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**Homemaking School for Children**

**By Monica Resinger**

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With it being summer vacation for the kids, a lot of us may be experiencing a messier house than usual. A solution to this would be to give the kids daily chores or, what I like to call it, homemaking school. Homemaking school will not only help the house stay tidier, but will also give your kids valuable lessons in housecleaning and responsibility that they need now and later in life.

As I was growing up, I didn't have many chores. All that was expected of me was to do the dishes after dinner and keep my room clean (which I barely did). Later when I got my own place, I discovered a few problems as a result of not learning how to do certain household tasks.

One of these problems was lack of organization. In my parent's home as I was growing up, most everything was kept for later use or for sentimental value. Since I grew up this way, this is how I ran my household; I didn't know any other way. I found out after a period of time that this was not going to work for me. My tiny apartment wasn't as big as mom and dad's house and it wasn't long until my place was bulging with too much stuff. It has taken me years to train myself to be more organized and the job is even more challenging with children and husband. I'm still 'in training' and still not that organized, but there has been a lot of improvement. The point is that if we can begin training our children early, they can have an easier time when they get out on their own.

Organizing was only part of my housekeeping problems. There were many other things I didn't know how to do correctly that I had to teach myself. Home magazines were my partner through this and they helped me tremendously.

I don't blame my mom and dad because they were doing their best at that time, and besides, I've learned a valuable lesson from it and that is to be sure to teach my kids how to do this stuff.

The most effective way for me to get my chores completed is to schedule or list them. This is probably the best way for the kids to get their chores done also. There are a couple of ways you can do this, but the first step is to figure out what you want each child to do.

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To do this, think of age-appropriate jobs. You don't want to give a job that's too difficult to your child because this will end up in disagreements and won't be worth it in the long run. You may even feel your child is too young for chores yet and that's perfectly fine, it's up to you when they start. If you feel they are ready, start thinking of what type of jobs around the house they could manage. The way I do this is to look at my own chore schedule and try to imagine my kids doing each chore. If I can't imagine it, they probably aren't ready for it yet.

Younger children are perfect candidates for dusting and wiping. They can wipe lower kitchen cabinets or dust low bookshelves. They can pick up stray items from rooms if shown where to put the items away; after a while, they will learn where everything goes. If they don't do it perfectly at first, let it go, they will get better as time goes on. The important thing is that they are learning to keep house and help mom keep it clean.

Older children can do dishes after dinner and pick up the dinner mess. They can dust the higher stuff. Mopping floors, disinfecting the toilet, sweeping porches, vacuuming, cooking they can do most everything you can if shown how.

Once you have decided what you want your children to do as chores, you can make up a chore schedule or list either by hand or on the computer. You can make it as a table with days of the week going across the top and the chores listed down the page. It could be just a simple list hanging on your refrigerator by a magnet. Or, you could make a fancy, colorful list from a computer program that can be hung in a frame. The list can be laminated so it can be used over and over. One final idea is to get a dry erase board or chalkboard and write chores on these. The important thing is to get it written down. This will serve as a reminder to you and the kids.

Once you have established which chores each child will be doing, it's important to show them the correct way to do each task. It may take a few times of showing them, but they will get it right eventually, so don't give up.

If you'd like you can pay them. Some people feel children shouldn't be paid for chores because children should learn they are part of the household and it's their responsibility to help out. Some people feel it's fine to pay children for the work they do. One important note here is if you decide to pay them, be sure they know they won't get paid for EVERYTHING you ask them to do. They do need to know that they are part of the household and they need to do their part. Paying children for chores is up to the family and based on their particular values, don't let someone else decide this for you. How much you pay them is also up to you.

Remember, chores are really life lessons for our children. Think of it as homemaking school.

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## **Homemaking Journals**

**By Dionna Sanchez**

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I am so excited about the idea of creating a Homemaking Journal to pass down to my daughters. It is something that was actually created centuries ago. Homemaking Journals were actually passed down through family generations in the "olden days." It is a journal where you record in one place all things related to homemaking. All of the things special to you, traditions you have instilled, secrets, tips and more.

Here are some ideas if you would like to start one in your family. You can pick and choose any of the following to include in your Homemaking Journal or include them all if you wish!

- ~Recipes (especially beloved Family recipes that have been in your family for years.)
- ~Inspirational Poems, quotes, Bible Verses or excerpts that inspire you in your love for family, home and homemaking.
- ~Tips, tricks, hints and ideas that aid you on a daily basis in helping your home to run smoothly.
- ~Home Schooling Information – if relevant.
- ~Health and First Aid Remedies and Tricks
- ~Ideas and tips for Emergency Preparedness
- ~List of Birthdates and Anniversaries
- ~Holiday Traditions
- ~Kid Stuff (activities, projects and kid recipes like "goop")
- ~Gardening –planting info, seasonal planting favorites that you have used, tips, tricks and more.
- ~Seasonal Tips – helpful info on what to do before and after each season changes.
- ~Your Daily Routines – Do you keep a "to-do" list? Does it help you to stick by a certain schedule?
- ~Meal Planning – How do you keep organized in your kitchen? What helps you keep meals rotating regularly?

~Budget Outline

~Trusted phone numbers of doctors, dentists, builders, pastors and more.

While you put together your Homemaker's Journal, I think you will find that it has become a labor of

love. It will be so treasured and cherished when you hand it down and also will become a valuable resource to whomever you choose to receive it. Whether you give it to your daughters when they move into their first home, your daughter-in-law when she marries your son, or a special niece; this idea is a real winner in creating a homemaking legacy.

Dionna is Editor/Publisher of Emphasis On Moms. Emphasis is a monthly newsletter focused on giving moms encouragement, support, and genuine tips and ideas to help them enjoy who they are as women and mothers while nurturing their families. Visit at <http://www.EmphasisOnMoms.com/>



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