharing responsibilities as a family

4.4 Review – Sharing Responsibilities as A Family

- Introduce new responsibilities when both you and your teen are calm
- Responsibilities can be things to help out in the house or around schoolwork/education
- Use "I" statements and share how you feel

- Allow your teen to express how s/he feels
- Allow your teen to choose what responsibilities s/he could take on
- Make a Specific, Positive, and Realistic plan. For example, "I will help out with preparing dinner once a week"
- Discuss what privilege or praise will be a result of fulfilling the responsibility
- Praise your teen whenever s/he helps out with responsibilities!

5 CORE LESSON – CONSEQUENCES TO HELP LEARN RESPONSIBILITY

5.1 Role-play – Consequences for Not Following Rules

Amani is trying to sneak into the house quietly.

Father (*angrily*): "Amani! What time is it! It is late!"

Amani (*worried*): "Sorry Father – you can go back to sleep".

Father (*angrily*): "It is WAY past the time you were supposed to be home!"

Amani (*worried*): "I can explain, Father, I can."

Father (*worried, calmer*): "Amani, it is the middle of the night and you came home later than we agreed. Whatever the reason is, you must understand that this is not acceptable. Your mother and I felt really worried."

Amani (*worried*): "The guy who was supposed to drive us home was drunk, so I decided not to get in the car and then I had to wait for someone else to drive me home."

Father (*more friendly*): "I am glad you did not get in the car with a drunk driver, Amani. That was a good decision. Let's talk more about this in the morning when we have had some rest."

Amani: "I am sorry I worried you and Mother."

Father: "Thank you. Now go to bed, but just to be clear, as you came home later than we agreed, you will not be allowed to go out next weekend."

Questions for Role-play:

1. Why does Father respond to Amani's behaviour the way he does?
2. What would have happened if Father responded violently or shouted at Amani?
3. How does Father share his emotions with Amani (using I Feel statements)?
4. Why does Amani react to his Father in the way he does?
5. Do you think the consequence for coming home too late is fair?

BUILDING BLOCKS

Make sure your teen knows what the household rules are.

Household rules need to be specific, positive, and realistic.

Allow your teen space to explain his/her actions.

It is okay to apologise to your parent/teen.

Make sure your teen knows the consequences for his/her actions.

5.2 Role-play – Unreasonable Consequences...

Bibi is coming home from work. She is at the door about to open it up.

Bibi (*thinking to herself*): "Ay my poor feet! I need to sit down a moment and drink a cup of coffee before I start preparing food for everyone."

Bibi (*enters the kitchen and sees Baraka eating bread*): "Baraka! What are you doing? That bread is for dinner! Now there won't be enough to feed us all!"

Baraka (*worried*): "Sorry, Bibi, I was just hungry. I can explain, you see, the thing is there is this guy at school...."

Bibi (*interrupting Baraka and raising her hand as if she is going to hit him*): "I don't care what happened at school, money doesn't grow on trees! I don't have enough money to go out and buy more bread! Tonight you won't get dinner with the rest of us!"

Baraka (*angry*): "That's unfair! You never listen to me! You hate me!"

Amina enters the kitchen looking concerned.

Amina: "What is going on? Is it almost dinner? I am so hungry!"

Bibi: "Mind your own business!"

Questions for Role-play:

1. What could Bibi have done before shouting at Baraka?
2. Is the consequence to not have dinner a reasonable one for eating the bread?
3. What does the consequence teach Baraka?
4. How does Baraka feel when Bibi yells at him like that?
5. What would he like her to do instead of getting angry with him?
6. How could YOU fix the scenario?
 - Ask participants for solutions to the scenario.
 - Ask participants to choose a solution.
 - Act out the solution in a role-play.
 - Discuss whether the solution was realistic.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Consequences should be appropriate and reasonable.

Take a Pause before reacting to negative behaviour.

Allow your teen space to explain his/her actions.

It is okay to show your disappointment when your teen breaks a rule.

As parent or teen, you can both apologise when you lose your temper or forget a rule.

5.3 Role-play – Accepting Consequences

Faraja is talking to the boy she likes, George. Her brother Amani is watching them from nearby looking upset.

George: "I like you, Faraja"

Faraja: "Oh, George!"

Faraja comes home while Father and Mother are sitting on the couch.

Father (friendly): "Hi Faraja. Thank you for being home at the time we agreed on."

Mother (friendly): "Come sit down with us and tell us about your day."

Faraja: "School is okay. And George and I were hanging out together earlier."

Mother (calm but concerned): "Ah yes... Amani actually said he saw you and George together when you were supposed to be in class. Is that true?"

Faraja (worried): "Sorry, Mother. I know I should not be alone with George. And that I should not skip class."

Father (calm but concerned): "Thank you for being honest, Faraja. We do not allow you to be alone with George because we want you to be safe."

Mother (calm but concerned): "Father is right. Many girls your age drop out of school because they get pregnant or get married too young. We want you to graduate and get a good job."

Father (calm): "We will also talk to George to remind him of our family's rules. I hope you remember to follow the rules in the future, Faraja."

Mother (calm): "Because you did not follow our rule, you will not be allowed to go out with George on Saturday. Okay?"

