

Responsible **Decision-Making** ebook

Five conversations that show you how your child really follows through

Bloomster

Why decisions are hard at this age

It's a skill, not a trait. Nobody is born a good decision-maker. It's built through practice — and 9–14 is exactly when it's built.

Their brain acts before it pauses. The pause-and-reflect step isn't a habit yet at this age. What looks like carelessness is usually a skill still under construction.

Friends' opinions feel like facts. At this age, what the group thinks carries enormous weight. Many choices that look like your child's are really the group's.

Rescuing them backfires. Stepping in to fix it feels right — but kids only become better decision-makers by choosing, sometimes wrong, and feeling what happens next.

Your questions matter more than your answers. The goal isn't to hand them the right choice. It's to help them build the pause — and the best tool you have is asking, not telling.

How to use this

Not at the table. In the car, the drive-thru line, walking the dog — sideways works better than eye-to-eye.

Read one aloud like you just thought of it. "Okay, weird question — imagine this..."

Don't correct the first answer. Even a wrong one. Ask "then what happens?" — you're listening for how they think, not grading.



SCENARIO 1:

Will they open the bag?

After school, some of your friends hang out at a nearby gas station. You decide to go with them one afternoon because your ride will be late picking you up. Once you get there, you notice some of your friends are distracting the cashier while others are putting candy in their backpacks. They call you over and tell you to open your bag. What's the responsible thing to do?

Why this one

Peer pressure at full strength.
Friends on one side, the law on the other — and no time to think.

The stakes are real.
This isn't about being polite. It's stealing, and friends are asking your child to join.

Listen for

Both sides on the scale.
Do the law and the friendship both show up — or does one erase the other?

A plan, or an exit.
"I just wouldn't go" dodges it. Ask what they'd do standing right there.

SCENARIO 2:

Can she put the phone down?

Denise is staying up really late on social media. She finds it hard to get up the next morning, and she's noticed her grades slipping — but she's still a good student. Finals are coming up, and she realizes she's on social media mostly to avoid studying. What might be the consequences of that decision?

Why this one

Time is the decision.
Most choices at this age aren't dramatic — they're about what to do with the next hour.

The phone fights back.
Social media is built to be hard to put down — even for adults.

Listen for

Consequences, unprompted. Do lost sleep and slipping grades come up on their own — or only when you ask?

Asking for help. Do they know responsible sometimes means borrowing accountability — a parent, a rule, a timer?

SCENARIO 3:

Fitting in, or standing by Chris?

Meera really wants to be part of the popular crowd, but she knows they always gossip. She's friends with Chris — and nobody in the popular group likes him. Meera thinks Chris is a bit different, but she's always liked him. The rest of the group makes fun of Chris behind his back. What might Meera do?

Why this one

No rule is broken. Nothing here is against the law — this one is purely about character.

Belonging pulls hard. At this age, the group's approval can feel like a need, not a want.

Listen for

Which comes first. Fitting in, or staying true to who they are?

A middle path. Do they find a way to stand by Chris without a showdown — or is it all or nothing?

SCENARIO 4:

The answer key, and nobody's looking

You're home doing homework alone, and you realize you can find the full answer key online — not just to check your work, but to copy straight through and be done in ten minutes. Nobody would ever know. And there's a game you'd much rather be at. What do you do?

Why this one

No one is watching. Every other choice has an audience — this one tests who they are when there's no one to answer to.

The short win costs later. Ten minutes saved now, but the material unlearned shows up on the test.

Listen for

What decides it. Getting caught, or whether it's right? "No one would know" and "it's still cheating" are different kids.

The long view. Do the future consequences — the test, actually learning it — arrive on their own, or not at all?

SCENARIO 5:

Film it, or walk away?

> Gabe is on his way to lunch when he hears "FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!" up ahead in the hall. He grabs his phone and runs toward the action, thinking, "Maybe I'll get the footage and post it for a bunch of likes!" Then he spots an administrator running toward the fight too. What's the responsible thing to do?

Why this one

It's real and common.
Filming fights for likes happens in most schools — your child has probably seen it.

Decide before the moment.
Talking it now lets them choose who they'll be before the hallway decides for them.

Listen for

Anyone else in the frame.
Do they think about the kids in the fight — or only the likes?

Does the adult change it?
If spotting the administrator changes their answer, ask why — fear and values aren't the same.

If one of those patterns sounded familiar, you haven't found a problem — you've found the starting point. Here's what to do with it.

Bloomster Course: Making Responsible Choices

One conversation opens the door — practice builds the skill. In this course, your child follows Drew, Payton, and Jordan through decisions that are genuinely hard: friends, siblings, and social media all pulling in different directions, with wise old Mr. Arthur offering perspective along the way. What they build:

The pause before the choice. A step-by-step way to slow down, gather the facts, and decide — not react.

A mind of their own. Practical tools for handling peer pressure and choosing from their own values.

Consequences, seen in advance. Thinking through the ripple effect of a choice — on themselves and everyone else.

Coming back from a bad call. Mistakes become material: reflect, learn, choose better next time.

Start the course free — 7 days, no credit card, nothing to cancel.
Find Your Child's Starting Point.

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