

A Pledge of Responsibility for Children

An Educator's Mantra. (Well, at least it's mine!)

We accept responsibility for children

who sneak popsicles before supper,

who erase holes in math workbooks,

who can never find their shoes.

We accept responsibility for children

who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire,

who can't bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers,

who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead,

who never go to the circus,

who live in an X-rated world.

We accept responsibility for those

who never get dessert,

who have no safe blanket to drag behind them,

who watch their parents watch them die,

who can't find any bread to steal,

who don't have any rooms to clean up,

*whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser,
whose monsters are real.*

We accept responsibility for children

*who spend all their allowance before Tuesday,
who throw tantrums in the grocery store and pick at their food,
who like ghost stories,
who shove dirty clothes under the bed, and never rinse out the tub,
who get visits from the tooth fairy,
who don't like to be kissed in front of the carpool,
whose tears we sometimes laugh at and
whose smiles can make us cry.*

And we accept responsibility for those

*whose nightmares come in the daytime,
who will eat anything,
who have never seen a dentist,
who aren't spoiled by anybody,
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep,
who live and move, but have no being.*

We accept responsibility for children who want to be carried

and for those who must,

for those we never give up on and for those

who don't get a second chance.

***For those we smother...and for those who will grab at the hand
of anybody kind enough to offer it.***

Adapted from Ina J. Hughs