House of Order, House of Prayer

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Chores & Charts

"We believe in work for ourselves and for our children. … We should train our children to work, and they should learn to share the responsibilities of the home and the yard. They should be given assignments to keep the house neat and clean, even though it be humble. Children may be given assignments … to take care of the garden." Pres. Spencer W. Kimball

Learning to work and teaching our children how to work is a spiritual principle that will bring far reaching blessings. Although it often takes more time and effort to help a child (or teenager☺) complete a task, the time we spend together and the skills that are learned are irreplaceable. The following ideas might be a good starting place for your family. No system is perfect, and what works for a few seasons might need to be changed as your family unit grows or shrinks or children get bored.

Daily Chores

Helping your children establish a habit of doing chores every day is a life skill. As they get older they will thank you (it's a shocking day, but a good one☺) for teaching them responsibility and how to clean. Depending on the age of your children, a daily chore chart might look like this:

HOMEWORK

DAILY CHORE
(ASK MOM)

PIANO

WALK DOG
(ROTATES BETWEEN CHILDREN)

KITCHEN CHORE
(SEE CHART BELOW)

Each day my children help with a household chore (whatever needs the most attention and is the most help to me) and also help with a kitchen chore. Our rotating kitchen chore chart looks like this:

There are many different chore chart systems. The truth is, you have to switch things up regularly because children get bored with any system. Here is an example of a system you could use:

The clipboard on the left is the parent's clipboard. Each morning, pick a daily chore (square) that you would like completed by each child and put it on their clipboard (right clipboard - make one for each child).

The rectangles are the dinner chores (set table, clear table, load dishes, sweep floor) that rotate among all family members weekly. If there are more people than dinner chores, there are free week assignments as well (those are everyone's favorite☺).

The large cards list what need to be done each day. On the child's clipboard the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday list is on one side and the Thursday, Friday, Saturday list is on the other side. Each day lists homework, chore, pick up room, or homework, walk dog, pick up room depending on the day.

The important thing is to be FIRM, FAIR and CONSISTENT. I tie my children's use of electronics / playing with friends to their completion of daily tasks. If their list isn't done - no electronics or friends, period! 60 minutes of electronics on school days and 90 minutes on weekends, holidays and summer.

As homemakers, we too should have a list that we complete each day. This is my list:

Weekly Focus Areas

Even though we clean our home as a family each Saturday morning, there are areas that need specific, regular attention (and a homemaker's touch). I've assigned these areas to a day of the week. In addition to my daily list (see above) I also check up on the following areas :

Weekly Chores

In our home, Saturday morning is a guarded, family at home time. Unless it's something super pressing, we don't schedule things from 9-12 on Saturday mornings. Decide what works best for your family.

I wrote up chore cards for everything around the house that needs to be cleaned. I've assigned points to each chore and then decided how many 'points' each child needs to complete. As they get older, their contribution needs to be greater, so their required points reflects this. My children seem to appreciate that they have a choice in which chores they do (of course there are some household favorites which seem to always be chosen first). I've tried incentives for completing their Saturday chores by noon, but for our family I've found the best incentive is a consequence. Anyone not finished by noon gets to help clean out the family cars. Works like a charm☺. In addition to their chosen chores

they must also clean their rooms and shared bathroom each Saturday. Working with the person they share a bathroom with proves to be quite a relationship builder at times, but it's teaching them 'work with others' skills, right?

Weekly Chores could include:

vacuum all carpets and rugs
damp-mop floors
change beds
clean windows and mirrors
dump all trash cans
sweep or dust mop hard floors
dust furniture
spot clean handprints, etc.
sinks, showers / tubs, toilets
sweep porches / patios

> "Each one will find that happiness in this world mainly depends on the work he does, and the way in which he does it." President Brigham Young

Advanced Lists

If you've mastered your daily and weekly checklists, here is a list of common household cleaning to dos, each assigned to a timeline. This allows you to not only feel a sense of completion, but not worry when something needs to be done (i.e. it's alright if there are cobwebs, I'm doing that next week).

Monthly

Dust woodwork and high and low areas
Catch all cobwebs
Vacuum upholstery
Vacuum drapes and blinds
Vacuum carpet edges
Damp-wipe seats of chairs
Clean out refrigerator
Clean kitchen cabinet fronts
Clean appliance fronts and tops
Dissolve any hard-water buildup
Wash/disinfect trash containers
Wash doormats

Sweep/hose walks and driveway
Wash easy-to-reach windows
Spot clean doors
Sweep garage
Change furnace filter

Twice a Year
Polish furniture
Clean oven (at least)
Defrost freezer
Degrease stove hood/exhaust fan
Turn mattresses
Vacuum air and heat vents
Dust tops of tall furniture

Annually
Wash or dry-sponge walls
Touch up nicks in wall paint
Clean under and behind things
Wash hard-to-reach windows
Wash or dry-clean drapes or curtains
Wash window screens
Clean light fixtures
Wash blinds
Wash/clean blankets
Shampoo carpet/upholstery if needed
Clean drain gutters
Wash exterior of all windows
Clean screens/storm doors
Clean/sweep chimney every several years or so
Wash or otherwise clean ceilings

Tip:

Clean it when it's soiled,

not when it's scheduled