

Opportunity Mindset Tips

Transforming Challenges into Possibilities

“My child doesn’t take care of things. Toys are broken and markers dry out with the caps left off. It really upsets me.”



CHALLENGE

How can I help my child learn to take care of things and show respect for the things they use?



CHOICE

You can decide how to think about this moment and how to respond. You can choose to see this challenge as a chance for your child to learn and grow.



OPPORTUNITY

Children might not think about the next person who wants to use a toy or markers. You can help them learn to see things from another person’s point of view. This will help build the life skill of **Perspective Taking**, which will help them be responsible and empathic in school and at home.

SKILL-BUILDING STRATEGIES

1 TAKE YOUR CHILD’S VIEW

TRY TO FIGURE OUT why your child isn’t taking care of things. Is it because they get distracted by the next activity? Is it because they haven’t thought about how their actions will affect others? Think about whether your reaction is helping them learn this skill, too. If you are feeling frustrated, step back, take a breath, and think of positive ways you can help them learn about others’ perspectives.

2 SHARE REASONS

EXPLAIN YOUR POINT OF VIEW that it’s important to take care of things. It shows respect for what we have and for other people. Let your child know that things cost money and that we all need to care for things so they last. You can also share how you feel when you see that things are neglected or broken. Tell your child you believe they can learn to care for things and to think about the others who pay for them and use them.

3 PROVIDE CHOICES

SET LIMITS and give your child options within those limits. In the moment, you can say, “We need to make sure the markers don’t dry out for the next person.” Then offer options. “Would you like to use all of the markers and put all of the caps back on when you finish, OR would you like to use one marker at a time and put the top back on before you take the next one out?”

4 PROBLEM-SOLVE TOGETHER

INVITE your child to think of how they might leave things ready for the next person. Ask your child how they feel when they find a toy broken or markers dried out. Then write down a list of items and how they would describe them as “ready” for the next user. For example, “Markers = Caps On” or “Toy = Unbroken.” Post the list where they can see it.

5 SCAFFOLD

BUILD ON the progress your child makes. Notice when they take care of something and leave it ready for the next person. Let them know you see them doing well. You can say, “I see you put the game pieces back in the box. Now it will be ready for the whoever wants to play next. I’m sure they will appreciate it!”

An Opportunity Mindset means choosing to see a challenge as a chance to learn and grow.

PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Perspective Taking means trying to understand what others think and feel. This requires Self-Control because we have to take a step back and manage our own thoughts and feelings to consider how others think and feel. This skill helps children adjust to school, understand what their teachers and parents expect, make sense of what they read, and build positive relationships. **For more information visit: www.mindinthemaking.org**

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