

Parent Guide: Independent Learning Life Skills Challenge (Ages 7-9)

Dear Moms of Growing Problem-Solvers 🚀

You've entered a new phase—your child is no longer a tiny tornado of energy (well, most of the time), but instead, they're eager to take on new responsibilities and prove they can handle the “big kid” stuff.

And that's exactly what this program is all about—helping them build **confidence, responsibility, and real-world skills** in a way that's engaging and doable.

How This Challenge Works:

- ✓ 12-week program focusing on life skills that **build independence**.
- ✓ Each two-week section covers a new area (chores, money basics, self-care, organization, and more).
- ✓ Hands-on approach—no worksheets, just real-world learning!

What to Expect:

- ✓ Goal: The skill your child will develop.
- ✓ Task: A real-life action step.
- ✓ Mini-Challenge: A fun way to practice!
- ✓ 🏆 Badge Earned: Because recognition = motivation!
- ✓ Why It Matters: Quick breakdown of why this is important.
- ✓ Why This Works: How it builds confidence and practical skills.

How to Use This Plan:

- 🔧 Give them room to try—mistakes = learning!
- 👏 Encourage, celebrate, and let them take the lead.
- 🌱 Skills build over time—this is the **foundation for responsibility and problem-solving** in later years.

Who Am I?

I'm Kara Peterson—writer, educator, and fellow parent. I believe kids thrive when they learn through doing—and this plan makes that happen in a way that works for real families.

Let's raise confident, capable kids—one skill at a time! 🎉

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Ages 7-9: Expanding Responsibility & Problem-Solving

Weeks 1-2: Personal Organization

GOAL: STRENGTHEN INDEPENDENCE IN DAILY ROUTINES.

TASK: FOLLOW A MORNING ROUTINE, INCLUDING WAKING UP, DRESSING, AND BRUSHING TEETH WITHOUT REMINDERS.

MINI-CHALLENGE: COMPLETE THE MORNING ROUTINE ON TIME FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE DAYS.

 **WHY IT MATTERS?** ENCOURAGES SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN PERSONAL CARE.

 **WHY THIS WORKS:**

✓ **STEP-BY-STEP LEARNING** – KIDS GRADUALLY TAKE FULL CONTROL OF THEIR MORNINGS.

✓ **REAL-LIFE APPLICATION** – ESTABLISHES STRUCTURE FOR SCHOOL DAYS AND BEYOND.

✓ **GROWS WITH THEM** – PREPARES THEM FOR MANAGING TIME AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

PARENT INSTRUCTIONS:

1. IN THE AGES 4-6 LIFE SKILLS, CHILDREN LEARNED ABOUT ROUTINES. NOW WE ARE ASKING THAT THEY MAINTAIN THEM WITHOUT INSTRUCTION.
2. WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE A ROUTINE – SIT DOWN WITH YOUR CHILD AND LIST THE KEY STEPS THEY NEED TO COMPLETE EACH MORNING.
3. USE A WEEKLY PROGRESS CHART, ONE IS INCLUDED, YOU CAN DESIGN YOUR OWN TO INCLUDE ROOM FOR STICKERS OR CHECKMARKS.
4. INTRODUCE A TIMER OR ALARM – HAVE YOUR CHILD SET THEIR OWN ALARM TO WAKE UP. IF THEY STRUGGLE WITH TIME MANAGEMENT, INTRODUCE A SMALL CHALLENGE LIKE "CAN YOU GET DRESSED IN 5 MINUTES?" TO MAKE IT FUN.
5. ENCOURAGE SELF-REFLECTION – AT THE END OF EACH WEEK, REVIEW THE PROGRESS CHART WITH YOUR CHILD. ASK: "WHICH PARTS OF YOUR ROUTINE WERE EASY?" "WHICH WERE HARDER?" "WHAT COULD WE ADJUST FOR NEXT WEEK?"
6. REWARD PROGRESS – IF THEY COMPLETE FIVE CONSECUTIVE DAYS OF THEIR ROUTINE ON TIME, LET THEM CHOOSE A SMALL PRIVILEGE (EXTRA PLAYTIME, A SPECIAL BREAKFAST, ETC.).
7. PRINT THE BADGE & CELEBRATE – WHEN THEY COMPLETE TWO FULL WEEKS, AWARD THEM THE MORNING MASTER BADGE WITH A HIGH-FIVE OR SMALL CELEBRATION!

Ages 7-9: Expanding Responsibility & Problem-Solving

Weeks 3-4: Meal Prep & Kitchen Basics

GOAL: INCREASE KITCHEN INDEPENDENCE.

TASK: MAKE A SIMPLE MEAL (E.G., SANDWICH, SCRAMBLED EGGS).

