

INVITATION TO

RESPONSIBILITY

1ST GRADE

Crossroads Families  
A ministry of Crossroads Church

I know it's hard to imagine but you and your child did make it through Kindergarten, and they are ready to head off to 1st grade. You might not be as scared of the year ahead, and lucky for you, your child is probably pretty excited. When a kid hits 1st grade there is a natural sense of confidence that comes with it. They know what to expect when they show up at school. They probably have some friends they look forward to seeing everyday again. They also understand now that you will be there to help them figure this school thing out.

What they don't know is that school and life are about to go to a whole different level as the people they trust the most...their teachers, their parents, and their friends...expect so much more of them than before! For maybe the first time, they will experience homework. Your child will probably be given some new chores around the house, and they might even be invited to spend the night with a friend...AWAY FROM HOME. This year will be filled with some new challenges, and we want to help you develop a plan to guide the process.

This year's Family Experience is called "Invitation to Responsibility." You are probably ready for this, and honestly, they are also. They just don't know to ask for it. This year, we want to help your child fully move to "BIG KID" status, and every 1st grader I know wants to be known as a big kid!

Our first step is to take a look at our 3 Kick-starters that will help you build a foundation to begin this year's Family Experience. They are Responsibility at School, Responsibility at Home and Responsibility

with Friends. These are expounded upon in our Kick-starter Guide. They will have questions and activities for you to do with your child that set up the Family Experience Ceremony.

Once you have had these conversations, your next step is to begin planning the Family Experience Ceremony, "The Blessing Box." Yes, it's a literal box, and it is going to be filled with some important letters from people in your child's life. You can even decorate the box to fit your child's personality. Next, you will write your child a letter and encourage your child's siblings, teachers, friend's parents, and other important adults in your child's life to write letters as well, letting your child know how they have seen them be responsible. You will find step-by-step instructions on how to implement this experience by going to our Parent Planning Guide.

This is going to be a fun year! This year, you get to officially welcome your child to the land of being a big kid who understands what responsibility is about.

## An Invitation To Responsibility

Children in 1st grade take a huge step in their level of responsibility. They're asked to attend school, complete homework, help out at home, navigate friendships, and join in extracurricular activities. There are a number of responsibilities in each of these areas. We can help our children navigate all the different pulls on them, since this is only the beginning.

### Kickstarter 1: School

Define responsibility in a way your 1st grader can understand. Ask them what they think responsibility means. Responsibility is choosing to do the right thing.

Ask, "If God told you that you could have anything you wanted, what would you ask for?" God asked King Solomon this and his answer was WISDOM. This answer pleased God, so He made Solomon the wisest man to ever live. This wise man had a lot to say about knowledge. We develop knowledge through learning.

Your heart will become wise.  
Your mind will delight in knowledge.

**PROVERBS 2:10**

Choose my teaching instead of silver. Choose  
knowledge rather than fine gold.

**PROVERBS 8:10**

The tongues of wise people use knowledge well. But the  
mouths of foolish people pour out foolish words.

**PROVERBS 15:2**

We can gain knowledge by being responsible at school. Help your child fill out the responsibility chart listing the things for which he/she is responsible for at school.

## Kickstarter 2: Home

Children are ready for more responsibility at home around this age. They have the ability to unload a dishwasher, put up clean clothes, make their bed, clean up toys, take out the trash, etc. These opportunities help them grow into a responsible person.

**“Suppose you can be trusted with very little. Then you can be trusted with a lot.”**

**LUKE 16:10A**

Help your child fill out the responsibility chart including his/her current responsibilities in the home column. As you talk with your child about being a big kid, maybe there are some responsibilities you can add to this column.

## Kickstarter 3

We all need friends. Even Jesus surrounded Himself with a group of friends. Look together at the end of John 1 and figure out who the first disciples were. Help them scan for the names. Jesus knew living life alone wasn't good. We can choose to be responsible in our friendships. Fill out the responsibility chart under the friendship column. Help your child to think through a few specific friends, then ask how can you show responsibility in your friendships.

