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# 7 Reasons Kids Need Chores at Every Age - Pine Grove Day Camp

5-6 minutes

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Kids of all ages can feel a sense of accomplishment and pride from doing chores.

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**By Judy Koutsky**

Admit it, it's often much easier to do the work yourself than to assign it out to the kids. They'll whine, they'll complain, and very often, they won't do it as well as you would have. But if you're doing all the cooking, cleaning, folding laundry, and everything else, it's not only unfair to you, but you're missing out on teaching your child some critical life lessons and responsibilities. We talked to the experts on why it's not only important — but essential — to give your kids chores at every age.

**1. Everyone has chores.** Let's be honest, if kids had their way, they'd only do the fun things in life. Who *really* wants to vacuum and clean up their room? But life isn't just about doing the things you want to do. Giving kids chores is a valuable way to tell them that in life, sometimes you just have to get on with it. "It's a life skill," says [Rebecah Freeling](#), Waldorf teacher and family coach. "Kids need to learn to complete tasks they don't necessarily enjoy." This will serve them well in school (if they have to take a test) and

in life (if they have to sit on the bench to give another child a chance to play ball).

**2. Routine helps kids feel grounded.** Chores are good when they're consistent — sweep the floor after dinner, clean the bathroom every Tuesday, etc. Consistency and routine are valuable for kids — both make them feel safe and secure in an unpredictable world. So how do you make chores routine? “Make a simple and colorful chart listing chores on the vertical and the days of the week on the horizontal,” says [Charlotte Reznick, PhD](#), child educational psychologist and author of *The Power of Your Child's Imagination: How to Transform Stress and Anxiety into Joy and Success*. For little ones, fun stickers are often great rewards for each chore done well.

**3. Kids need to feel valued.** Whenever a child is made to feel like a part of a group — helping to rake the leaves with Dad, cleaning out the basement with siblings, washing dishes with Mom — the child feels a sense of value in what he's doing. “Chores tell kids that they have a real impact on the family, and this in turn increases kids' desire to listen to parents,” says Freeling.

**4. Chores are a shared responsibility.** Often, a good chunk of the housework is left to you. By constantly picking up after your kids, doing their laundry, wiping up their spills — you're reinforcing the idea that all the work should fall to the mom. When kids are empowered to clean up, they begin to realize that household work is a *shared* responsibility. Not Mom's responsibility.

**5. Nothing feels better than a job well done.** The first time anyone does something, it's rarely done to perfection. Kids and chores are the same way. Crumbs are left behind after sweeping,

windows have streaks after cleaning, socks are mismatched after laundry. But by giving kids these chores over and over, they start to master the task. “Chores teach kids to do a good job,” says Freeling. By practicing the same chores, kids will start to take pride in what they’re doing and will soon feel a sense of accomplishment of a job done well. Kids as young as 2 can help put their toys away, says Freeling, which makes them feel happy and fulfilled. Often, little kids will take you by the hand to show you their work — putting their books away — after completing the task. They’re proud of helping out.

**6. There’s fun in cooperation .** If you have several children, getting them all to pitch in and do chores is a great way to show that working together gets the job done faster. Plus, it’s more fun. Having three kids wash the car or two kids clean out the closet will encourage communication (you talk as you work) and new ways of thinking to get the job done. “Cooperation skills learned through chores will be transferred to school and the rest of life,” says Reznick.

**7. Your contribution is vital.** You don’t want to send your child to college not knowing how to do laundry or have your third-grader spend the night at a friend’s and be at a loss when asked to help with the dishes. Children raised doing chores learn life skills to take care of themselves, but also to contribute to society. “You don’t want to raise an entitled children who thinks, ‘That’s not my job,’ or ‘That’s beneath me,’” notes Reznick.

And remember, when using cleaning products, always keep them out of reach of children and store them in a locked cabinet or storage area when not in use.

What chores do you give your kids?