

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 it to blow around the neighborhood, he did something extra. He placed a rock on the papers 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 the following "extras" in the kitchen:

- If he made a snack after school, did he leave the kitchen clean?
- If he used the last of the peanut butter, did he tell someone to add it to the grocery list?
- If he poured the rest of the water out of a pitcher, did 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 will place it in his cubby.
- Instead of turning in a sloppy report, he will take the time to write it out neatly.
- Instead of waiting until the last minute to work on his project, he will start early and go beyond what is expected. He'll include an illustration in his essay. He'll add a great cover to his report.

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