

Parenting Together

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A Home Full of Helpers!

The moment you become a parent, time becomes an instant commodity. It is precious, it is valuable, and you are constantly seeking more of it.

The truth is, it can be hard to carve out time for yourself when you are responsible for little ones.

There are groceries to pick up, chores to do, and endless loads of laundry to fold on top of the responsibilities you had before becoming a parent. Let's also pay tribute to the daily back-breaking effort of picking up toys while watching your little one drop another to the floor. Parents, rejoice! You can take back your time (or a bit of it!) by encouraging little helpers in your home!

By encouraging young ones to be helpful around the house, you support the development of important skills related to empathy, compassion, and kindness.

Raise children to be kind, and get an extra hand around the house? Yes - we call this a win-win!



"Children are not things to be molded, but are people to be unfolded." - Jess Lair

Have you ever had one of those days where your child wakes up cranky (just a bit earlier than expected), and everywhere you look there are things to be done?

Next time you have one of these days, take a deep breath, acknowledge your feelings, and then come up with ways to involve your children in completing some of those pesky household chores.

Sell it!

Young children look to their parents to gauge their own responses. If you aren't excited about a task, then your child likely won't be either. Tackle your to-do list by learning to 'sell it' and you may even find yourself having fun along the way!

- Explain why the task is important
- Explain each step in detail
- Model enthusiasm as you participate
- Provide praise and encouragement
- If children run into challenges, give them time to learn before jumping in

You don't have to offer a reward for helping out. Children will consider it reward enough to have one-on-one, uninterrupted time with you, as they learn important skills that foster independence and curiosity.

The Book Nook

Pig Pig Gets a Job
By David McPhail

The Little Engine That Could/La Pequeña Locomotora Que Si Pudo
By Watty Piper

I Can! / ¡Yo puedo!
By Gladys Rosa-Mendoza



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Helping: At Home

Enlisting the help of young children in the home seems like a great idea in theory. In practice, you will need to be patient, remember that it will take extra time, manage expectations, and pick tasks that are age-appropriate. While it may seem like you are creating more work now, it is important to keep your eye on the prize. The prize being:

- Quality time with your child
- Opportunities to learn
- Development of gross and fine motor skills
- Character building (empathy, compassion, kindness)

“Our afternoon of raking leaves opened my eyes to the opportunities everyday chores can offer for playing, exploring, and discovering.”

- Kristin Roberts

Helping: In the Community

There are many benefits to volunteering. One study indicates that people who volunteer report significantly higher levels of personal wellbeing.

In fact, adolescents who spent time volunteering were at a decreased risk of heart disease! When you teach your child to help out in the home, you are setting them up to be a helper in their community, and a model for others.

Here are some ideas for helping out in your neighborhood:



Visit a neighbor
Spend time at a nursing home
Donate food, toys, or clothing
Pick up trash
Walk for a cause (local 5k or run/walk)

The Making of a ‘Helper’

As you begin to include children in household tasks, consider the way you communicate with your child.

According to recent research, how you ask your children to help makes a world of difference. Instead of ‘please help me with the laundry,’ consider ‘please be a helper.’

According to psychologist, Christopher Bryan, “being called a helper makes kids feel like they’re embodying a virtue.” He follows up with

“It’s really important to all of us to be good people...”

helping is nice, but helpers are good people.”

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