

WHAT TO TEACH YOUR KIDS BEFORE THEY LEAVE HOME

It would be great if by 18 every young person could do the following:

DOMESTIC SKILLS:

1. Cook – don't just open and pour – a traditional breakfast, lunch, dinner.
2. Wash and iron clothes without ruining them, plus removing spots.
3. Replace a button – baste a fallen hem and polish your own shoes.
4. Extra credit – make a loaf of bread, without a machine, or bake a cake from scratch.

PHYSICAL SKILLS:

1. Throw and catch balls of all sizes without breaking your fingers.
2. Swim half a mile, tread water for half an hour and float for an hour.
3. Ride a bike with confidence.
4. Extra credit: Be able to get a kite up in the air, keep it there and bring it back down in one piece.

HANDYMAN SKILLS:

1. Hang a picture straight without making extra holes in the wall.
2. Paint neatly, including cleaning up the mess.
3. Know which tools perform what functions and how to use them around the house.
4. Extra credit: Sharpen a knife without cutting yourself.

OUTDOOR SKILLS:

1. Hike with friends all day without getting lost, bitten, or covered with a rash.
2. Bait a hook, catch a fish, reel it in, remove the hook, then clean and cook the fish.
3. Plan and manage a weekend camping trip with friends.
4. Extra credit: Know enough about the wildlife in your area to recognize and feel like a friend to the animals.

PRACTICAL SKILLS:

1. Type well with both hands in the normal manner.
2. Set up your own computer system without help from anyone.
3. Drive a car, including one with a manual transmission and maintain it properly.
4. Extra credit: Change a flat tire.

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS:

1. Create a budget – it takes longer to earn money than to spend it.
2. Balance a checkbook – manually, even if you bank online.
3. Maintain an address book and a personal appointment calendar.
4. Extra credit: Set up a filing system to keep all of the paperwork in your life in one place.

SOCIAL SKILLS:

1. Carry on a conversation for 15 minutes with a person you don't know.
2. Speak before a small group of friends for a few minutes.
3. Tell a joke well enough so that everybody gets it and maybe even laughs.
4. Extra credit: Learn enough ballroom dancing so you can have fun at parties.

ARTISTIC SKILLS:

1. Draw an illustration at least well enough to get your point across.
2. Have enough confidence to sing aloud, even when everyone else can hear you.
3. Know how to play a musical instrument well enough to enjoy playing in a group.
4. Extra credit: Learn how to take a decent photograph, so you won't be disappointed later, when it's developed.

HUMAN SKILLS:

1. Care for a dog, cat or other animal including when it's sick.
2. Baby sit for children ranging in age from 6 months to 6 years.
3. Aid elderly or handicapped people without looking superior.
4. Extra credit: Help a person in need without exposing either one of you to danger.

ORIENTATION SKILLS:

1. Get around town on a bus, even if you usually walk or drive.
2. Read a map, including road maps.
3. Know what to do if you find yourself in a bad neighborhood.
4. Extra credit: Know which direction is north, south, east and west without a compass whenever you're outside.

RECREATION SKILLS:

1. Play a team sport instead of just watching.
2. Maintain a fitness regimen
3. Learn a game like bridge or chess you can play with friends for life.
4. Extra credit: Know how to ride a horse, handle a boat or enjoy a snow sport.

SURVIVAL SKILLS:

1. Know basic first aid and maintain a complete first aid kit.
2. Know what to do if you get sick, especially if you're alone.
3. Know when to defend yourself, then know how to be effective.
4. Extra credit: Know CPR, the life you save may be your father's or mother's.