

## Voyager School ~ Home Responsibilities in Building School Readiness

1. Assign appropriate chores for your child (making bed picking up toys, help clearing dinner dishes) and follow through with consequences if they do not get done.
2. Require your child to sit while eating.
3. Encourage their independence: at 5 years old they should be feeding themselves, sleeping in their own bed, getting dressed by themselves, helping with simple home tasks, and picking up after play.
4. Toys should *always* be put away and treated with care.
5. Parents must be consistent in following through with consequences for unacceptable behavior. Never let a child speak disrespectfully or be physically aggressive with others without a consequence.
6. Help your child learn to control his/her body. You can make a game of it by putting soft music on and having them practice lying still for periods of time. Challenge them to sit in the same spot for 5 minutes (extending the time as they get better). Ballet, hula, meditation, yoga, or martial arts are helpful for learning these skills!
7. Talk to your child about "thinking before they act" and have high (but realistic) expectations. The acronym STAR sometimes helps them remember (stop, think, act, respect).
8. Limit video games, TV, or movies (especially right before bed). Avoid any violent media.
9. Emphasize that there is a **time and place for everything** (wrestling with daddy at home is okay but not in other settings with other people).
10. Establish routines at home (morning and bedtime). The more predictable and structured the routine, the more quickly your child will learn to go with and participate in the flow.
11. Frame your child's behavior in terms of choices. If your child is misbehaving offer some other choices of behavior and give them an opportunity to make another choice. If they do not make a better choice, follow through with consequences.
12. Do not threaten. As adults we often use too many words. Actions speak louder than words...particularly with children.
13. Consequences should relate to the offense whenever possible, should be delivered as quickly as possible after the event, and should be time-limited so that your child remembers what he/she is being punished for. At the end of the consequence period debrief with your child. Why were you in time-out? What would have been a better behavior choice? What will you do next time? Do you need to make it right with anyone?