“Whenever it’s time to clean up or help out, my child disappears!”

**Challenge**
How can I get my child to stick around to help with clean up and with other responsibilities?

**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**
You can help your child take responsibility for cleaning up — staying present and not disappearing when they are needed. Being part of a group means taking care of and helping each other. Taking this responsibility can help them learn the life skill of **Critical Thinking**, which will serve them well in school and in life.

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**Skill-Building Strategies**

1. **Take Your Child’s View**
   **Try to Figure Out** why your child is disappearing when it’s time to clean up. Is tidying up overwhelming? Do they have trouble seeing where to start? Let them know that you understand that cleaning up can be challenging, and that you will work together to find a system that works for both of you.

2. **Share Reasons**
   **Explain Your Point of View.** Let your child know that having a clean space is important because it allows you all to enjoy using it. Share with your child that your goal is to work together as a team.

3. **Provide Choices**
   **Set Limits** and give your child options within those limits. You can say, “Let’s put on music for clean-up. Would you like to take turns putting away one thing at a time, OR would you like to work together? There are lots of different ways we can work together to reach this goal as a team.” By exploring options together, you are promoting **Critical Thinking**.

4. **Problem-Solve Together**
   **Invite** your child to think of ideas that would help them participate at clean-up time. Clearly define the goal and then brainstorm together. Make a list of their ideas and yours, too. You can suggest creating a game out of clean-up time using singing, counting, or a timer. You can invite your child to use self-talk like, “I am a strong member of this team.” Or you can work together to make a checklist of their tasks. Ask your child to pick one idea from the list to try first. Plan to come back together to see how it worked.

5. **Scaffold**
   **Build On** the progress your child makes. When you check in to see whether a strategy was successful, talk about why they think it did or didn’t work. Stepping back and reflecting on what did or didn’t work is **Critical Thinking** in action. If it did work, celebrate their success! Then see whether they want to keep using that approach or try another one. If your child didn’t find that approach helpful, have them pick another idea to try.

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

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**Critical Thinking**
Critical Thinking means searching for knowledge that we can rely on to guide our beliefs, decisions, and actions. For more information visit: [www.mindinthemaking.org](http://www.mindinthemaking.org)