

John Rosemond, a child psychologist, writes that schools teach the three Rs—reading, writing and 'rithmetic, the basic skills. In the same way, Rosemond states that there are three Rs that parents should teach. These are respect, responsibility, and resourcefulness. According to him, these skills help students to find success in the classroom and, later on, in their work and other relationships.

As a bilingual teacher and work supervisor, I would like to offer some suggestions for parents wanting to develop the three Rs.

Respect

Think about how you address teachers and neighbors. Do you use titles such as *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Officer*, *Reverend* when addressing these persons? If you use their title when addressing them, then you are serving as a model. It is also a good idea to ask your children to address adults in a more formal manner than when talking to children their own age. In Spanish, the formal *you* is recommended. Finally, parents must also show good judgment when expressing their feelings. If you are unhappy about someone's

behavior, you should criticize their *actions* and not just call them names which criticize their person.

Responsibility

There are certain tasks most people don't like, such as taking out the trash or pulling out weeds. Similarly, students avoid certain tasks. The task may seem too hard (difficult), and they don't know where to start. When they come to you with excuses, do not be distracted by their complaints and tears. Remember, at such times, sermons aren't needed, but solutions are!

Remind your children that they have the intelligence and skills needed to do the task. Point out that the assigned task must be completed, there is no question about that. What can be discussed is who can help and how much. You can give them ideas about how a sister, an uncle, a neighbor, or staff at the public library can help them. My own mother did so when I needed to get three letters of recommendation. She gave me ideas about who to call, but I had to do the calling myself.

Finding Resources (Being Resourceful)

People often learn bad thinking habits. They tend to see only what they don't have, what they lack to do a job. The same thing happens with students. When their teachers ask for projects, they give examples of how these can be done. Students then think this is the only way of doing something. You can let your children know that when an example is given, it is just that, *one* way of doing things. There exist other ways. Perhaps the teacher used an expensive tray. Tell them they could paint or varnish a piece of wood for the rock collection or cover a shoe box with decorative paper.

Don't forget. You too can be a model and a resource that will help your children find success. For more information on this topic talk to your children's teachers.

Respect, Responsibility and Resourcefulness: Three Rs for Success

