

Household Chores for Adolescents



Getting children into the habit of pitching in around the home can begin as young as age two, by having them put away their toys when they're done playing with them. By age twelve, there are few household tasks a teenager shouldn't be expected to master. And once they earn their driver's license, it is appropriate to assign them errands such as going to the grocery store or picking up the dry cleaning.

Helping out at home teaches kids the importance of contributing to a team. It also allows them to feel valued and competent, both of which enhance self-esteem.

Household Chores Appropriate for Adolescents of Any Age

- Putting away their belongings
- Doing the laundry
- Folding and putting away clean clothes
- Vacuuming, sweeping, dusting
- Setting the table
- Clearing the table
- Washing and putting away the dishes
- Feeding, walking family pets; cleaning birdcages and litter boxes
- Mopping floors
- Scrubbing the sink, toilet, bathtub, shower stall
- Preparing their own lunches for school
- Playing chef and cooking dinner one night a week
- Doing yardwork
- Washing the family car

A Teenager's Bedroom: Enter At Your Own Risk

Who has jurisdiction over an adolescent's room? This question has divided parents and teenagers going all the way back to the Stone Age, when the first cave teen was reprimanded for always leaving his bear and bison hides on the floor.

Let's hear from both sides. Teenagers will insist that it is their room, and they should be able to do whatever they want in it. If that includes leaving an obstacle course of junk, clothes and magazines on the floor, that's their business.

Parents will counter that it may be the teenager's room, but this is their house, and what they say goes. What follows is a compromise: Let your youngster keep his room however messy he wishes, so long as you don't have to call the health department.

But there are three conditions:

1. He must keep the door to his bedroom closed whenever he's not at home so that Mom and Dad don't have to be mortified in front of houseguests.
2. Mom and Dad will not clean his room. "If there's stuff all over the floor," advises Dr. Hofmann, "you don't vacuum. If clothes are not placed in the laundry basket or hamper, they don't get washed. And no picking up after him." That includes throughout the rest of the house too.
3. He must clean his room once a month.

Source

Caring for Your Teenager (Copyright © 2003 American Academy of Pediatrics)

The information contained on this Web site should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.