
HOUSEHOLD CHORES

Getting children to do chores can sometimes be a struggle.

There are many tasks that need to be done every day just to keep a family ticking over. Apart from the practical benefits of children making a contribution, it is important that they grow up realising that they should be helping others, and not expecting to have everything done for them.

Not all chores are fun. However, if we only give children the jobs which are boring, they will be de-motivated and unlikely to do them.

If you have certain jobs to be done, you can, to some extent, let the children choose what they want to do. But remember, you have to have the final word, and they may not like all the chores they have been allocated. Sometimes we have to do things which we don't particularly like, and that should be pointed out to children.

Whingeing about the chore may make you feel like letting them off. Instead of releasing them from the chore, make it clear that you won't tolerate the whingeing.

Some families pay children for the chores they do. If there is to be an addition to their pocket money for chores completed that is up to the family. However, we should try to encourage children to see the need to help others as their contribution to family life. That way, they won't expect remuneration for everything they do.

Q:

All our children have jobs to do, from cleaning the rabbit hutch to helping to wash the car. With five children, we need them all to help out. Our middle child, who's nine years old, complains all the time that he has more to do than the others. We have talked about this a lot and, if anything, he has less to do. What can we try?

A:

As the subject has been discussed many times, stop the talk. Tell him you expect the chores to be done without any moans or groans. Then, if he does start again, ignore it. If he persists you will need to use some sanction.

At the same time, make sure you praise him for the jobs he does do. He may have got used to the attention he has been getting for the complaining. Therefore, by withdrawing attention for that negative behaviour, and giving more attention when he is pleasant, the behaviour should stop.

