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**Parents - If you haven't already read the pages on "Developing Character in Your Children," you might want to go there first before reading these pages.**

## Availability Chart

Make a chart to help reward your children for being available.

1. Copy the giraffe from the coloring page, cut it out, and glue it to a ½ sheet of colorful poster board.
2. Let your children draw a background scene or use torn pieces of colorful construction paper to create mountains, a lake, and trees.
3. Write with a marker or print with a computer the words "I will be available." Place these words at the bottom of the poster.
4. Every time your child shows availability, let him color a section of the giraffe's hide and write his initial on it.



## Availability vs. Self-centeredness

"Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I serve."

### Tips for Parents to Encourage Availability

Build the concept of teamwork in your family by first teaching your children the quality of availability through modeling it in your own actions. Learn to set aside your own priorities to help your children with homework or to listen to their problems or to just play a game with them.

As they begin to enjoy your availability, you can discuss with them the importance of being available, especially to their authorities. You can begin to create situations where the children need to drop what they are doing to be available to help you with a task. Encourage them to be available to their siblings and discuss the value of teamwork within the family. When they have shown availability to you or to their siblings, praise them freely for doing so and compliment them for their availability later to others.

Why not take your children to visit an EMS station or Volunteer Fire Department? Let them ask questions and perhaps write a report-or talk about it over dinner.

Here are some sample questions:

1. How do you prepare in advance to be helpful in emergencies?
2. How did you learn to be flexible and "on call"? Is it easy?
3. How do you balance that need to be flexible with your other responsibilities, such as family?