

responsibility

re-spon-si-bil-i-ty (ri spän'sə bil/ the condition of being responsible *responsibility* for the error.] **2.** a t that one is supposed to look after [Her education will be my *responsi-* spon'si bil'i ties, pl. re-spon-si-ble (ri spän'sə b'l), ad

RESPONSIBILITIES AS CITIZENS

Citizens + Elected Representatives = Decision Making

(e.g. closing a public swimming pool, opening a new school, setting a fee for a dog licence, sending troops (peacekeepers) to another country, etc.)

Elected Representatives need to listen to what the citizens need and want. Governments **rely on the citizens** for information that will help with these decisions. Therefore, responsible citizens need to inform the government, make their point of view known and to listen to and try to understand the points of view of others (giving people a voice).

“Every individual **MATTERS**. Every individual has a **ROLE TO PLAY**. Every individual **MAKES A DIFFERENCE**.”

~ Dr. Jane Goodall, scientist and environmentalist

OTHER CITIZEN RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Become involved in **actions** that **benefit others in the community**
- **Learn** about issues in your community and school
- Can form a **group** to work together to achieve certain goals (e.g. local government to install street lights at a dangerous corner)
 - Goal can include asking the government to correct **injustices (is an action that is not fair)** or wrongs from the past.
- Can be active by supporting an action a government takes.
 - **E.g.** In some communities in Alberta, the local government has imposed a curfew. Young people under 16 years of age are not allowed to be on the streets without an adult after certain hours. Some citizens support this action.
 - **What issues are there in your community?**
- Voting (basic right in a democracy)
- Obeying laws (**rule of law- a basic part of democracy meaning laws apply to everyone equally**)
- Volunteer to help others

THE MORE PEOPLE PARTICIPATE, THE MORE DEMOCRATIC A SOCIETY BECOMES.

When people become involved in an issue that benefits them personally, their actions often benefit others as well. When citizens participate to make things better for many people, they are contributing to the **common good (a condition that benefits the majority)**. *Think about the ramps at St. Mary School.*



GETTING INVOLVED

STEP 1: Identify your concern

- What is my concern?
- Why am I concerned?
- What do I hope to achieve by becoming involved?

STEP 2: Research your concern

- Where can I get information about this?
- What are the different points of view?
- What actions could I take?

STEP 3: Find out who supports you

- Who else might be interested in taking action?
- How can I get others involved?

STEP 4: Create a Plan

- Are we going to take action?
- If so, what action are we going to take?
- Who do we need to talk to?

STEP 5: Take action

- Are we doing what we planned to do?
- Do we need to make any changes to our plan?

STEP 6: Evaluate the Plan

- What part of the plan worked well?
- What part didn't work?
- What did we learn from our experience?

STEP 7: Apply your learning

- How can we apply the results?
- How might we build on our action?

