

MAKE IT MOM'S DAY ALL YEAR ROUND

Teach kids how to treat mom with the respect she deserves

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Mother's Day is a special day for moms to enjoy some well-deserved relaxation. An effective way for kids to help mom on Mother's Day — and throughout the year — is by assisting with chores around the house.

Chores are an important part of family life. They provide the foundation upon which responsibility, self-esteem, and strong family relationships are built. At the Love and Logic Institute, we've found that kids who make meaningful contributions to their families, such as preparing dinner once a week or completing household chores, are more likely to gain academic achievement, enjoy success in life, and develop a desire to give back to the community.

Here are four practical, easy-to-learn tips to teach children the value of helping their mothers (and fathers) all year round:

Tip #1: Teach kids to do their fair share of the housework without being hounded.

It will make mom's life a lot easier if kids complete chores without frequent reminders. With one simple statement, show your kids you mean business in a loving way by saying, "I'll be happy to do the things I do for you as soon as your chores are done."

Tip #2: Guide your kids toward needing less help with completing daily chores.

It's never too early to start teaching kids how to take care of themselves. As early as age two or three, kids can learn daily activities, such as getting ready in the morning, putting away toys, and preparing for bed in the evening.

In order to teach kids how to be independent, have them write down a list of daily tasks and mark them off the list as they are completed. If the child is too young to write, such as a two-year-old, draw pictures of the daily tasks with your child.

Tip #3: Assign chores as repayment for withdrawals from your "emotional bank account."

When a parent asks a child to stop misbehaving, but the child keeps it up, the parent can say in a loving, soft tone of voice, "How sad! Your behavior has really drained the energy out of me. Now I'm too tired to clean the bathrooms. When you get them done, I'm sure I'll feel a whole lot better."

If the child refuses or forgets to do the chore, wise parents don't lecture or threaten. Instead, they quietly allow their child to "pay" for their bad manners with one of their favorite toys.

Tip #4: Show kids why it is wise to be polite to mom (and dad).

When a child talks back, pick one loving statement in response and say it over and over again, such as, “Honey, I love you too much to argue.” Kids will learn that they need to use a polite tone of voice and respectful words when requesting assistance from their parents.

It’s never too early or late to start raising kids to respect their parents.

I know of a mom with a 15-year-old who had to “go on strike” with her son, because he was very demanding, wanting to know, “Where’s dinner? Where are my clean clothes?” In response to her son’s rude requests, she said, “I’ll be happy to help you when your chores are done and I feel respected.” It eased her stress level and before long, her son was a much happier, more respectful and responsible child.

Give Love and Logic a try and join thousands of parents who have discovered easy and effective ways to improve their relationships with their kids and teach positive family values.

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Dr. Charles Fay is a nationally known speaker, parent, and school psychologist with the Love and Logic Institute in Golden, Colo. His book, *Love and Logic Magic: When Your Kids Leave You Speechless*, provides a host of helpful tips for teaching values, as well as handling other perplexing parenting issues. For more information about Love and Logic parenting and teaching techniques, call **1-800-LUV-LOGIC** or visit **www.loveandlogic.com**.