

## Chores for kids will keep them out of jail

Statistics show that your son could have a [30% chance of going to jail](#) during his life. Chores for kids will keep them out of jail – and make them happy. It's no joke – nobody in the world incarcerates more kids than the United States, but experts agree that by creating a rigid schedule and working them hard at a young age children are less likely to be incarcerated as adults. We've heard the stories about [children getting arrested on airplanes](#) and how important it is to involve kids in projects such as [fundraisers to keep them out of trouble](#), so it's stupid that some parents think kids shouldn't be burdened with chores.

My son will be 10 years old in just a few days, and I have mixed feelings about his advancing age. On the one hand I'll only have to suffer through a few more birthday parties at Chuck E. Cheese. It also means he is growing up and should take more responsibility in his life. As he advances in age, I won't be around to give him structure and tell him what he needs to get done in order to be a productive family man and citizen. If we are to raise children well, chores for kids will teach them responsibility and necessity for structure, checklists and utility. Chores for kids also keeps kids out of trouble now and later in life. The old adage goes that idle hands are a devil's workshop, which translates to jail time for the lazy.

A recent [review of archival letters](#) from the 1930s until the 1970s revealed that children were often tasked with preparing menus, lighting and maintaining fires for warmth and cooking, and even maintaining the family car. Many kids today are expected only to attend school. With so little expected from children these days, it should be no coincidence that 1 out of every 32 Americans [are currently in jail](#).

There are [desperate websites](#) trying to educate parents how to keep kids out of the penal system, but prevention starts in the home with chores for kids, structures and warnings to kids about the perils of drugs, lawlessness and dangerous friends. For me, it's all about duties at home, from yard work to cleaning to sanitation responsibilities. We're convinced that chores for our kids will keep them out of jail.

There is a ridiculous [debate](#) about making kids help out around the house when their lives are already too busy. Sure, we should start out slowly with a child, perhaps something as simple as teaching my son how to make his own nightly cup of chocolate milk. By the age of 7-years old my kid was sweeping the floor, make his bed, loading and unloading the car and folding his clothes. By 8-years old our children should all know their responsibility to put away clean laundry and rinse off dishes for the dishwasher after every meal. And then the list of chores can be addressed, including but not limited to watering plants, raking leaves, taking out trash and feeding pets.

These tasks for young kids can be little things, but chores for kids keep them out of jail because they are learning that life is a give and take, and that the repercussions for vice and idleness are real. Responsibilities are important and discipline should follow when chores for kids are not done.

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[Parenting specialists](#) agree that kids should start to do things for themselves by the age of 8-years old because it builds their confidence and their resiliency, as well as gives them a head start on building a work ethic. This speaks nothing of the all-important necessity to teach kids what it means to be part of a family.

My son needs to know that not only is he part of this family and needs to help out, but when he gets married he will need to help out then, too (his wife will thank me). When he gets married, he won't expect his partner to do everything for him. His vocation will be the same way – he's going to have an understanding of project management because the chores he gets now are little projects unto themselves.

I am slowly and gently releasing the reins and providing him the chance to do things for himself. Although he may complain about it, there have been a few times when I've glimpsed that little proud smile he has when he knows his chores were done well. And that's great, because when he's 25 I really can't drive across town when it's time for his evening cup of chocolate milk – in jail.