



happyhouse Good Choices™ Character Building Program

Activity Sheet

Name: Shoplifting
Chapter: #13 - Do Not Steal
Type: Story
Ages: 9 and Up
Time: 30 minutes

Lesson Start

It seemed like such a little thing. Who would miss just one pack of gum? That's what Trent was thinking when he noticed his very own hand reach out and take the pack and shove it in his pocket.

He made it out of the store and felt so relieved. The clerk waved to him and didn't notice anything. Within two hours Trent had chewed all the gum and had even tossed some of it on the street, something he never had done before. He had always been careful to wrap gum up and put it in the trash but he didn't see that was such a big deal anymore. He was thinking he didn't really care anymore.

The next day he took another pack and two days later a whole handful of packs. He felt like he couldn't stop himself and really didn't want to. He smiled at the sales clerk, a man he had always liked but one he now thought was stupid. All he could notice were the bad things about that man. He's an idiot. He's a loser. He's so blind! Even though he knew that this clerk always helped kids and older people. Trent was forgetting all that.

It happened on a Friday. Trent wanted to have gum for the weekend and he also wanted some candy bars. He filled his pockets, hardly even bothering to hide his stealing.

But he got caught by the clerk who happened to look up because he had noticed that Trent was changing and it worried him. He had seen kids do this before, go from good kids to thieves and he hoped it would not happen to Trent.

The clerk told him to stay where he was and moments later the police arrived.

As he waited, Trent's heart raced and he kept saying this was the first time, he would put it back, it was just a joke, a test. Hey, we're friends! But the clerk had heard all this before and knew the signs of lying.

Trent felt like his whole life was ending but he also felt like he would outsmart all these people. He kept thinking, even as he said he would never do it again, that the next time he wouldn't get caught. He knew deep down that he should tell them everything and when he got to the police station and saw his parents coming towards him he felt tears about to explode from his eyes.

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He didn't know what to do. What should he do?

- Keep it to himself and strive to change, there's no reason to make his parents sad.
- Tell them everything and suffer all the consequences.
- Get through this and forget about it.
- Tell them about his friend who is stealing even more than he is and then they won't think he's so bad.

What would you do?

End of Lesson