

Learning to Work and Save

“An essential part of teaching children to be disciplined and responsible is to have them learn to work.”

James E. Faust, “The Greatest Challenge in the World—Good Parenting,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 32

OBJECTIVES

Help children understand the value of hard work and that there are rewards for high levels of work by suggesting ideas of what sorts of work can be done along with appropriate rewards for the completion of that work.

Help children understand the value of savings and delayed gratification through a discussion and game for younger children and through direct implementation for older children. The value of savings can be taught through an explanation of investing savings in a way that will allow savings to grow.

Have regular and clear communication and keep your children involved by allowing them to decide upon what work will be done along with allowing suggestions as to what rewards will be given in exchange for completion of the work.

WHY?

Learning to work and be industrious is essential to becoming successful in this life. Our Father in Heaven desires for all of us to “put [our] shoulders to the wheel” each and every day. While oftentimes children receive financial rewards for doing work for their parents, they are often not required to do anything specific with these financial rewards. In fact, Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught that “too many of our youth get into financial difficulty because they never learned proper principles of financial common sense at home” (*Ensign*, May 2004, 42–43). This lesson will allow parents to teach their children the impact of investing savings so that these financial rewards may grow, helping children provide for their education, missions, and items they wish to purchase.

LESSON

Here you will begin your lesson. What is it you are trying to accomplish? You can be very creative here. There are a number of different formats that you can use.

1. Teach the Doctrine. President James E. Faust said that “an essential part of teaching children to be disciplined and responsible is to have them learn to work. As we grow up, many of us are like the man who said, “I like work; it fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours”” (James E. Faust, “The Greatest Challenge in the World—Good Parenting,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 32).

Our Heavenly Father requires and expects each of us to work. While the work we perform is necessary and important, equally important is what we choose to do with the rewards received as a result of the work we perform (see Matthew 15:14-25). The Lord is not pleased when we are careless or irresponsible with the blessings we are given.

Three things should be done when we receive money:

- a. Pay your tithing.
 - b. Contribute to savings.
 - c. Invest in a mission fund or education fund. This can be done by simply telling your children that the money they choose to invest can be given directly to their mom and dad. The responsibility will then rest with you to invest this wisely for your children and properly reward them for choosing the more efficient way of managing their own finances.
2. Story and discussion. Share a story or personal experience of your own in which you worked hard and received a financial reward. Explain the way you felt when you were done with the work. Further explain what you did with the finances you received.

Ask your family whether your decision was good or bad. Why?

Explain to your children the value of investing the financial rewards we receive. Demonstrate that money invested can grow at a faster rate than money sitting in a piggy bank or savings account at your local bank. In this way, saving money for a mission or for college is easier since we do not need to save as large an amount.

Suggestions for families with younger children. Make a list of chores that can be done by all family members, such as doing the dishes, making your bed, cleaning your room, and so on. Explain that with each chore completed, each child will receive a reward of a predetermined amount specified by you. Incentives can be established by explaining that if each child can save a certain amount of money, the family will go on a vacation or out to the children's favorite restaurant. Be creative and include your children.

While the lesson of investing our savings is extremely important, it may not be suitable for younger children, as this topic may be too difficult for them to understand. Use discretion. If it is too difficult, teach the value of saving by expressing how your children will feel when they have been able to purchase something they have saved for, i.e., a bicycle, a toy, or some other goal.

ASSIGNMENTS

Include some assignments that the family should try to accomplish during the next week or the next month that will help them incorporate the objectives you are trying to teach into their daily lives. Assignments could include:

1. Application. Encourage them to begin to increase their work today. Establish incentives with children regarding savings targets and goals. The goal is to teach your children that sacrifice brings forth blessings. Possible ideas include:

- Matching Mission Fund
- If all children save a certain amount before a certain date, the family will go to Disneyland.
- Full reimbursement if mission is paid in full before leaving

2. Goals and Journals. Encourage them to set specific goals relative to savings and amount of work performed and to write them down in their journals.

3. Application. Encourage the application of what you have taught to the lives of those you are teaching. Follow up as often as possible—five minutes at the beginning or end of each family home evening would be a great idea to ensure that the principles taught in this lesson are being implemented.

SUGGESTED SONGS

Hymn 252: “Put Your Shoulder to the Wheel”

Hymn 224: “I Have Work Enough To Do”

Hymn 241: “Count Your Many Blessings”

Children’s Songbook: “I Have Two Little Hands”

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