

Allowances

Children who receive an allowance from their parents without an appropriate exchange are being misled into thinking that they are financially responsible. Being financially responsible means understanding the value of saving, budgeting, spending, and most importantly, earning money. Children who receive an allowance, regardless of completing chores or exhibiting good behavior, start to expect a regular payment. Because of this expectation, the kids lose their appreciation for their unearned allowance. Teaching children to be financially responsible is not effective when parents just give their children an allowance; an allowance is the reward for children who perform tasks around the house or properly behave and should be earned not given. Allowances are earned through completing chores, exhibiting proper behavior and performing well in school.

Most children earn an allowance by completing chores around the house. Simple chores that children perform include washing dishes, mopping floors, vacuuming, and taking out the trash. When these chores are completed, some parents either give their child the allowance on the spot or follow a traditional payment style of having the child complete the same chores for a week and reward them on the last day of the scheduled week. In an article for PBS Parents entitled "Should You Give Your Kids An Allowance," child psychologist Grace Hwang Lynch

argues that "a list kept on a dry-erase board" is helpful "to check that the kids have finished their tasks, and then everyone gets paid." Parents who use an allowance as a reward for their children prepare them for an actual job because working for a period of time and getting paid afterwards simulates receiving a consistent paycheck. A bonus is when kids work for their own money, the reward they receive is more gratifying so they appreciate their reward.

Some kids may earn their allowances by exhibiting good behavior. For kids who act out or misbehave, parents try to negotiate their children's good behavior for an allowance. Behaving properly is an issue that has adopted the solution of giving children an allowance to resolve their poor actions. Lynch says, "families follow the philosophy that kids receive an allowance just because they are apart of the family." This tells readers that within some families, parents will give each child an allowance regardless if they do chores or not. Children who get an allowance without reciprocating a work showcase that they do not deserve the money. Being apart of a family who distributes allowances as rewards for completing chores clearly displays that to get an allowance, you must earn for it. Receiving an allowance without work is a waste of money and does not build one's financial responsibility. Therefore, a child who behaves properly should only receive an allowance if they are truly behaving poorly.

Then, there are kids who obtain an allowance by doing well in school such as receiving good grades or performing well in extra curricular activities. For students who get allowances based on their grades, parents use the grade their children get and equate that value into how much money they earn. For example, if a child received an A, then he would receive the maximum amount of money for their allowance. If he got a B, then he would get the second largest amount, and as the grades decrease by letter, so does the value of the allowance. Getting an allowance based upon grades would give children incentive to do better in school and work for better grades. When children participate in extra curricular activities, their allowance could depend on their performance. Using extra curricular activities may not be as effective as chores or grades, but for student athletes or children who give their time to pursue something outside of school, an allowance works just as effective for those kids.

An allowance is a reward for children who earn it. Teaching children to be financially responsible by giving them an allowance without working for it is a waste of time and money. Children must earn their allowance through completing chores, behaving properly, or doing well in school. An allowance can be a great stepping-stone towards raising a prepared and financially responsible individual.