

Home Maintenance Expectations

Authoritative parents expect that their children will contribute to the well-being of the family by taking on the responsibility of certain household chores. Three areas of basic life skills which should be expected are: cleaning a house and keeping it that way, planning/selecting and preparing healthy meals, budget and making appropriate purchases. Expecting a child to participate in home maintenance not only encourages the development of necessary life skills, it also allows the workload to be shared between parent and child, which should leave more time for other activities together.

Parents must make sure the child knows exactly what is expected. Be sure to do the following;

- Have your child observe others doing the task.
- Give them instructions along with principles or “whys”.
- Let them ask questions about the task.
- Offer compliments and encouragement along the way.
- Occasionally work with the child, helping with part of the task to make the job more enjoyable.
- Break the total job into small parts for easier mastery.
- Build on past successes.

The following life skills are suggested for learning at home. Note the age range behind each task. The first number indicates when the child should begin taking on the task and the last number is the age when you can expect your child to master the task.

PERSONAL CARE SKILLS

Put pajamas away	2-4	Pick up toys	2-6
Undress self	2-4	Comb hair	2-5
Wash face, hands	2-5	Brush teeth	2-5
Tidy up bedroom	2-8	Make own bed	3-7
Clean, trim nails	5-10	Leave bathroom neat after use	6-10
Wash and dry own hair	7-10	Arrange for own haircuts	10-16
Purchase own grooming supplies	11-18		

CLOTHING CARE SKILLS

Put dirty clothes in laundry	4-8	Put away clean clothes	5-9
Clean own drawers	6-14	Clean out closet	6-16
Fold, separate clean laundry	8-16	Fold clothes neatly, w/o wrinkles	8-16
Wash/dry clothes in machine	9-16	Shop for clothing	11-18
Basic spot removal on clothes	12-18	Iron clothing	12-18
Simple mending	12-17	Sort clothing by color, fabric, content	8-18

HOUSEHOLD SKILLS

Clear own place at table	2-5	Wipe up a spill	3-12
Dust furniture	3-12	Set table	3-9
Clear table	3-13	Pick up trash in yard	4-9
Spot clean walls	4-12	Clean mirrors, glass	4-8

MORE HOUSEHOLD EXPECTATIONS

Feed pets	5-8	Clean toilet	5-8
Scour sink and tub	5-12	Empty wastebaskets	4-10
Sweep floors/ vacuum	4-10	Load/unload dishwasher	6-12
Put clean dishes away	6-12	Take telephone messages	7-12
Water house plants	8-14	Fold blankets/sheets neatly	8-14
Wash car	8-16	Weed garden/flower beds	9-13
Change bed linens	10-13	Mow lawn	12-16
Replace fuse; know where breakers are	11-18	Replace light bulbs, understand wattage	10-15
Wash windows	13-18		

COOKING/FOOD HANDLING SKILLS

Know basic food groups	5-14	Put groceries away	6-16
Cook prepared food	7-12	Read a recipe	7-12
Pack a cold lunch	7-12	Operate a microwave	7-12
Measure ingredients	7-14	Clean kitchen appliances	10-18
Plan a weekly menu	12-16	Prepare food from recipe	7-16
Distinguish between good and spoiled food	10-18		

MONEY MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Know monetary denominations	5-12	Make change and count change correctly	8-11
Maintains savings account	8-16	Make savings or checking deposit	10-18
Use a simple budget	12-18	Write a check	14-18
Balance a checkbook or track electronic charges	14-18	Know how to use a credit/debit card properly	16-18
Compare quality and prices of similar items	8-12		

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Know address	4-6	Know phone number	4-6
Clean interior of car	8-14	Ride bus or taxi	8-16
Maintain a bicycle	9-14	Wash car properly	10-17
Read a map	7-14	Fill car with gas	16-18
Change flat tire	16-18	Schedule simple car maintenance	16-18

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