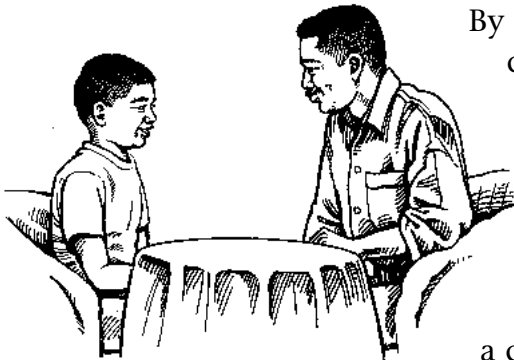


Six Rules for Making Responsible Decisions

“Dad, can I get my ear pierced like John?”

“Mom, can I go to Jane’s party Friday night?”

Testing rules is a part of growing up. If you have open lines of communication with your child, he may ask you permission for things to which you are opposed or for things you had not previously considered.



By discussing your child’s requests in a standard way each time, she can learn a good process for judging the appropriateness of choices. She will also be more likely to see that you are considering the requests carefully and not just saying “no” automatically.

In addition, such a discussion gives you a chance to think before reacting. It is ideal to have both parents discuss important decisions together with the child.

Posing the following six questions as part of the decision-making process can help you and your child arrive at responsible decisions:

- *Is it safe?*
- *Is it legal?*
- *Does it conflict with other responsibilities?*
- *Is it right for your child’s age?*
Will it help him learn and mature?
- *Will it harm or inconvenience others?*
- *Could it harm your child’s self-confidence and happiness?*