

# Centsible parenting

A newsletter for parents of third grade children

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

*Jason and his dad stop to eat at noon at a fast food restaurant. Jason says, "I want that space ship they're selling." "I thought you were going to buy a race car with your money when we got to the store," answers Dad. "But Dad, this doesn't count, this is a restaurant," says Jason.*

*(See end of newsletter for a possible answer.)*

Every day we all make many decisions—big and small. Sometimes we may spend a lot of time deciding before we make our choice. Other choices we make without even thinking.

It's usually easier for adults to make choices because over time we learn the process of making decisions. Even then we don't always make the best or wisest choice.

When it comes to money management, there are many concepts for children to learn. But one of the most important is that of choices and decision making.

Money means different things to different people. However, spending money always means when you buy one thing you can't buy something else. Money is limited so children have to learn how to weigh options.

## UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

Before you make any decision you may think about many things. These might include needs versus wants, costs, durability, etc.

Then you might follow a process like this:

- 1) **Situation**—Carefully and clearly identify the situation.
- 2) **Options**—Think about all the choices and get together any information that might help you make a decision.
- 3) **Consequences**—Look at the advantages and disadvantages of each choice.
- 4) **Solution**—Make a decision. Later look back and see how good your decision was.

When a child is learning the process, he or she may need to actually write things down on a piece of paper. As the child gets older and has more experience making decisions, much of this becomes automatic.

This process can be used to decide what to buy for a snack or how to use an allowance or bigger decisions when a child gets older like whether to drink and drive.

## USING A CHOICE CHART

You can use any method you want to help you choose between two or more products or options when making a decision. But, here is a sample chart you can try with your child.

Situation: Carly has saved \$10. Now she needs to decide what to do with it. Fill in the blanks.

Child's Name: Carly					
Options/ Products	Cost	Best Thing About It	Worst Thing About It	How Long It Will Last	My Choice
Spend on snacks					
Leave in savings					
Buy a present					
Buy hair bows					
Go to a movie					
Total spent					

### CONSIDER THIS

*Dad says, "Jason, I know we're at a restaurant but this toy is not food. You will have to decide if you want this spaceship or the car you had planned to buy. You only have money for one. The choice is yours—you decide."*

### COMING IN JANUARY: LEARNING TO SAVE MONEY

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#### ... and justice for all

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