

GUIDELINES FOR THE FIVE-MINUTE WORK CHORE

A work chore is a substitute for time out when a child is too old for the use of time out. A work chore is used to encourage more cooperation within the family.

Explaining the Work Chore:

1. Be positive when explaining how the Work Chore works. Discuss this agreement with the adolescent at a positive time. Explain that this agreement is intended to help increase communication and cooperation in the family.
2. Explain to the adolescent if he/she refuses to comply with a specific request or instruction you give them, he/she will have to do a short work chore (give the adolescent examples of some work chores). Arguing about the chore will mean doing another work chore. Furthermore, a privilege will be removed until the two chores are completed (give the adolescent examples of privileges that will be removed).

Implementing the Work Chore:

1. It is helpful to use a cue word so that your adolescent knows when you will follow-up your request with a work chore. (e.g. "Please set the table, that's a request").
2. Don't give undue negative attention by lecturing or arguing. Stay calm and neutral.
3. Each time you are about to make a request, have two work chores in mind that you can impose if necessary.
4. Impose no more than two work chores before you withdraw a privilege. Make sure the chore is brief.

5. Stay out of the way while they are doing the work.
6. Remember, work chores are most effective if they are used simultaneously with praise for steps towards cooperative behavior whenever you see it.

HOMEWORK:

1. Come up with a list of chores which can be completed in five minutes. Also come up with a list of privileges to remove (e.g. telephone use).
2. Tell your adolescent what to expect. Explain the five-minute work chore.
3. Begin imposing a work chore every time your adolescent is noncompliant.