

# Do You Teach “Soft Skills” at Home?

Will your child graduate from high school or college with all the skills needed to get and keep a job? Many parents look to educators to prepare their children for the workplace. While academics are crucial, employers tell us that “soft skills” are also essential.

In the report *Are They Ready to Work?*, 40% of employers said the high school graduate workers they hire lack the soft skills needed for entry level jobs. *Employers want employees who are responsible and get along with their peers.* Customers, treated badly, do not return, and business suffers.

Unfortunately, research shows that many kids entering the work force in the next 20 years will lack sufficient soft-skills.

Skills your child need include:

- Team work. He will need to work and cooperate with others.
- A positive attitude. It helps if workers are optimistic and upbeat.
- Decision-making and problem-solving.
- Self-confidence in her ability to do her job.
- Good communication. He must be able to express his ideas and needs.

- Desire to listen, learn and serve.
- Concern for others -- empathy.
- The ability to *accept criticism* and *use it* to do a better job.
- The comfort to work with diverse groups of people.
- Flexibility. She must be able to accept change and new ideas.
- A good work ethic. He will be expected to show up for work on time and carry out work duties in a timely manner.

Kids learn and practice soft skills at school. However, school is not enough. They must also learn and use these skills at home.



## Prepare your child for future jobs.

1. Help him practice soft-skills daily – at home.
2. Be a good role model. Your child learns by what she sees and hears.
3. Expect him to complete weekly chores.
4. Encourage her to volunteer outside the home – with or without you.
5. Support her when she struggles with school work. Do not let her quit.
6. Help him solve problems with school, friends and family.
7. Limit TV, video and computer time. Instead, suggest she interact with her friends.

Practice makes perfect. Not only do children learn from doing chores and volunteering, they also build a resume. Employers and colleges want involved children who use their soft skills.

*Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John’s Children’s Hospital  
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