Tools for Your Child's Success.org

Chores Age 11 Summary

Why Chores?

Chores allow your child/teen to contribute to maintaining and caring for your family's household. Daily chores also allow your child/teen to learn valuable skills like timeliness, work ethic, and responsibility. A work ethic that is essential in helping children/teens persist toward any type of goal is taught through chores.

Tip: These steps are done best when you and your child/teen are not tired or in a rush.

Tip: Intentional communication and a healthy parenting relationship support these steps.



Consider what chores need to be done. You might start by thinking through the rooms in the house, beginning with your child's/teen's room.

- *"Help me create a list of chores. What might be some chores we should consider?"*
- *"Why are chores important?"*
- *"What chores feel most meaningful to you?"*
- *"Which ones do you think you can successfully get done regularly?"*

Tip: Create a checklist together of your household responsibility plan on a whiteboard or chalkboard. Children/teens appreciate owning the list and enjoy checking it off. This way, you are not micro-managing them. Instead, you are supporting their independence.

Trap: Be sure to create your plan at a calm time. Don't create your plan when you are in the routine, hungry or tired, or under time pressures.



- Say what you will model and why.
- Model the behavior.
- Ask your child/teen what they noticed.
- Invite your child/teen to model.
- Ask what they noticed with their own modeling.
- Practice together.
- Provide specific feedback starting with strengths using "I notice…"
- Be specific and pick a time to do this when you do not have time pressures.
- Working side by side on a project and chatting about what you are actually doing models the behaviors, promotes reflection on what you're doing, and helps transfer the skills to your child/teen.

Tip: Your child/teen is interested in making connections and learning about what's happening in the outside world, so use this motivator! Experiment with having your child/teen play waiter at your family table. Play it out by having them set the table, take drink orders, and serve. Or, if your child/teen is more interested in meal preparation, have them select the menu, shop for it, and work together on cooking and preparing it.



- Use *"I'd love for you to…"* statements, such as *"I'd love for you to make breakfast with your own flair."*
- Recognize effort: *"I noticed how you brought back the garbage can from the curb today without me asking. That's taking responsibility!"*
- Proactively remind: *"Remember what we do with the pot handle?"*

Trap: Don't constantly repeat yourself. Children/teens often need more time to perform tasks that challenge them, even if you believe they are simple and don't require much time. Be sure to wait long enough for your child/teen to show you they are competent. Your waiting could make all the difference in whether they can do what you need.



- Ask key questions: *"How are you feeling about clean-up time? Do you know where everything goes?"*

- Infuse some fun! Working together as a family can be enjoyable. Turn on some music or sing while working.
- Reflect on outcomes: "*It looks like you forgot to set the table. What could help you remember in the future?*"
- Stay engaged. Working together on particularly challenging chores can offer additional support and motivation for your child/teen when difficult issues arise.
- Follow through with logical consequences to repair harm when needed.

Trap: Check your tone and attitude toward chores! If you groan when it's time to finish them, your child/teen will also groan. If you approach chores with a "Let's dig in together" attitude, they will also learn to approach them.



- Notice even small successes: *"I noticed you put all your supplies in their proper bins on your own in the time we agreed upon. Excellent."*
- Recognize small steps along the way.
- Build celebrations into your routine. For example, *"We'll clean up the kitchen first, and then we can play a game or watch a movie or show."* Include quality time and hugs in your repertoire of ways to appreciate one another.

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