## Blessing Box

The culminating experience for your child in learning about responsibility is the Blessing Box. We have looked at responsibilities for your child in three areas: school, home, and friendships. Choose someone that represents each of these areas (e.g. a teacher, a parent of one of your child's friends; someone to represent home, such as a mother, father, older sibling, etc.). Have each person write a letter to your child, stating the ways they've seen your child being responsible.

Guide these individuals in the writing of the letters, specifically with your child in mind, remembering that this time is to signify his/her becoming a "big kid" through responsibility. Feel free to use the provided sample letter as a guide. Place these letters inside a Blessing Box. This can be something you create, buy, or already have in your possession. The Blessing Box can be in just about any form; it is simply meant to house the letters.

Designate a special time to present your child with this Blessing Box, telling him/her that they've shown they are now a "big kid" by being responsible at school, at home, and in their friendships. Read the letters to your child, and pray with them that God would help them continue to be responsible as they grow. If you would like additional guidance, you can use the script we have provided for the presentation of the Blessing Box.

### SAMPLE LETTER:

I am so proud of the big kid you are becoming. At home you have been keeping your room clean without my even having to ask you. You take such good care of the dog by walking her, keeping her food and water bowls filled, and even giving her a bath sometimes. I see you choosing to do what is right most of the time. You're choosing to share with your sister, even if you may not want to.

All of these things show that you are responsible. I love watching you become the big girl God created you to be. You help our house be a place of love and peace through being responsible. I love that God gave you to me. You have shown that you can be a big kid who is responsible, allowing God to shape who you are.

I Love you, Mom

### PRESENTATION SCRIPT

You have become a such great reader and we've heard you read many books. We believe the greatest book you will ever read is the Bible and we chose this Bible for you because we want you to begin spending your own time reading it.

Lots of people that you love have marked special verses in this Bible, so that as you read, you can discover everyone's favorite verses. We hope that this Bible becomes very special to you as you spend time reading it in order to know God more.

As a family, we've learned that the Bible is personal, that the Bible prepares us for life, and that the Bible is true. We hope you will always remember these three things as you grow up and learn more about a great God who loves you by reading His words to you.

1st graders are stepping into their “Big Kid” years. There can be some insecurity for children during this transition. This year, kids are spending a good deal of their time away from you, which can be a little scary for everyone involved. However, they are developmentally ready for this shift toward independence.

## Physical

- Tend to be in perpetual motion, squirm, gesture while talking, etc.
- Will test muscle strength by skipping, running, throwing, catching
- May be sloppy because they tend to do things in a hurry
- Can tire easily because of the fast pace at which they do things
- Engage in lots of chasing games, specifically boy/girl chasing on playground

## Social and Emotional

- Can distinguish reality from fantasy
- Play becomes more dramatic
- Still can't fully process a consequence before they execute an action
- Tend to be overly sensitive
- Have a tendency to still be egocentric
- Increased move toward independence, spending a good deal of time apart from family
- More aware of their own emotions and the emotions of others
- See things as black and white with no middle ground

## Relational

- Tattling becomes very real at this age
- Need rules and rituals
- Opportunities for unmonitored social interactions
- Care what others think about them
- Will begin asking for privacy
- Focuses on friendships with peers and interacts with other adults such as a friend's parent
- Plays with friends of the same gender
- Has a few close friends they play with more than others

## Spiritual

- Ask questions, some of which we may not know the answer. It's a good time to begin telling our children that we don't know the answer if we don't. Be ready for tough questions, even ones that make you squirm
- Developing a moral sense. Will see things as right or wrong through the lens of parents and teachers. Tend to have a strong conviction of this right and wrong.
- Because kids still see themselves as the center of the universe and will be proud of their accomplishments, we can help them see the difference in confidence and boasting.
- Children are just beginning to think of others.

Our hope is that during the past year, you had a great year teaching your child responsibilities and creating the blessing box.

In order to encourage other parents, we would love to hear about your your journey and how that experience has impacted your relationship with God and your family.

Feel free to send us an email, make a video, or send us a copy of your story, Bible verse, song, or prayer so that we can better encourage other parents. Thank you for taking this journey with us and we pray that God continues to work in your life and the life of your child.

**SEND RESPONSES TO:**

Kiki McDaniel

Director of Children's Ministries

[k.mcdaniel@xroadschurch.net](mailto:k.mcdaniel@xroadschurch.net)

