



*Instead of using an excuse, teach kids a different way to respond.*

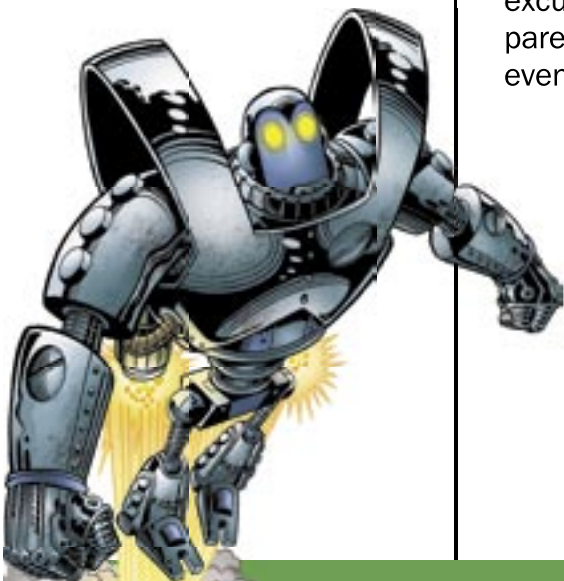
## Excuses, Excuses

We are so creative when it comes to laying blame. It doesn't even have to mean laying the blame at someone else's feet. An excuse is just a way to explain something away in order to be more easily forgiven.

An excuse can be an outright lie, a partial truth, or something completely truthful and legitimate. But even a really good excuse doesn't excuse us from ownership of the situation. We need to be responsible for what happens.

For example, a girl tries out for the cheerleading squad. She does her absolute best, but she doesn't make the team. Because she doesn't make the team, she becomes sad and depressed and forgets she had to write an essay for English. Her excuse could be that she was wrapped up in her emotions, and forgot about the assignment. But ultimately, she's still responsible for her assignment.

Help kids understand that no matter what happens around them, each kid is responsible for himself or herself. "My parents are divorced and that gives me the right to be angry," is a reasonable excuse, but it doesn't give a kid the right to act out in anger. Instead of using an excuse, teach kids a different way to respond. In the above example, "My parents are divorced; I am angry, but I choose not to yell at my friend even though I feel like it."



## Holsom Comics Discussion Questions

1. What excuses could Jorge's dad, Mr. Martinez, have used? (*He lost his job; his wife ran out on them*)
2. Can you think of any excuses Constance Vile could use? (*JD told her to do the things she did, etc.*)
3. What about Jake "the Snake"? (*His parents are divorced; he has to live with his Aunt Myrtle, etc.*)
4. What changed Jake's mind about the role he played? What things helped him stop making excuses for himself? (*Lucy forgiving him; the words of Pastor Simmons*)



## Not My Fault!

### You will need:

White board or chalkboard (or paper if you don't have one)  
Dry erase markers, chalk, or pen

Divide the board or paper into two columns.

Present a situation where a responsibility was dodged.

Ask the kids to list off as many excuses as they can think of in a few minutes (one to three). Write them down in the left column.

After the time is up, ask the kids to come up with ways they could handle/respond to the situation without making excuses.

After the exercise is over, challenge kids to own up to situations and not make excuses. Close in prayer and ask God to help each of you be responsible.

