

# **Raising Adolescents To Be Responsible Through Chores And Work**

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Student's Name  
Institutional Affiliation

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There have been changes in the family set-up over the years that have affected the development of adolescents. Families, as years go by, are reducing in the number of children. Williams (2018) explains that this trend has affected the way adolescents interact in a household. He states that children in a household have less responsibility in chores compared to children in the past. They used to help in farm work, but the way of life has since changed due to the industrial developments. It has been cited that the children in the past grew to be responsible individuals as a result of the chores that they had at home. This situation is opposed to the irresponsibility exhibited by the current generation of adolescents that would develop into irresponsible adults. Chores and work as help adolescents to become responsible adults.

Studies on the changes in family size point out that industrialization has played a hand. People are less inclined to have many children compared to the past. Notably, children back then grew up with many siblings (Williams, 2018). The experience taught them valuable life skills such as sharing, communication, compromise, and leadership among other important skills. They would help around the house and farm with the knowledge that it is their duty to contribute to the functioning of the family. These lessons were helpful to adolescents when they grew up. They would know the value of work and help around the house (Demerouti, Peeters, & Van Der Heijden, 2012). The adolescents would also develop into adults that train their children to become resilient as an important life skill.

In contrast, there are changes in the ways a family functions today. In many of the American homes, both of the parents go to work, and thus, have limited interactions with the children (Williams, 2018). The parents cater to their children's needs, and this eliminates the need for the children

to work. Consequently, adolescents will fail to acknowledge the value of work at home. According to Lin and Burgard (2018), “In particular, working parents experience both conflict and hardship as well as rewards and enjoyment, with the balance between the two potentially varying greatly across the life course. During some stages of parenthood, it may be easier to combine parenting and work responsibilities, whereas at other stages it could be more difficult”. The adolescents would have no initiative to help around the house or at the workplace when they grow up. All the same, house chores and adolescent employment help to nurture the development of the adolescents.

House chores are valuable to the functioning of a household, and also, as a teaching tool to the adolescents. There are many activities such as washing, cleaning, and lawn maintenance that adolescents participate in around the house (Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011). The parents typically divide the chores equally among children so as to make sure that every child participates. It helps when children know the duties that they are responsible for, and it gives them the desire to accomplish their tasks.

Adolescents do not work equally in a household, and data shows gender disparities when it comes to household tasks. Females work more than male in most of the assigned chores (Williams, 2018). The females are more involved in cooking, cleaning, and babysitting compared to males. In fact, parents prefer to assign chores to females because it is tedious to argue with the males, who nag when assigned duties. Women then carry on their hard work through to their adulthood while their male counterparts exhibit laziness when it comes to house chores.

Parents too have contributed to the gender disparities when it comes to house chores. Many parents have encouraged the stereotype of gender

roles in the house such that girls are assigned more duties than men (Williams, 2018). Parents believe that it is important to train girls to learn how to work in the house while boys engage in outdoor activities. It is almost a situation where girls clean after boys, who are not bothered by the everyday activities in a household. It is advisable to swap duties weekly or monthly if parents have children of different sex. Division of labor is still a problem in most of the household worldwide. The adolescents can swap chores such as swapping kitchen and bathroom floors, shampooing the carpets, taking care of items in the house that need to be recycled, and organizing the garage.

In line with changes to the family set-up, there has been an increase in the number of single mothers. They have come about as a result of divorce or children born in wedlock. Women are more involved than ever in providing for their families, which has given them two jobs, at home and in the workplace. At home, they are mostly tired from the day's work to follow-up with boys that do not want to help around the house. Girls are less aggressive than boys are, and thus, would cave into their parent's wishes.

It has been well documented that parents are less involved with their children compared to previous years. Children spend most of their time at school starting from an early age in daycares (Lam, McHale, & Crouter, 2012). The parents know little about their children from the little time they spend with them after work. Many of them are satisfied so long as they see that their children do their homework and perform well at school (Williams, 2018). Single parents find it difficult to strike a balance between work and family. The parents hire babysitters and nannies to assist with work at home. It takes the load off the family from house chores.

There are adolescents that have moved a step further from house

how to relate with others, and it also opens up their mind for them to be creative. Some of the common work for teenaged include working in fast-food restaurants, babysitting, and clerical work (Williams, 2018). These jobs give them a perspective of how people make their fortune and end up inspiring them to work hard for better jobs, especially when they focus on their studies. Colleagues at the workplace can also act as their role models and mentors. According to Crain and Hammer (2013), “Conversely, a role enhancement perspective highlights the possibility that rather than depleting individuals of scarce or fixed resources, one social role may serve to enhance the experience of another social role. One role might provide resources, such as material wealth or access to social networks, which can be used to enhance performance in the other role”. Teenage employees learn a lot from a workplace that they can use the information in the future.

Despite the many benefits of employment, it can also have negative effects on adolescents. There are those that begin to make poor choices with the money that they earn. They would use it to buy alcohol and drugs. What influences this behavior is sometimes their peers or older colleagues at the workplace. They might also begin to disrespect their parents, partly because of the stresses of work, and at times, because they feel they are independent. The workplace will expose teenagers to both positive and negative work practices. Unfortunately, businesses have little time to spend mentoring these young adults and only focus on ways to get the most productivity out of them.

Adolescents that have paying jobs may also contemplate dropping out of school because of the pay that they receive. In addition, they neglect house chores assigned to them. According to Staff, Vaneseltine, Woolnough, Silver, and Burrington (2012), “A long-standing concern with adolescent employment is that it engenders a precocious maturity of

more adult-like roles and problem behaviors, including school disengagement and dropout, licit and illicit drug use, sexual activity, inadequate sleep and exercise, and work-related stress". Working parents still share in household responsibilities such as cooking and doing laundry. Some teenagers, however, find it difficult to balance work, school, and house duties. Therefore, as much as employment is seen to have a positive impact on adolescents, there is the danger that it can affect them adversely. There are other issues that can emerge far from the worry that teenagers are lazy. They might begin to make their own choices that sometimes they are not well equipped to do (Williams, 2018). Apart from drugs and alcohol, they might also engage in sexual activities resulting in teenage pregnancy.

In conclusion, chores and employment have the benefit of preparing adolescents to become responsible adults. There have been notable shifts in the family set-up over the years that have affected the development of adolescents. Notably, families are reducing in the number of children as time go by. Adolescents in the past learned a lot from working on farms that generated the household's income. They carried on the sense of responsibility to their adult years. Teenagers today might also benefit from those early days of training responsibilities. Parents, despite their busy schedules, have instilled those values to adolescents through the chores they assign to them. Some parents have also encouraged adolescents to get employment so as to learn how to make money, save, and aspire to better-paying jobs. However, there are adolescents that have felt the negative aspect of employment. It has derailed them from a good future by exposing them to adult content at the workplace. Parents are increasingly becoming preoccupied with their careers as such are the demands of the current life. They should be more involved in the lives of adolescents and guide them as they grow. Adolescents are the future generation that will administrate their country. For this reason, there is a

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need for adolescent programs at school that engage with teenage children and advise them on how to successfully develop to hardworking responsible adults.



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