Stuff That Works
Building Families

Chapter 8

"Projects for Kids"

Take Action

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Chapter 8 Take Action: Content

- Brainstorm a list of projects for the kids and work the list

- Set a 1-hour time. Assign a project and step back and watch. Keep it simple. Clean the kitchen; paint a wall, etc...

- Share the project list and say 10 projects and set rewards for the number completed. For example we will go to the ice cream parlor when you have two complete but we go to a hotel for the night when all 10 are completed. Usually the kids burn through them fairly fast.

- Invest time on Stuffthatworksbooks.com

Brainstorm a list of projects for the kids and work the list

ACTION

I find that lists are great. I almost never really use them but I find the process of building them to be very helpful. Especially if I include the family in building them.

Gather the family. Be transparent in what you are doing and begin building the list. With some families it helps to have a list already begun with others a blank piece of paper is best. Trial and error will be needed to find what works best for you.

Note families change every year as members mature and become more aware of themselves and the other members. You must be aware and diligent to try new approaches as the family matures.

I always make sure that each family member has added to the list. This can be as simple as ending the session by asking each individual if they have anything to add or it can require that you ask the one quiet non participating member to please prioritize the list and bring it back to the family at a later time.

EXAMPLES

Here is a list I have used for Kid Projects:

1. Clean your room
2. Clean the bathroom
3. Paint a wall
4. Make sandwiches
5. Make breakfast
6. Organize shelves
7. Clean garage
8. Build a hammock
9. Build a shelf
10. Rake leaves
11. Weed Garden
12. Plant flowers
13. Wrap Presents
14. Decorate a Christmas tree
15. Shovel snow
16. Mop floor
17. Wash clothes

I try to pick items that stretch the skills of the child but prepare them with life skills. I make sure I keep them safe. No power tools or chemicals without my direct supervision.

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Set a 1-hour time. Assign a project and step back and watch. Keep it simple. Clean the kitchen; paint a wall, etc...

ACTION.

The idea here is for the child to own the task.

This is supposed to be a time of discovery and ownership.

DO NOT OFFER UNSOLICITED ADVICE!!!!

In my experience people learn from mistakes far more than from success. It is trial and error that makes us smarter and better.

The experimentation is what makes it fun and beneficial.

If you bark orders and become frustrated there is no win for anyone.

Let them do the work and figure it out.

Protect them and do not them hurt themselves but a little excess paint or time is no big deal.

Also set a reasonable time limit.

EXAMPLES

Paint a room:

I let my children paint a room. I helped prep and then showed them how to cut in and roll paint. Then I left them for an hour.

OMG. Took a lot of pictures afterwards. It must have been crazy in there given they had as much paint on themselves and the plastic floor coverings as them selves.

Clean up took longer than painting and involved showers but they learned a lot and had a ball.

Build a catapult:

I had the kids do research on you tube and Google for how to build a catapult. Let them design it. Then I helped them build their creations.

Then as asked I provided suggestions.

There was a ton of trial and error and just plain fun.

In the end they got "A's" at school.

They were proud and learned a ton as did I.

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ACTION.

This works best over a weekend or during a week. I have done both and the tackling of a project list over an extended time is a great life skill for your children to learn.

You have to be clear on which projects require adult supervision and how you want those tasks to be scheduled.

For example I have said you cannot clean the garage without me being present. I am available any time on Saturday to help but you need to let me know the time by Friday night.

You are preparing your children for the "real world"

EXAMPLES

Saturday's Work List

1. Clean Rooms
2. Clean upstairs Bath Room
3. Bring Laundry Downstairs
4. Wash dishes
5. Vacuum Family Room
6. Dust Living Room
7. Organize Games
8. Clean Garage
9. Rake Leaves
10. Feed Dogs

Pizza and Movie when complete

Family Task This week

Marriott weekend if 3 get complete by Friday:

1. Prep main floor for Paint
2. Paint main floor
3. Clean Main Floor
4. Return Furniture
5. Prep Up Stairs for paint

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Invest time on Stuffthatworksbooks.com to discover more ways to add fun to daily office life.

ACTION.

This is an easy one.

I believe that each of us can help someone else.

There is so much to know and to experience. You just can not do it on your own. So the best way forward is to share and learn from each other.

Technology makes this so easy today. That is why I built the web site Stuffthatworksbooks.com .

It only reaches its potential if you join in and add the stuff that works that you have found. Please make a contribution today. Help others find the Stuff That Works.

Others have already shared their stuff that works so be sure to check the site often as there is probably something to improve every area of your life.

The community is waiting and growing.   I hope you will join in and make a positive difference.

Thank you!

EXAMPLES

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Easy!

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