

# Encouraging Independence and Responsibility

For Children Ages 2-12

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Research indicates that those children who do have a set of chores have higher self-esteem, are more responsible, and are better able to deal with frustration and delay gratification, all of which contribute to greater success in school.

<http://centerforparentingeducation.org/library-of-articles/responsibility-and-chores/part-i-benefits-of-chores/>

Research by Marty Rossman\* shows that involving children in household tasks at an early age can have a positive impact later in life. In fact, says Rossman, “the best predictor of young adults’ success in their mid-20’s was that they participated in household tasks when they were three or four.”

### 5 Reasons to have chores

1. Helping at home teaches children important life skills (such as doing laundry, cooking and cleaning).
2. Children who pitch in around the house become better team players, co-workers, and eventually life partners.
3. Kids actually love to help out, as it empowers them and bolsters their self-esteem. They take pride in feeling needed and important within the family.



### 5 Reasons Continued...

4. Enabling kids to do things for themselves (such as pack their own bag for school) fosters personal responsibility and independence.
5. When your children help out, it reduces adult work load of tedious tasks, and frees up more time for families to do the fun stuff!

<http://connectedparenting.com/2010/05/5-reasons-kids-should-do-chores.htm>

Children as young as 2 and 3 can begin to help around the house.

\*A Personal, Social, and Emotional Developmental Milestone for 18 months is to enjoy helping adults with domestic activities.



Beginning with age 2,  
laundry task are  
easily achievable...

\*A Personal, Social and  
Emotional Developmental  
milestone for a 4-year old  
is to follow a series of  
social requests. Asking a  
child to put the laundry  
into baskets - and even  
sorting by color - is a first  
step.



By the age of 6, children  
should be able to care  
for plants and animals  
on their own and  
sooner with supports.

\*A developmental  
milestone for 18 months  
is to be able to pour water  
from one container to  
another. Start them early  
to gain independence  
later on.





Children as young as 4 can begin to help in the kitchen.

Older children can wash dishes on their own.

If a child is asked to be responsible for their own actions (eating a snack that dirties a bowl) at home, they will learn to take responsibility for their own actions at school (cleaning up after snack or lunch time).



## Some School Expectations in the Early Years

- o Students should carry their own book bags
- o Unpack and put things away in school
- o Pack up what needs to go home at the end of the day
- o Clean up after snack and lunch
- o Share classroom items willingly with peers
- o Use the bathroom independently
- o Remember their water bottle and hat

## School Expectations for Primary Students

- o Carry their own book bag, lunch box, etc.
- o Unpack and organize for the day
- o Clean up after snack and lunch
- o Be responsible for homework
- o Be responsible for their personal belongings while at school
- o Keep their work areas tidy

### age appropriate CHORES

#### 2-3 YEARS

- \*make bed
- \*pick up toys and books
- \*put laundry in hamper
- \*help feed pets
- \*help wipe up messes
- \*dust (put socks on hands)

#### 4-5 YEARS

- \*clear/set table
- \*load dishwasher
- \*empty silverware from dishwasher
- \*take laundry to laundry room
- \*match socks & fold
- \*put away laundry
- \*straighten room
- \*get the newspaper/mail

#### 6-8 YEARS

- \*empty dishwasher
- \*clean bathroom sinks & counters
- \*sort laundry by colors
- \*help pack school lunches
- \*pull weeds & rake leaves
- \*water plants/flowers
- \*collect trash from wastebaskets

#### 9-11 YEARS

- \*clean toilets
- \*take trash to curb
- \*vacuum
- \*mop floors
- \*mow grass
- \*food preparation (wash, cut, dice, measure)
- \*walk pet

#### 12+

- \*baby-sit siblings
- \*wash windows
- \*iron
- \*clean interior/exterior of car
- \*cook simple meals
- \*laundry
- \*clean refrigerator
- \*make grocery list



## Examples of chore charts

Having a "Chore Tracker" is a great visual for the younger children to see when they have finished their chores.



Each day can be different to keep things from being "boring".

My Chore Chart							
Chore	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Take out the garbage	✓			✓			
Walk the dog	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unload the dishwasher		✓			✓		
Clean your room						✓	
Take out the recycling			✓				
Make your bed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



## To Pay or Not to Pay...

### Arguments for Allowance tied to chores

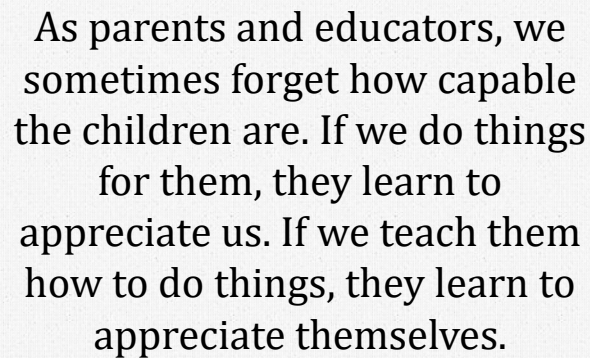
- Children will learn to associate hard work with money and keep this mentality as working adults.
- It motivates them, which in turn will lead to habit-forming behaviors.

○ \*GROUP DISCUSSION

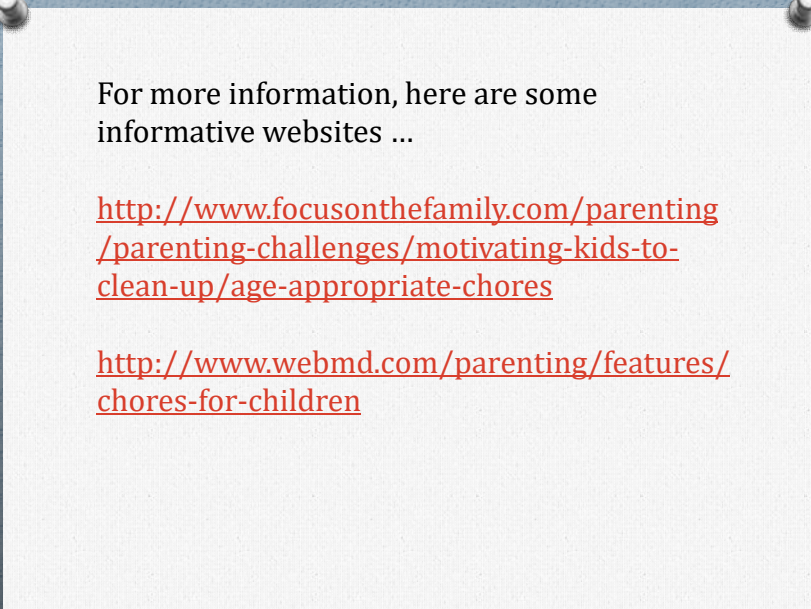
### Arguments for NOT giving Allowance tied to chores

- Children should want to do the right thing simply because it is the right thing to do.
- It will make them think that working for money isn't fun and they will not want to do it.





As parents and educators, we sometimes forget how capable the children are. If we do things for them, they learn to appreciate us. If we teach them how to do things, they learn to appreciate themselves.



For more information, here are some informative websites ...

<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/parenting-challenges/motivating-kids-to-clean-up/age-appropriate-chores>

<http://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/chores-for-children>

