

The Top Thing Parents Can Do to Turn Kids into Successful Adults

Last week, [Business Insider](#) ran an interesting article listing 13 things parents can do to turn their child into a well-adjusted, successful adult. The first thing on the list?

“They make their kids do chores.”

But if childhood chores are truly a predictor of future success, then it seems the U.S. is about to see a very unsuccessful generation, for only [28 percent of parents](#) require their children to do chores. By contrast, 82 percent of those same parents were asked to do chores when they were kids.

This steep decline is likely an outgrowth of numerous things, including the tendency to overschedule both children and parents. But is it possible that many of today’s parents are also unsure of how much they can reasonably expect of their child? Authors and educators Harvey and Laurie Bluedorn address that issue in their book [Teaching the Trivium](#). According to the Bluedorns, children are capable of far more responsibilities than we give them credit for:

“Develop in your child a love for work and service. From the time a child is able to walk and talk, he should be given regular chores to perform. We do not mean simply feeding the dog and making his bed. A five-year-old is quite capable of putting the dishes away and folding the laundry. A ten-year-old can prepare simple meals from start to finish. Children of all ages can clean and straighten the house. The mother should not be picking up things from off of the floor. Your goal should be that, by the time the children are in their

teens, they are able to take over the work of the household, from cooking to cleaning to caring for their younger brothers and sisters. This not only teaches them to appreciate work while removing some of the burden from the parent, but it is good training for when they have their own households.

Do not do for your child what he can do for himself.”

If we want to ensure that the next generation turns into successful, responsible adults, are more parents going to have to step up to the plate and expect more out of their children in the chore arena?

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