

## CHORES – CUT IT OUT!

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Children need to have a sense of belonging and the knowledge that they contribute to their family in a meaningful way. Paying children to do chores commercializes your relationship and gives them the message that they aren't really responsible for helping out. If you're paying your child for basic family chores, you really need to CUT IT OUT! Kids who are paid to do chores stop helping out when they make their own money. Consider your children's ages when asking them to help out. Remember, children under age five like to mimic adults but are too young to do any chore on their own. Children this age can be



expected to help with a five-minute, supervised tidy to put toys away. Children six and older can help by putting away their own dishes and cleaning up after themselves. Slowly, as children mature, they can be taught to do a variety of chores. Children have centred thinking until they are 21, which means large messes or big projects can overwhelm them. If you break the work into small, manageable chunks, it will be easier to accomplish. And remember, it would be unusual for children to see the mess or care about the state of your home like you do.

- Make a list and have your child choose the chore.
- Avoid keeping kids stuck on one chore.
- Be consistent with your expectation that kids contribute to the care of your home.
- Use freedom as a positive consequence to taking responsibility. "When you have completed your chore, then you can (watch your show, go out....)"
- Teach your child how to do a new chore and give specific feedback, "The sink is clean, the tub looks spotless, the toilet needs a wipe around the floor....thanks."
- Have a positive attitude toward chores rather than barking out orders.
- Express sincere appreciation, "I feel grateful when everybody pitches in."
- Use a timer and play beat the clock.
- Leave the child's bedroom out of the family routine; it is their space.
- Allowance is a separate issue and should be a child's right, or you can pay them for chores when they do extra ones.