

CHORES FOR KIDS: PROMOTING DEVELOPMENTAL SKILLS

APRIL 25, 2015 BY CLAIRE HEFFRON — 2 COMMENTS

Chores for kids...they're great for fostering independence, promoting a sense of responsibility, and making kids feel like capable members of a household.

But what if we told you that chores for kids are also *amazing* for promoting all kinds of **developmental skills**? Yep, now you have more reason than ever to put those kiddos to work!



Read on to learn how common everyday chores can help boost **strength, proprioception**, bilateral coordination, midline crossing, fine motor skills, visual skills, and cognitive skills!

**This post contains affiliate links. [Read more.](#)*

Chores for Improving Strength and Proprioception in Kids

Proprioception is the way joints and muscles send messages to the brain to help coordinate movement. **Proprioception** also allows us to regulate the force of our movements. As kids

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move against an opposing force, they strengthen their proprioceptive systems. This kind of movement is also great for all over **strengthening**.

Help kids improve **proprioception and strength** with chores that involve **lifting, pulling, and movement against resistance**:

- Taking out the garbage
- Washing the floor (squeezing out a mop or sponge, scrubbing the floor)
- Loading the washer and dryer with clothes
- Raking, shoveling, pulling weeds
- Taking sheets, blankets, and pillowcases off beds to be washed
- Making beds
- Vacuuming

Chores for Promoting Bilateral Coordination in Kids

Bilateral coordination refers to how we use both sides of our bodies together smoothly. From doing **jumping jacks** to catching a ball with two hands to buttoning a shirt, this is an important skill for all kids!

Help kids work on **bilateral coordination** skills with chores that involve **using the right and left hands together**:

- Sweeping the floor
- Folding laundry
- Washing dishes
- Cooking (especially stirring and pouring tasks)



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Chores for Promoting Midline Crossing in Kids

Crossing the midline means spontaneously using a body part (arm/hand or leg/foot) on the opposite side of the body to complete a task. Being able to cross midline during movement activities is an important precursor for establishing hand dominance and other motor skills.

Help kids work on **crossing midline** with chores that involve **reaching across the body**:

- Dusting/wiping down tables or counters
- Washing windows
- Sweeping and mopping
- Washing the car
- Raking or shoveling

Chores for Promoting Fine Motor Skills and Hand Strength in Kids

Fine motor skills refer to small muscle movements in the fingers and hands, including finger isolation, in-hand manipulation and more! Fine motor skills and hand strength give kids the ability to **grasp** and manipulate objects – so important for school activities and **self-care tasks**!

Help kids work on **fine motor skills and hand strength** with chores that require **pinching, pulling, squeezing, and grasping**:

-Washing anything using a sponge or cloth that needs to be squeezed out (dishes, floor, windows, car)

-Folding laundry

-Watering plants with a **spray bottle**

-Hanging laundry using **wooden clothespins**

Chores for Promoting Visual and Cognitive Skills in Kids

Kids rely on visual motor integration and visual perceptual skills to coordinate their movements and to make sense of what they see. Visual motor integration and visual perception are closely related to cognitive skills like memory, problem-solving, and sequencing.

Help kids work on **visual and cognitive skills** by encouraging them to do chores that involve **sorting, organization, and multi-step tasks**.

-Following a recipe

-Making and packing snacks/lunches for school

-Putting away groceries

-Unloading the dishwasher

-Setting the table

-Putting away laundry, matching socks

-Tidying up and sorting toys and other objects

-Picking out clothes

Do your kids help out around the house? Do they have any favorite chores? We'd love to add to our list!

Share with us in the comments below!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "-CLAIRE". The signature is written in a simple, slightly irregular font and is centered within a white rectangular box.

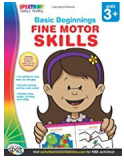
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[Margaret@YTherapySource](#) says
 April 25, 2015 at 2:00 pm

Great post – just pinned. I like the printable and how you sorted it by developmental skills not necessarily by age. If you need some more reasons of why children should do chores check out my recent blogpost <http://yourtherapysource.com/blog1/2015/03/19/3-reasons-why-children-should-do-chores/>

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[Karen](#) says
 May 19, 2015 at 1:13 pm

Thanks very much for sharing–go OT!

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