

# PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

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## Sharing Busy Mornings

### REMEMBER:

- *Include children to give them a sense of responsibility.*
- *Children are often very keen to help out.*
- *Select tasks that are age appropriate and match your child's skill level.*
- *Try star charts to help keep them motivated.*

Including children in household chores at an early age helps them to feel like they are part of home life, and gives them a sense of being responsible.

It can also help them to feel that they are important and are included in running the home. The tasks or jobs can be allocated by parents depending on their child's age and ability. The jobs need to be age appropriate and ones that the child can manage.



One of the benefits of developing responsibility at an early age is that it prevents boredom and attention seeking behaviour which can be irritating for parents. It also helps children in their adult lives to grow up knowing that they have responsibilities.

It is always best to discuss tasks with children and ask them what they think they are capable of doing to help. Older children in particular feel better if they aren't 'ordered around' by parents but are treated with respect and consulted about decisions that affect them.

*Proudly managed by*



## “What Can I Do to Help Mum?”

Allocate age appropriate jobs for children.

At the age of three a child needs quite a bit of supervision. For example when a parent is in the garden, or cleaning the house is a good time to include the child in that activity (they might help sweep or fetch the bucket etc).

At the age of four they may want to help cook and make cakes. Children naturally want to be helpful. For example: taking their bed sheets to the laundry while they are preparing to wash or taking their dry clean clothes into their bedrooms and putting them away.

At the age of five, they do other chores around the house such as walking the dog, feeding pets, or sweeping the path. Packing their school lunch, and choosing which fruit they will take to school. Gradually children learn the order of life in the home and feel like they are contributing to the household.

At the age of six children are more independent and have learnt some things about organising how their day works. For example: getting their clothes ready and making their bed.

To encourage children to help, the parent or parents can write out a list of jobs that they do each morning and show this to the children.

They can then ask the children what jobs they can think of that they could do each day to help. This gives the child a sense of responsibility about how they can help with household tasks.

## Star Charts

One way of keeping track of how things are going by using Star Charts.

- Introduce the star chart by explaining how they work.
- Remind the children that when they have had a successful week with five stars in a row, they will get a privilege or a reward.

It is recommended that the reward centres around an activity with the parent like reading a special book, going to the park, playing a game.

This gives the message to the child that when they contribute to the household it frees up time to have special time with the parent. Other times a small treat might be useful.

- Children can help draw up their lists and decorate them and with stick them up on the wall, the fridge or a door of their bedroom, making sure that each child knows what they are responsible for.
- Positive feedback is useful. Focus on what they are doing well.
- For older children, another way to make choices is to use the concept of a ‘love job’, or a ‘money job’. The love job is done ‘for free’ out of love for family, or caring for shared spaces.

Money jobs can be a negotiated jobs, as to how much it is worth and how hard the work may be.