

What LIFE SKILLS can I expect from my child/teen? Here is a list to get started:

Organization

Organization is a foundational life skill that is difficult to learn but must be mastered early for other skills to be developed. It is easy to practice by doing simple work around the house. When teaching your child to handle a new chore, teach him to make a list of the steps and materials a project will require before he even starts. Over time, he will not need a written list but will be able to “plan ahead” in his head. The following are some good practices:

- Organize bedroom: dresser clothes, closet, room--remove outgrown items and sort “stuff”
- Organize clothes for school every day
- Organize kitchen pantry--come up with a system
- Clean out and organize kitchen drawers
- Organize garage hand tools work-bench area, shelves, car tools, paint cans, etc.
- Organize book in library, DVD movies, collections, etc.
- Other _____

Cleaning

Your child should not be afraid of getting his hands dirty. The dirtier the work the better. Actually, our “worlds” are so clean these days that it is hard to find really dirty work for our kids to do--but keep looking. Every child should know how to do these basic cleaning chores well:

- Clean and disinfect bathroom completely--toilet, sinks, shower, and floor
- Understand the use of specific cleaning supplies (Clorox and other chemicals)
- Clean kitchen after meals--not just “do dishes--but put food away, clean counters, wipe down stove top, sweep floor
- Understand dishwasher: load and run, monitor dishwasher soap supply
- Mop any type of floor
- Clean oven
- Vacuum floors in whole house
- Wash windows inside and out
- Dust
- Clean/sweep out garage
- Gather all trash from around the house

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- Wash out trash cans including large street can
- Other _____

Laundry

Your children should be doing their full laundry by 5th grade. If their hands work and they can walk to the washing machine, there is no excuse for not doing this. It will take some time to teach them but don't rob them of this needed life-experience! Specifically, they should know how to do these laundry-related tasks:

- Manage one's own complete laundry: gather laundry, wash, dry, fold, and put it away. Laundry is not "complete" till everything is put away.
- Empty lint trap & monitor laundry soap supply.
- Wash one's own bed sheets.
- Simple mending such as sewing on buttons
- Other _____

Personal responsibility and hygiene

These basic skills are surprisingly hard to master for some reason! However, don't let up or give in--keep demanding follow through here:

- Brush without being told
- Bathe without being reminded
- Monitor supplies needed for personal hygiene
- Wake up on time before school without help
- Think ahead and pack supplies needed for after school activities (music, sports etc.) without reminder from Mom
- Maintain schedule/calendar for practice schedules, homework, and appointments
- Other _____

Home Maintenance and Repair

Anytime you have something to fix or replace, have a child by your side. Never miss an opportunity to have him hold the tools and actually do it when he can.

- Replace light bulbs
- Replace batteries
- Replace air filters (for central air)
- Replace water filters
- Hang pictures
- Try general repairs using hammer, nails, drill, level
- Repair bike tires, oil

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- Help with fixing broken things—gluing
- Other _____

Pets

Taking care of a family pet builds empathy. However, with pet ownership comes responsibility, and, therefore, these chores are not negotiable. If you have kids in your home, they—not you—should be taking care of the pets as much as possible, doing these things:

- Feed pets, monitor food supply
- Walk dog without reminders
- Change cat box without reminders, monitor litter supply
- Other _____

Yard work

Even if your child can't mow the yard yet, there is plenty she can do. Have a her with you every time you mow to lend you an extra hand. Specifically, they can learn how do these items:

- Mow grass
- Pull weeds
- Put out pine straw
- Plant and care for a garden
- Sweep
- Understand sprinkler system, watering
- Fertilizer and other grass maintenance
- Rake and bag leaves
- Do heavy work such as digging, planting, hauling
- Other _____

Cooking

Every child should know her way around the kitchen. Before too long, she should be able to make simple full meals and serve food. Because we don't have opportunities to learn these skills in school anymore, there is no time to waste in your kitchen at home. No excuses allowed!

- Determine meal choice; locate recipes,
- Make list and shop for ingredients
- Bring in groceries and put away
- Make hot breakfast: eggs, toast, hot pancakes, etc.
- Pack school lunch every day

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- Follow recipes
- Make 5-8 simple complete dinner meals and understand how to plan and time the prep for each dish
- Make a salad
- Make a smoothie
- Make cake/cookies from scratch
- Organize and sort refrigerator content distinguish between good and spoiled food
- Other _____

Entertain guests

Don't assume that your children know how to be social and plan a party. Get them to practice this life skill now. Planning a party includes organization, planning ahead, communication skills, social skills, cooking, cleaning, follow through, and more! This life skill packs a lot of punch--plus it's fun!

- Organize a "party" (birthday, other) plan theme, food, supplies,
- Write invitations
- Make phone calls to invite and follow up
- Plan a social gathering: think of the activity, make a list of invitees, make calls, communicate details, etc.
- Other _____

Car

There is no time for lazy habits when you are driving a car. Specifically, you can work on these car-related skills:

- Clean out/wash/detail car
- Pump gas
- Understand maintenance schedule for oil, tires, fluids, etc.
- Other _____

Interpersonal Communication Skills

- Speak to salespeople
- Make phone calls to confirm appointments
- Start a conversation with a stranger when out
- Other _____

Understand Current Events

- Read the paper or a reputable news magazine
- Have a working knowledge of current events to speak in a group setting
- Other _____

Music Practice

- Practice music without complaining

Finance

- Make a deposit
- Keep up with debit card
- Know how to write a check
- Give to charities
- Other _____

Time Management

- Able to manage an entire day of activities and responsibilities without asking for help all day or needing help with ideas when bored.
- Other _____

Making appointments

- Before your child leaves the nest, they need to know how to make their own medical appointments. Have them start with their orthodontists for practice.
- They need to understand how to gather insurance information too

Responsibility for others

- Take a babysitting course
- Care for/Babysit a younger sibling
- Understand basics of first aid
- Other _____

Exercise

Gets exercise every day without reminder from parents

- Other _____