

Tracks to Transition: Teaching Teens to do Chores

Learning to do chores is an important life skill. Chores help develop skills for your teen so they can be more independent. Your teen will feel good about themselves when they are able to do some chores on their own.

There are ways to help your teen learn to do chores on their own:

- Teach them simple skills to do each day.
- Practice the same chore several times before they are expected to complete it on their own.
- Give them chores that are right for their age (ask your teen's doctor, therapist, or care team at Children's Health).
- Work with them for a few times to show them what to do as they learn.
- Thank them for completing their chores and tell them at least one thing that they did well.
- Correct any part of the chores that is not right. Help them remember all the steps to complete when doing the chore.
- Show them pictures or videos to help explain the chore or to help them remember what to do.
- Keep them focused on their chore while they are doing it. If needed, take away things that distract their focus.
- Teach them how to use a timer. This may help them keep track of time while they are learning the chore.

As your teen's improves in completing their chores, help them less until they can do it on their own.

Track your teen's progress with this sample chore checklist on the next page.

Use it to create a checklist for your family. Ask your teen to help create this by thinking of chores they can do or learn. Look at the list from time to time as they are ready to take on new chores. Talk together about what can be added or removed as they master skills and chores.

| Chore | I can do with help | I can do while you watch | I can do alone |
|--|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Put dirty clothes in the hamper or basket | | | |
| Feed pets | | | |
| Open and close blinds or drapes | | | |
| Clean-up spills | | | |
| Clean-up my items and put them away | | | |
| Match and sort clothing, towels, or silverware | | | |
| Clean my bedroom weekly | | | |
| Clean another room weekly, such as the bathroom | | | |
| Water plants in the home | | | |
| Help wash the car | | | |
| Pull weeds | | | |
| Set and clear the table for mealtime | | | |
| Use simple tools (broom, handheld vacuum, rake) | | | |
| Load and unload the dishwasher | | | |
| Put away groceries | | | |
| Pack lunch for school | | | |
| Prepare simple meals (make sandwich or cereal) | | | |
| Cook simple meals using microwave, toaster, stove, or oven | | | |
| Wash, dry, and put away laundry | | | |
| Get the mail | | | |
| Change bed sheets | | | |
| Take out the trash | | | |