

## Help Kids Earn & Learn

By Amy Allen Clark

Founder of MomAdvice.com and Kenmore Home Management Expert

### 1 The younger set can...

### 2 Tweens can...

### 3 Teenagers can...

Summer jobs for kids provide incredible learning and family-bonding opportunities, whether the purpose is to earn income, raise money for charity, nurture a creative interest or simply pass the time. As summer ends, help your kids turn their jobs into weekend and after-school vocations. Check out our top jobs for kids; many can be continued year-round.

### The younger set can...

#### Sell lemonade

This is the ideal job for the youngest entrepreneurs. Keys to success are hot days and a location near neighborhood events like yard sales. Suggest unique offerings to increase sales, such as sparkling water, fresh squeezed lemons and fruit garnishes like watermelon and pineapple slices. Add crushed or shaved ice from your freezer for slushies or snow cones. Encourage children to make and offer light snacks like granola bars.

#### SUPPLIES

- Drink mix or lemons
- Water
- Sugar
- Juicer
- Pitcher
- Ice and cooler
- Cups
- Paper towels or wipes
- Table and chair
- Sign materials
- Optional snacks
- Money holder containing small bills and change



### quick tips

Young children love "playing work" and get a kick out of dressing the part, so help them design their "uniforms."

- Lemonade seller: add citrus-themed appliqués or iron-on crayon drawings to a plain tee shirt.
- House cleaner: convert an old work shirt into a cleaning smock.
- Gardener: decorate a sun hat or baseball cap and gardening gloves with a plant theme.

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#### Do household chores

Little kids learn responsibility by helping mom and dad with cleaning and laundry chores. Establish a fee or reward system for each task, such as 25¢ for each load of laundry. But first, make sure that your cleaning products are safe for kids. Check out my list of age-appropriate cleaning tasks in the sidebar.

No kidding,  
children can do

## SUPPLIES

- Child-safe cleaners
- Rags and towels



## Garden

Kids who enjoy a romp in the dirt will love helping parents and neighbors with yard work. Again, establish a fee or reward system, perhaps 10¢ per pulled weed or 25¢ per planted item. Check out library books or visit a nature center to help kids learn to identify plants and seeds. Have kids collect seeds and plant them. Or, help them package seeds in envelopes and sell them. Help kids plant and maintain a small vegetable or herb garden; they can sell the produce.

## SUPPLIES

- Gardening gloves
- Carpet square or knee cushion
- Watering can
- Three-tine cultivator
- Trowel
- Soil
- Seedlings
- Sunscreen

You'll find a wide variety of gardening supplies at [Sears.com](http://Sears.com), including sets made just for kids.



## household chores!

### TODDLERS CAN:

- Pick up toys and books
- Carry laundry to the laundry room
- Dust with a clean diaper or an old sock on their hand

### PRESCHOOLERS CAN:

- Set and clear the table
- Help prepare food
- Help put away groceries

### CHILDREN AGES 6-8 CAN:

- Fold and put away laundry
- Vacuum and mop
- Take out the trash



## Learning opportunities and safety

- Set boundaries. Make sure kids understand basic safety measures such as staying out of the street and not talking to strangers.
- Math matters. These jobs allow kids to practice simple arithmetic. Ask: How many cups of lemonade were sold? How much more lemonade was sold than granola bars?
- Teach the value of money. Encourage kids to save their earnings, spend wisely or donate to a good cause.
- Work together. Help siblings cooperate and appreciate their unique talents.
- Enjoy the moment. Relish the time spent teaching your child a new skill.

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## Our team wants to hear from you!

Do you have a question for our make-it-simple team or tips and ideas to share? Send them to [makeitsimple@searshc.com](mailto:makeitsimple@searshc.com). Each month, our experts will respond to select questions and we'll post select user tips and ideas. If we respond to your question or post your tip, you may receive a \$10 Sears gift card. Send yours today!

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### Tweens can...

#### Walk dogs & take care of pets

Encourage your child to research pet care and grooming. Check out library books or talk to a local veterinarian. Then announce the new service. I love the idea of tying a dog biscuit and contact card together with ribbon and delivering them door-to-door. This is a great opportunity for parent/child bonding time, and gives mom or dad a chance to scope out potential clients. Have kids create signature pet bandannas by cutting triangles from old sheets or scrap fabrics.

#### SUPPLIES

- Leashes
- Dog treats
- Bandannas
- Pet toys
- Materials for announcements



#### Wash cars

A car wash works especially well as a one-time group event or a by-request offering. For a group car wash, kids need to secure a space (a parent's driveway or a school parking lot) and post signs. List the event on community bulletin boards, local newspapers and Craigslist. A by-request car wash service requires a different kind of advertising. Create and distribute a flyer that lists the price, processes (use of soft cloths, vacuuming the car interior, etc.) and availability. Get the word out by talking to neighbors and friends.

