

Pediatrician suggests household chores that are appropriate for children and teens

March 4 2024, by Shelly Flais, MD, FAAP, American Academy of Pediatrics



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Age-appropriate chores and responsibilities are an important part of a child's development.

Young children are naturally eager helpers. Take advantage of this and develop a culture of teamwork in your home. Most preschool age kids can start pitching in with some simple household tasks. This teaches them [life skills](#) and how to cooperate with a group (in this case, your family).

Helping to keep the home running smoothly boosts a child's self-esteem. Just don't expect perfection; this is a [learning process](#), and children will develop their skills over time. Praise your child's effort in each task, not the outcome. Small accomplishments lead to bigger ones. Kids can take on more responsibilities as they move through their school years and adolescence.

Some age-appropriate chores for kids:

As your child enters their adolescent and [teen years](#), [household chores](#) still play an important part in their growth. Chores contribute to the busy household and develop important life skills. Caring for shared spaces within the home also nurtures the concept of shared teamwork that will last into adulthood.

In addition to chores child did as a younger kid, some great chores for teens include vacuuming shared spaces, such as living room, hallways, stairs, furniture; washing and vacuuming the car, especially if they have car privileges; mowing the yard, spreading mulch and weeding; and clearing walkways and the driveway of snow. Teens who have a driver's license can also help with grocery shopping. They can clean the kitchen after meal prep; feed, groom and take care of pets; and help care for [younger siblings](#).

Wondering if your teen can perform some of the household tasks that need to be done? Just remember, if your teen can operate a smartphone, they can figure out how to use a [washing machine](#), an oven and a

dishwasher.

If your teen is swamped with too many extracurriculars, consider the big picture. Many of our teenagers are overscheduled. However, baseball practice doesn't make anyone "too busy" to take out the garbage without reminders from a parent.

After the age of 16 years, many teens take on part-time work or a summer job, which is fantastic. But it's not a reason to stop contributing to home chores. Can you imagine if as parents we didn't keep up with household jobs because we "had to go to work?" Make sure your teen knows that the work within the home is as valuable as the work outside the home.

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