

Encourage your child to do more than the bare minimum

It was a windy evening when Jack took the recycling to the curb. But instead of leaving it to blow around the neighborhood, he did something extra. He placed a rock on the papers so they would not become litter.

Jack had learned to do more than the bare minimum. It's a great lesson in responsibility--and it's something you can teach in your home.

For instance, you could ask your child to think about the following "extras" in the kitchen:

- * If he made a snack after school, did he leave the kitchen ready for the next person?
- * If he used the last of the peanut butter, did he tell someone to add it to the grocery list?
- * If he poured water out of a pitcher, did he refill it? Or did he leave it empty for the next person?

Those lessons will also help your child be successful in school. Instead of leaving his backpack where someone could trip over it, he'll place it in his cubby. Instead of turning in a sloppy report, he'll take the time to copy it neatly.

When it's time for a big project, some kids will wait until the last minute and do the very minimum. Others will go beyond what was expected. They'll include an illustration in their essay. They'll add a great cover to their report on Italy.

Help your child learn to do more than the minimum. By going beyond what's expected, he'll be a great success in school and in life.

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