



HELPER TASKS AT HOME

Having helper jobs can support kids' motor skills, executive functioning, and sense of belonging in their families. Here's how you can involve kids of any developmental stage in five common household tasks:

1

Grocery shopping: beginners can help push the cart, hold on to a specific item, or imitate by pushing their own play-cart with play-food items. Eventually, they can have their own "list" with pictures of items that will be easy to find. Parents and kids can then take turns grabbing items.

2

Tidying up: play a song and have a clean-up dance party, or choose a "secret item"; when the secret item gets tidied up the child gets chased or tickled by surprise! Or, if it matches their abilities, count how many items are picked up and compete to see who gets the most.

3

Dishes: beginners can work on sorting the silverware before it's put back in the drawer, or label each item (verbally or symbolically) as it is pulled out of the washer/water. Those with stronger motor skills can pull dishes out of the washer/water and put them on the counter.

4

Laundry: kids can help to sort laundry by item (i.e. shirts, pants, socks), by family member, or by colour. They can also pair up socks or carry piles of laundry to each bedroom. Eventually, they can choose their favourite clothing items to pick out and fold alongside parents.

5

Windows: kids can be responsible for spraying the cleaner at the windows (with or without hand-over-hand support) while parents wipe it away. Kids could also point out spots on the windows that aren't clean to build their understanding of the task.

Check out our tip sheet on backward chaining if you think your child is ready to learn to do a whole helper task from start to finish.