MINI-CHALLENGE: PACK A LUNCH OR SNACK FOR AN OUTING.

 **WHY IT MATTERS?** ENCOURAGES HEALTHY INDEPENDENCE.

 **WHY THIS WORKS:**

✓ **STEP-BY-STEP LEARNING** – BUILDS ON SIMPLE TASKS.

✓ **REAL-LIFE APPLICATION** – PREPARES KIDS FOR MEAL RESPONSIBILITY.

✓ **GROWS WITH THEM** – SKILLS INCREASE IN COMPLEXITY.

PARENT INSTRUCTIONS:

1. THIS IS A GREAT WHEN TEAMED WITH: 20 EASY AND HEALTHY BREAKFASTS AND SNACKS!:
2. LET YOUR CHILD PICK A SIMPLE MEAL TO PREPARE (SANDWICH, SCRAMBLED EGGS, FRUIT SALAD, ETC.).
3. SUPERVISE AS THEY PRACTICE USING KITCHEN TOOLS SAFELY (SPREADING, STIRRING, BASIC CUTTING).
4. GRADUALLY ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE BY LETTING THEM PREPARE THE MEAL WITH MINIMAL HELP.
5. FOR THE MINI-CHALLENGE, HAVE THEM PACK A SNACK OR LUNCH FOR A TRIP AND DISCUSS BALANCED NUTRITION.
6. CELEBRATE THEIR ACHIEVEMENT BY PRINTING THE JUNIOR CHEF BADGE!

Ages 7-9: Expanding Responsibility & Problem-Solving

Weeks 5-6: Managing Money Basics

GOAL: TEACH EARLY MONEY MANAGEMENT AND VALUE RECOGNITION.

TASK: PRACTICE COUNTING CHANGE AND MANAGING A SMALL ALLOWANCE.

MINI-CHALLENGE: SAVE UP FOR AND PURCHASE A SMALL ITEM WITHIN A SET BUDGET.

 **WHY IT MATTERS?** HELPS KIDS UNDERSTAND THE BASICS OF EARNING AND SPENDING.

 **WHY THIS WORKS:**

✓ **STEP-BY-STEP LEARNING** – HANDS-ON MONEY COUNTING AND BUDGETING.

✓ **REAL-LIFE APPLICATION** – ENCOURAGES MINDFUL SPENDING CHOICES.

✓ **GROWS WITH THEM** – SETS THE FOUNDATION FOR FINANCIAL LITERACY.

PARENT INSTRUCTIONS:

1. GIVE YOUR CHILD REAL OR PLAY MONEY TO PRACTICE COUNTING CHANGE AND RECOGNIZING COIN VALUES.
2. THERE ARE ALSO A LOT OF “MONEY GAMES” YOU CAN PLAY AT THIS AGE [HTTPS://EPICPUBLISHER.COM/EDUCATION/BOARD-GAMES-THAT-TEACH-FINANCIAL-LITERACY-TO-YOUR-KIDS/](https://epicpublisher.com/education/board-games-that-teach-financial-literacy-to-your-kids/)
3. IF THEY RECEIVE AN ALLOWANCE, HELP THEM DIVIDE IT INTO SAVING, SPENDING, AND GIVING CATEGORIES.
4. SET A SMALL SAVINGS GOAL (E.G., BUYING A BOOK OR TOY) AND TRACK PROGRESS TOGETHER.
5. TAKE THEM SHOPPING WITH A SET BUDGET AND DISCUSS HOW TO MAKE SMART PURCHASING CHOICES.
6. PRINT THE MONEY STARTER BADGE ONCE THEY SUCCESSFULLY SAVE AND PURCHASE AN ITEM!

Ages 7-9: Expanding Responsibility & Problem-Solving

Weeks 7-8: DIY & Home Fixes

GOAL: LEARN BASIC HOME MAINTENANCE SKILLS TO TAKE CARE OF PERSONAL SPACES AND SMALL HOUSEHOLD TASKS.

TASK: PRACTICE SIMPLE DIY FIXES LIKE CHANGING A LIGHTBULB, REPLACING BATTERIES, PLUNGING A SINK (WITH SUPERVISION), AND USING BASIC TOOLS.

MINI-CHALLENGE: SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THREE HOUSEHOLD MAINTENANCE TASKS FROM THE ATTACHED LIST.

 **WHY IT MATTERS?** BUILDS CONFIDENCE IN HANDLING SMALL HOUSEHOLD TASKS INDEPENDENTLY.

 **WHY THIS WORKS:**

✓ **STEP-BY-STEP LEARNING** – INTRODUCES KIDS TO BASIC HOME MAINTENANCE IN A SAFE, SUPERVISED WAY.

