



How to Get Your Child to Help Around the House



Do your kids whine, complain, stall, or just refuse to help out...and you end up doing whatever chore needs to be done yourself? Yes, it is easier to do most chores yourself, but it is not preparing our children for life. But, how can we do it?

Lead by example. Do you clean up after yourself? Do you leave your shoes in the middle of the floor? Do you whine when you have to do the dishes? Kids are picking up more than we realize (attitudes, that is).

Give everyone some regular responsibility around the house. (Everyone who lives in this house helps out!) A simple chore chart posted on the pantry door will save you a lot of arguments. Whose turn is it to do the dishes? Check the chore chart. It's not my turn to set the table! Check the chore chart. Choose a few daily chores (set the table, dishes, feed the dog, clean the bathroom, etc.) and put them on a chart. Write a person's name beside each job and rotate the jobs each week. (I have dishes this week, but next week I have an easier job.) Give everyone a time when their chore needs to be completed.

Train them how to do the job you've given them. (To your child, doing the dishes may mean putting the dishes in the dishwasher; to you, it may mean loading the dishes and wiping out the sink.) Here's a simple guideline:

1st time: You do, child watches.

2nd time: You do, child practices.

3rd time: Child does it, you watch.

4th time: Child does it unsupervised.

Work together. Don't you love it when someone helps you? My children have promised to etch "Many hands make light work" on my tombstone because I have said it so much.

Make it fun. Sing the "Clean Up" song. Set the timer for 2 minutes and see how much you can do. Write chores on slips of paper, put them in a jar, and ask everyone to pick two. Celebrate with a game or treat after the work is done.





Notice and praise. “Thank you for getting that toy for your little sister.” “That was a big help to me.” “I love it when you put your toys away without being told.” “Wow! Did you clean up your room all by yourself?!”

There are lots of obstacles to getting your children to help around the house, but it is so worth it. You are giving them a chance to build genuine self-esteem when they do a job well. Besides, your child’s future mate will thank you if you train your child to help around the house.

