



Helping Hands

Do you the children in your care help you with chores? Some adults think that children can't help around the house or it's easier to do the job yourself. Children learn from doing real work. Putting things in order and keeping things clean are basic skills they will need all their lives. Doing chores helps children feel useful.

Take Time for Training

Young children need step-by-step instructions when they are learning a new job and time to practice, practice, practice. Remember they are learners. They may need reminding. Don't expect their work to be perfect.

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real work.

The Right Tools

Sweeping is fun, but it's a hard job when the broom is twice your size. Find some child-size brooms, small dustpans and brushes, a spray bottle of water, and small cleaning rags and sponges to bring the job down to their size.

Keep Children Safe

Children should never be asked to do jobs that use hot water, heavy equipment, animal or human waste, or harmful chemicals. Watch children closely if they are helping you in the kitchen.

Make Chores Fun

You are setting an example for the children. If you complain about chores, they won't be fun for the children. You'll soon hear them complaining too.

Think of ways to make chores fun for children. You could say, "Let's pretend we are dump trucks as we pick up the blocks. I'll load the blocks into your arms, you drive yourself over and dump them in the bin."

Let children know you're pleased with their work. "Thanks for singing to the baby while I finished making lunch. That was a big help to me."

Help children see the end coming. "When we get all the toys put away, we'll go outside to play."



Self Care Jobs

Learning to brush your teeth, comb your hair, wash your hands and face, and get dressed are skills that every person uses all their life. Young children can start learning to do these tasks for themselves. Some self care jobs are more difficult than others, such as putting on shoes and tying them, zipping zippers, and buttoning buttons. If you have older children who know how to do these tasks, ask them to help the younger children.

Cleaning and Clean-up

Don't fret over spilled milk. Hand the child a cloth or some paper towels and let him clean up the

mess. Show children where to get paper towels, child-size brooms, and dustpans. Children will soon learn to get the cleaning supplies whenever there's a spill or mess.

Don't have time to dust? Get out some clean old socks and put them on children's hands. They'll have a great time dusting your furniture.

Toys need washed? Lay an old plastic tablecloth or shower curtain on the floor. Set several dishpans of warm water with a little dish detergent on the tablecloth. Give children washcloths and a pile of toys. The children will have a great time playing in the water and the toys will be clean.

Sorting

Sorting is a beginning math skill. Have children sort and fold washcloths, sort pairs of socks, and sort toys into different bins. You'll get some work done and the children will be using math skills as they work.

Kitchen Jobs

There are always jobs to be done in the kitchen. Children love to help prepare food. Make sure everyone has clean hands, then put them to work on some of these jobs:

- scrubbing fruits and vegetables
- tearing lettuce and salad greens
- breaking fresh beans
- pouring ingredients into a batter
- mixing batter
- shaking a drink or instant pudding
- cracking and peeling hard cooked eggs
- beating with a hand beater

Don't forget:

- wiping the table
- setting the table
(this helps children learn another math skill — one-to-one)
- clearing the table
- helping to load the dishwasher

Think about other ways you can use helping hands around the house.

Child-size brooms, dustpans, small rags and sponges make it easier for children to help with cleaning chores.



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