✓ **REAL-LIFE APPLICATION** – PREPARES THEM TO CARE FOR THEIR OWN SPACE AND BELONGINGS.

✓ **GROWS WITH THEM** – LAYS THE FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE INDEPENDENCE AND PROBLEM-SOLVING.

PARENT INSTRUCTIONS:

1. INTRODUCE THE CONCEPT – EXPLAIN THAT TAKING CARE OF SMALL HOME TASKS HELPS KEEP THE HOUSE RUNNING SMOOTHLY.
2. DEMONSTRATE FIRST – SHOW THEM HOW TO SAFELY COMPLETE A TASK BEFORE LETTING THEM TRY.
3. SUPERVISE AS NEEDED – GUIDE THEM THROUGH HANDS-ON PRACTICE BUT ALLOW FOR INDEPENDENCE WHEN APPROPRIATE.
4. PROVIDE THE RIGHT TOOLS – LET THEM USE A SMALL TOOLKIT (SCREWDRIVER, PLUNGER, DUSTER, ETC.) SUITED TO THEIR ABILITIES.
5. MAKE IT FUN! – TURN IT INTO A CHALLENGE, REWARD EFFORT WITH THE HANDY HELPER BADGE, AND CELEBRATE SUCCESSSES.


Ages 7-9: Expanding Responsibility & Problem-Solving

Weeks 9-10: Home Safety & Emergency Basics (Calling 911, basic first aid)

GOAL: ENSURE CHILDREN UNDERSTAND SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS.

TASK: LEARN HOW AND WHEN TO CALL 911, PRACTICE BASIC FIRST AID, AND MEMORIZE HOME EMERGENCY CONTACTS.

MINI-CHALLENGE: ROLE-PLAY EMERGENCY SCENARIOS WITH A PARENT OR GUARDIAN.

 **WHY IT MATTERS?** PREPARES KIDS TO ACT CONFIDENTLY IN EMERGENCIES.

 **WHY THIS WORKS:**

✓ **STEP-BY-STEP LEARNING** – BUILDS KNOWLEDGE THROUGH GUIDED PRACTICE.

✓ **REAL-LIFE APPLICATION** – REINFORCES CRITICAL SAFETY HABITS.

✓ **GROWS WITH THEM** – INCREASES AWARENESS AND QUICK RESPONSE SKILLS.

PARENT INSTRUCTIONS:

1. EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN SIMPLE TERMS.
2. PRACTICE DIALING 911 ON AN UNPLUGGED DEVICE AND ROLE-PLAY DIFFERENT EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.
3. REVIEW HOME EMERGENCY CONTACTS AND HELP THEM MEMORIZE AT LEAST ONE NUMBER.
4. TEACH BASIC FIRST AID, SUCH AS APPLYING A BANDAGE OR CLEANING A SMALL CUT.
5. BOOST THEIR CONFIDENCE BY PRINTING THE SAFETY EXPERT BADGE!

Ages 7-9: Expanding Responsibility & Problem-Solving

Weeks 11-12: Managing Responsibilities

GOAL: LEARN TO BALANCE TASKS AND COMMITMENTS.

TASK: TRACK AND COMPLETE DAILY RESPONSIBILITIES LIKE CHORES AND HOMEWORK WITHOUT REMINDERS.

MINI-CHALLENGE: USE A SIMPLE PLANNER OR CHART TO TRACK COMPLETED TASKS FOR ONE WEEK.

 **WHY IT MATTERS?** HELPS KIDS DEVELOP STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS.

 **WHY THIS WORKS:**

✓ **STEP-BY-STEP LEARNING** – INTRODUCES PLANNING AND SELF-DISCIPLINE..

✓ **REAL-LIFE APPLICATION** –ENCOURAGES ACCOUNTABILITY AND FOLLOW-THROUGH.

✓ **GROWS WITH THEM** –SETS THE FOUNDATION FOR TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS.

PARENT INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1.WORK WITH YOUR CHILD TO CREATE A SIMPLE DAILY CHECKLIST FOR CHORES, HOMEWORK, AND PERSONAL TASKS.
- 2.ENCOURAGE THEM TO TRACK THEIR PROGRESS IN A PLANNER, WHITEBOARD, OR STICKER CHART.
- 3.RESIST THE URGE TO REMIND THEM—ALLOW THEM TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.
- 4.AT THE END OF THE WEEK, REVIEW HOW WELL THEY BALANCED THEIR TASKS AND CELEBRATE THEIR EFFORT.
- 5.AWARD THEM THE RESPONSIBILITY CHAMPION BADGE FOR COMPLETING THE CHALLENGE!