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## Responsibility

Responsibility—a crucial concept in parenting—is the ability to recognize one’s obligations, to know right from wrong, and to accept the consequences of one’s decisions.

Once children learn to take responsibility for their choices by experiencing the consequences that follow, they are equipped to make better choices. Many of the choices your child makes in the next few years may affect their entire lives. They will be offered tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, and they will choose to accept or decline. They will face choices about sex, about dropping out of school, about work and careers, and perhaps even about whether to commit crimes. You won’t be there, telling them what to do, but if you have prepared them to make responsible decisions and have instilled in them the courage to stand behind those decisions, they will be prepared to meet their challenges. We will explore methods of teaching responsibility throughout this book, and especially in Chapter 3.

*Democracy is based on the notion that “none of us is as smart as all of us.” Competition has its role in our society, but the individual who values teamwork is one who moves society forward.*

## Cooperation

A child who learns to live and work cooperatively with others has a much better chance to succeed than the lone wolf or the rebel.

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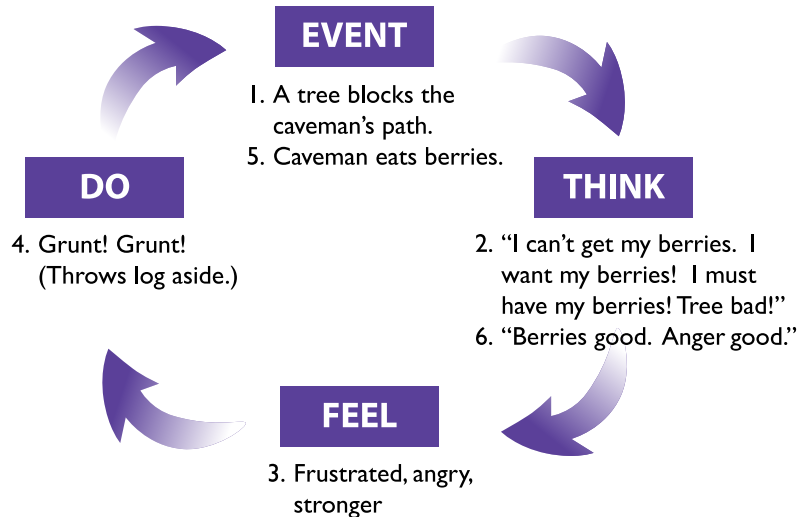
Learning to cooperate begins in the family and the classroom. It is fostered through everyday problem solving and planning, which require effective communication and a spirit of mutual respect and participation. In Chapter 2 we will present



## The Purpose of Anger

Anger is an emotional and physiological response to frustration. If an important need, want, or desire is blocked for us, our bodies and emotions react with intense feelings that we often label as anger.

For example, a caveman walking through the woods comes upon a fallen tree that blocks his path. On the other side of the tree are some berries he wants to pick and eat. He strains to push the fallen tree aside, but he isn't strong enough, and he becomes frustrated at the thought of not reaching his goal. His frustration produces changes in his body that enable him to lift the fallen tree and hurl it aside.



Anger is one of the emotions that triggers that ancient human instinct, the fight or flight response (see "A Little Bit about Your Child's Brain" on page 23 for a more detailed description). This causes our brains to release chemicals that make us stronger, faster, and ready to take action, whether it's to fight danger or run from it. In primitive times, this added power and focus helped us survive when problems could be settled by either being stronger or running faster than someone (or something) else.