Faraja: "Okay, Mother and Father. I understand. Thank you for caring about me."

Questions for Role-play:

1. How did Father and Mother deal with Faraja breaking their rule?
2. What do you think of the consequence that Father and Mother gave to Faraja? Was it reasonable?
3. What helped Faraja take responsibility for her actions?

BUILDING BLOCKS

Allow your teen space to explain his/her actions.

It is important for teenagers to learn that their negative actions have consequences.

Consequences should be reasonable and connected to the behaviour and household rule.

5.4 Discussion – Accepting Consequences for Our Actions

Discuss with participants about the benefits of using consequences when teens do not follow instructions or break rules. Write ideas on the flipchart.

Suggested questions to help with the discussion:

- What would be the benefit of helping teens learn that there are consequences for negative behaviour? What about consequences for positive behaviour?
- What would be the benefit of using reasonable and nonviolent consequences instead of yelling or hitting teens?
- What would be the benefit of involving teens in deciding what would be an appropriate consequence for a specific behaviour?
- Why would we want to try to avoid having to use consequences in the first place? How can we do that?

Key points to draw out from the parents/caregivers:

- Consequences help teens learn responsibility for their actions
- Teens learn that if they do something negative, it will have a negative result
- Teens learn that if they do something positive, it will have a positive result
- Involving your teen in identifying appropriate consequences for specific behaviours increases the likelihood that they will accept those consequences
- Consequences allows parents to discipline their teens in a controlled way
- Hitting or shouting teaches your teens that aggression and violence is an appropriate way of resolving conflicts – your teens may then use that with their partners or peers
- Hitting or shouting makes everyone feel bad
- Parents often lose control or act out of anger when disciplining violently
- Responding in a firm and authoritative way maintains your control and allows your teen to remain under the Sunshine of Positive Attention

5.5 Practice – Identifying Consequences for Not Following Through With Responsibilities

This activity helps participants identify appropriate consequences for situations when they do not follow through with their responsibilities.

1. Revisit the paper with the Responsibilities and Privileges.

2. Ask participants to list any additional responsibilities that they might have (e.g., doing their schoolwork) and what privileges might connect to them.
3. Parents and teens work in pairs to identify appropriate consequences if they do not fulfil their responsibilities.
4. These consequences should also be **Specific, Realistic, Reasonable, and Consistent**.
5. Write these behaviours in the far right column of the flipchart.
6. Ask participants what they think about the relationship between increased responsibilities, positive consequences, and negative consequences.
7. Ask participants why they think it is important to discuss these issues together.

6 ASSIGNING HOME ACTIVITIES

IT IS WHAT YOU DO AT HOME THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE!

Assign Home Activities to practice at home:

- Discuss with your parent/teen about how s/he can **share responsibilities**.
 - Discuss at least ONE new or existing responsibility that the teen can do to help in the house. Make sure the teen can still fulfil his/her responsibilities around school work too.
 - Identify a special privilege for the teen that s/he can have if s/he follows through with the responsibility.
 - Identify an appropriate consequence if the teen does not follow through.
 - Discuss other consequences for not following through with household rules that you have established during PLH Teens.
- Spend **at least 15 minutes** of **One-on-One Time** each day with your teen/parent.
- **Take a Pause** whenever you are feeling stressed or upset. You can even **Take a Pause** to appreciate a positive emotion!

Ongoing home activities

- Continue to monitor your **family budget** and **savings plan**
- Continue to be consistent with **household rules**
- Have a **conversation** with your parent/teen about **health and safety**
- Try to be more **aware of your own emotions and the emotions of others**.
- Ask your parent/teen about how s/he is feeling at least **1 time during the week**.
- Practice **I Feel Statements** at least **1 time during the week**.
- **Praise** your parent/teen, yourself, and others in your family!
- Parents: Notice how you **give instructions** and try to make them **positive, specific, and realistic**.
- Teens: Remember to be **calm and clear** when talking to your parent about things that are important to you.
- Do something nice to **reward yourself** for your hard work in the PLH Teens programme!
- Do the **Physical Exercise** every morning.
- **Meet with or contact (call or text message) your PLH Buddy** one time during the week.

Please note: Discuss with the families each goal for the coming week.
Make a note of it so that you know what they are planning to do at home.
Then you can follow this up during the next session's discussion on home activities.

7 CLOSING

7.1 Sharing One Thing You Learned

Ask parents and teens to share ONE thing that they learned during the session with their parent/teen.

7.2 Compliment Circle

Parents and teens take turns praising each other.

Then parents and teens take turns praising themselves for something specific that they did well.

Encourage participants to make eye contact and use the name of their parent/teen. The compliments can be about anything as long as they are sincere.

7.3 Take A Pause

Take a brief pause with families (30 seconds).

7.4 Emotional Check-Out

Model the emotional check-out by describing your emotion, where you feel it in your body, and what thoughts are associated with it.

For example, "I am feeling happy. This happiness is in my eyes. I am happy to have learned about how to create fair rules together."

7.5 Goodbye

Remind participants of the Home activities.

Refer to the Family Handbook and to the place for families to record whether they have done the home activities. Remind families of the core home activities for the session.

Thank and praise the parents/caregivers and teens for coming!