

Let's Talk: Parenting – Kids and chores

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Hi, I'm Julie. Let's talk about getting your kids to do chores.

It can be difficult to fit everything into a day

School is just around the corner, and for many families it means not just getting back to school, but getting back to music, band, sports, cheerleading, and art, and all the extra-curricular activities. With college acceptance being so competitive nowadays, parents and students are trying to squeeze the juice out of every year, every month, and every day.

The result of overscheduling

But what happens when kids are over-scheduled? Well, they miss having down time to be creative, to think. They miss those organic opportunities of conversation that happens over the dinner table that helps them adjust to the stresses of growing up.

Negative impact on behavior

Alvin Rosenfeld, author of *The Over-Scheduled Child*, talks about how these kids may be at risk for depression, anxiety. They may have poor problem-solving skills and lack of creativity.

Lack of time to help out

Another consequence for these over-scheduled kids is that they're so busy outside of the home, they don't have time to help out in the home. So, for these kids, they're missing important life lessons, such as learning how to do laundry and learning how to cook. So for these parents, not only are they holding down full-time jobs, but they're driving their kids around to all these events and activities and stuck with all the chores themselves.

Less = more

So here's an idea. What if we scheduled our kids less so they have the downtime they needed and they can learn these important life skills and responsibilities?

Teach the value of chores early

Chores can be started as young as ages two or three. I know that sounds young, and sometimes getting kids to help out is more work for us, but ultimately, it can lead to a sense of pride and productivity and can help with their self-esteem.

A chore chart can help

Take a look at this chore chart.

CHORE CHART

Sample chore chart that show example chores for children in different age ranges. Ages 2-3: Pick up toys & books, Wipe up messes, and Put laundry in hamper; Ages 4-6: Take care of pets, Set and clear table, and Empty trash; Ages 7-10: Fold laundry, Sweep, and Vacuum; Ages 11+: Wash dishes, Mow yard, and clean bathroom.

It can give you some ideas of chores based on age. I read somewhere that if a kid can use a smart phone, he or she can use a broom, a mop, a vacuum cleaner, and a washing machine.

Take time to teach responsibility

Take time to allow your children not to have to rush through their childhood. Giving them responsibilities will help you find time in your day. I hope you enjoyed these tips. Good luck.

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