

Encourage your child to do more than the bare minimum

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

Juan 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 doing the following “extras” in the kitchen:

- If he makes a snack after school, does he leave the kitchen clean?
- If he uses the last of the peanut butter, does he tell someone to add it to the grocery list?
- If he pours the rest of the water out of a pitcher, does he refill it?

Helping your child do more than the bare minimum will also help him be successful in school:

- Instead of leaving his backpack where someone could trip over it, he places it in his cubby.
- Instead of turning in a sloppy report, he takes the time to write it out neatly.
- Instead of waiting until the last minute to work on his project, he starts early and goes beyond what is expected. He includes an illustration in his essay. He adds a great cover to his report.

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