## SITTING PRETTY

Help young babysitters prepare on-the-job kits:

Coloring books

Crayons, markers, pencils

Construction paper

Game ideas

Storybooks

Colorful yarns

Puzzle and riddle books

Old magazines to cut up

Big chalk

Safety scissors

Craft supplies  
(fabrics, old socks for puppets,  
glue, glitter, paper plates, etc.)

First aid kit



## LEND A HAND!

## SUPPLIES

- Buckets
- Hose and water source
- Cloths or soft sponges
- Car wash fluid or liquid dish soap
- Dry towels
- Glass cleaners
- Handheld vac
- Sign and flyer materials
- Small bills and change
- Sunscreen



## Help babysit

Tweens are good assistant babysitters. They can watch younger children while parents are at home but occupied. Encourage your child to learn first aid or take a babysitting course at school. An assistant's rate should be less than that of a full-fledged babysitter.

## SUPPLIES

- Babysitting kit (see my ideas in the sidebar)
- Emergency phone list



## Learning opportunities and safety

- Scope it out. Accompany your child to a customer's home on the first visit to assess safety and to show you're an active parent.
- Protect personal information. Talk to your kids about where and when personal information should be exchanged. If they're communicating their service via an email address or website, make sure you have access to it and that they don't post sensitive data.
- Mind your manners. Make sure kids understand the importance of good customer service, eye contact, timeliness and appropriate language and attire while on the job.

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### Teenagers can...

#### Babysit

Babysitting can be lucrative for teens. Before your child takes her first job, discuss expectations and rates. Teens should know first aid and basic childcare practices. Those with previous experience should establish a rate sheet and list their references. We love sitters who come prepared with a bag of books, games and activities to share with the kids. It shows professionalism and can help to justify higher fees.



#### SUPPLIES

- Babysitting kit (see my ideas in the sidebar on the [previous page](#))
- Emergency phone list

#### Do yard work

Teens can earn green and get exercise by starting a neighborhood lawn care service. Teach your child how to operate a lawn mower safely. Establish expectations with each homeowner upfront: Will your teen need to bag clippings, pull weeds and/or provide the mower and fuel? If you live in an area with large lots, encourage your child to team up with a sibling or friend.

It's easy to adapt this job to the changing seasons. Replace the lawn mower with a rake in autumn and a snow shovel or blower in the winter.

#### SUPPLIES

- In the summer: mower, yard waste bags, work gloves and sunscreen
- In the fall: a rake and large yard waste bags
- In the winter: a shovel or snow blower



*quick tip*

Teens operating a recycling service can personalize and decorate the bins.

Paint the sides with the name of their service or customize with eco-messaging: for example, statistics about trees, oil or energy saved each year by recycling certain items.



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## Recycle

Eco-conscious teens can start a neighborhood recycling service in towns that don't offer curbside recycling. Teens should identify the nearest recycling plant, create a list of accepted items and alert neighbors. Establish a flat per-trip rate based on average time and mileage, and set pickup dates and times for each household. Purchase bins for customer collection of recyclables. (See the sidebar for bin decorating ideas.) Teens should clean and redistribute the bins after each trip, and provide periodic updates on how the neighborhood is doing, like the number of bottles and cans recycled each month.

### SUPPLIES

- Car
- Work gloves
- Recycling bins
- Decorating materials



## Sew & craft

Teens with sewing skills can provide alterations or make custom items like eco-friendly hemp shopping bags. Teens can put craft skills to work by making jewelry, screen-printing posters and t-shirts and making bows, especially around the holidays. [Etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com) is a great online space for selling handmade goods. Or, explore opportunities at local boutiques, gift shops and craft fairs. Your teen is responsible for product photography, pricing and marketing when selling through these venues.

### SUPPLIES

- Sewing machine
- Craft supplies
- Computer with Internet access
- Fabric
- Digital camera



## Learning opportunities and safety

- Boost confidence. Promote poise by helping your children pursue talents, hone skills and market themselves.
- Manage responsibility. Make sure your kids can balance their time and work commitments alongside their other activities.
- Promote people skills. A part-time job helps teens learn to delegate and take direction from a superior.
- Pay attention. Guide kids to stay focused and avoid distractions like cell phones while on the job, particularly if driving is involved.
- Monitor online activity. Again, make sure kids act responsibly with online communications.



## DON'T SWEAT IT!

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**Allow your children to extend their jobs beyond summer as long as schoolwork and other responsibilities are addressed first. When children are ready for a more serious career, help them succeed by following these tips:**

- Create a résumé together.
- Ask friends and neighbors about potential opportunities or internships.
- Conduct practice interviews.
- Help select an appropriate interview outfit.
- Encourage good money management and saving habits.

*Back to beginning:* [The younger set can...](#) | [2](#) | [3](#)

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