

## Taking Time For Training

From: *Positive Discipline Workbook: A Resource Guide for Parenting Classes and Discussion Groups*  
by Jody McVittie and Barbara Kinney

1. **Have the child work next to you.**
2. **Ask “What” and “How” questions rather than directing him/her through each step:** What do you think needs to be done to clean up the kitchen? How would you make the living room look neater?
3. **Encourage the child’s suggestion of what needs to be done.** Regarding the clean kitchen, if the child says, “Put the dishes in the sink,” You might answer, “Yes that would get the table cleared off. Let’s do it”
4. **Ask more “What” and “How” questions to continue training.** How do you think we could get the dishes clean? What ideas do you have for putting the food away? What about the crumbs on the table? (Encourage the child’s suggestions as in # 3 above)
5. **Share your suggestions.** “I like to wash the table with a wet sponge.” Or “I find that scraping the food off the plate first makes it easier to wash.” “Let’s do it together.”

After several training sessions, the child can try the job on his/her own.

6. **Ask for self-evaluation when the child has done the job on her own.** “What do you like best about the way the kitchen looks now?” Child: “The table is all clear and wiped clean.”
7. **Celebrate the child’s progress.** Use specific observations. “Yes I see there are no crubs or sticky spots on it. Thank you.”

**Keep quiet about criticism for now.** (Remember we are looking for progress, not perfection.) If you notice food and crumbs on the floor, make a mental note to cover this next time you work together. At that time, you might start by asking another “What” and “How” question – “What ideas do you have about getting the floor clean?” Or “How do you think we could get the crumbs off the floor?”

# Kids Are Capable – Age Appropriate Skills.

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As children grow, so do their capabilities to help themselves and others. Some of the skills listed here are for self care; others are ways children can contribute.

## **Age 2 ½ -3**

- Pick up toys
- Pouring their own milk (from a small pitcher with a handle)
- Choose own clothes
- Wipe up own accidents
- Help put away groceries (lower shelves)
- Run hand held vacuum over crumbs
- Stack newspapers, magazines
- Sort silverware into drawer

## **Age 4 - 5 (the above and...)**

- Make bed, pick up room
- Serving themselves at the dinner table
- Pay for small purchases
- Help with grocery shopping
- Prepare simple breakfast
- Learn to set and clear table
- Take out garbage
- Hold electric mixer
- Add ingredients to simple recipe
- Cut vegetables with supervision
- Get mail
- Help do yard work
- Feeding pets
- Sweep floor
- Bring in firewood
- Answer phone
- Separate white and colored laundry
- Empty waste baskets
- Help clean car (inside, outside)

## **Age 6 - 7 (the above and...)**

- Choose own clothing according to weather /event
- Water Plants
- Pull weeds
- Set table properly
- Take pet for a walk
- Care for own bike
- Get self up in morning
- Be in charge of lunch money
- Help change beds
- Put dishes in dishwasher

## **Age 8-9 (the above and...)**

- Vacuum own room.
- Prepare own school lunch
- Do own homework with minimal supervision
- Keep track of own money
- Helping cook family meals
- Scrub bathtub
- Clean up after animals
- Rake yard
- Operate washer and dryer
- Use grocery list
- Serve guests
- Do neighborhood chores

## **Age 10-12 (the above and...)**

- Doing their own laundry.
- Be involved in vacation planning.
- Cooking meals for the family.
- Yard work.
- Mow grass
- Pack own bag to stay over with friend
- Stay alone at home for short periods
- Community projects

## **Teens (the above and...)**

- Purchasing own clothes (with a budgeted "clothing allowance").
- Still keeping track of own money, some of it earned by outside work.
- Arranging some of own transportation
- Learning to balance and use own checking account
- Car maintenance
- Heavier yard work