

How to Have a Clean Home School!

Notes on Presentation Given at LDS-OHEA 2013

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How to Have a Clean Home School!

“Really, it’s not an oxymoron! People exist who do both! And you can become one of them! Or at least learn how to be little better at it....”

Structure

In our not too distant agrarian past, life’s demands created and demanded a structure. Certain crops would only survive and produce if they were planted at specific times. Cows needed milking. Chickens needed feeding and eggs collected. For many things, timing was important. I realize that some still live on farms. Those not living on farms and who are home schooling often find it difficult to establish a family rhythm. For generations family rhythms were passed down to the next generation. After World War II, this became increasingly rare.

Today, many struggle with setting family rhythms and caring for their homes. This is largely to the fact they were never taught how to run a home, though they may have had chores growing up. Completing a chore is not the same as running the system called home. Chores prepares one to be task oriented, learning to run a home prepares one to be system oriented. System orientation includes the tasks, and also creates patterns, and patterns lead to good habits that become daily rhythms.

Developing your discipline of habit and a family rhythm takes time, lots of time. So, be patient with your-self! So what do you do? Take baby steps and work on developing the habit of personal rhythms and then family rhythms. Your personal rhythms influence your family. Healthy family rhythms can create a reliable structure and add to the sense of belonging and peace in the home.

Bedtime and Sleep

Begin with establishing a bed time. What? Your children won’t go to bed? Children often stay up late because their parents do. Often children and adults have difficulty going to sleep, because their body is not producing enough melatonin. Bright lights, television screens and computer screens can trick your body into thinking it is still day and then melatonin is suppressed. Melatonin helps us sleep. Some scientists believe there is a connection between melatonin suppression by artificial light (staying up late) and increased levels of breast cancer.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-391267/Artificial-light-increases-breast-cancer-risk.html>

Besides, the Lord said:

“Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another; cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated.” Doctrine and Covenants 88:124

Apparently, He wants us to retire before we are exhausted. He does not want us to be dropping into bed weary. He also wants us to arise early enough we feel invigorated. Rather than trying to finish projects at the end of the day when your mind is slowing and burdened with the cares of the day, try arising earlier when your mind is clear and more amenable to creative thought. Consider turning off TV, computer and bright light about 1 hour before bedtime. May I also suggest the Walton plan?

The Walton Plan

During the 1970s there was a television show called —*The Waltons*. It was about a family who lived during the Great Depression. Each night the family retired at the same time. The lights would go out and you would hear, “good night ma, Good night pa.” “Goodnight John-boy, goodnight Mary Ellen...” The parents and grandparents rose each morning earlier than the children. So, consider retiring earlier and rising earlier.

Dinner Time is the Door to the Evening

Next plan regular meal times. I find when children retire late, they want to sleep late, and then meals are late and everything gets out of rhythm. Start with setting dinner at a regular time. I find that one of the hardest things to do is get to bed at a decent time, if dinner is late! So ask everyone their favorite meals and put together a menu for the week. Dinner success will be higher if you have a plan. Everyone will be on board if they know that somewhere along the week they will have their favorite dish! Let the family help prepare and clean up after the meal. “Remember, many hands make the work light!”

Breakfast the Key to the Day

Next in importance is a healthy balanced breakfast. The goal is to eat a breakfast that does not cause a high sugar spike, which then leads to a sugar drop about two hours after breakfast. Eating a good breakfast will feed their brains and lead to less contention and irritability!

Minimum Maintenance Training— Personal Care and Family Work

Up to 8 years old.

Daily, up to eight years old... Brain development, patterning, habits, and character training. We help children build healthy relationships with God by teaching them to pray when they are young, and help them develop the habitude of daily gratitude. A child’s character training begins before a child can talk and walk, as we dress them and care for them. We teach them regularity as we help them dress and groom them in the morning. Later as they begin to talk and walk they can begin helping with Family Work. (See [Family Work, by Kathleen Bahr](#)). Even toddlers can do simple things like begin to help sort laundry or wipe dust from the base boards and lower parts of furniture. The key to family work is to do it together where parents can take advantage of teaching moments. See the *Family Guidebook* and *Deuteronomy 6:7*. Minimum maintenance are the daily things such as making beds, picking up rooms, putting belongings away, and wiping bathroom counters, etc. These are the things that keep a home in a general feel of neat. We like to do it after dinner is cleaned up, and it usually takes less than 30 minutes.

Family Guide Book

<http://www.lds.org/manual/family-guidebook?lang=eng> Read especially the section on teaching the Gospel in the Home— Working Together.

Family Work by Kathleen Bahr, BYU Magazine, Spring, 2000.

<http://magazine.byu.edu/?act=view&a=151>

Work in the Home Building Enduring Relationships, by Kathleen Slaugh Bahr

http://lds-ohea.org/Work%20in%20the%20Home_%20BuildingRel_Bahr.pdf

The Sacred Nature of Everyday Work by Kathleen Slaugh Bahr

<http://www.ldsmag.com/1/article/5787> (click on print to read the article)

My Home as a Temple by Kristine Manwaring

<http://lds-ohea.org/articles/MyHomeAsATemple.pdf>

Internal Economy

I do not create an artificial internal economy. I am not a bank. I do not do allowances or pay children to serve in the home. Home is their training ground and is not a factory. They will value money more that they earn working for others, when they are old enough and trained enough to do a quality job. They will not become entitled because of family work.

Joseph Smith family Model

When the Joseph Smith Sr. Family had financial hardships the family worked together on their farm, on neighbor's farms and in town selling their wares.

1816, The Smiths made barrels, buckets, chips and birch brooms Joseph Sr. and sons were brick layers.

Joseph Jr. works in Martin Harris' fields for \$.50 a day.

Lucy makes oilcloth coverings, maple syrup, root beer, gingerbread cakes, and boiled eggs to sell.

"A Joseph Smith Chronology," by J. Christopher Conkling.

Move to Palmyra 1818

Joseph Smith- Father, Alvin, and Hyrum hired out to neighbor farms.

When Joseph was 11, Joseph, his father and brothers cleared the land in Palmyra for their farm.

Father Smith and boys helped other farmers.

In the summer of 1819 Joseph Jr. pulled his cart to camp meetings and sold baked goods.

“*Stories from the Life of Joseph*” Smith by Richard E. Turley and Lael Litke page 15-17.

Deep Cleaning and When to Apprentice Youth to Learn Deep Cleaning

8-12 years old.

In times past, apprenticeships began between 10—14 years old, depending on the job and the readiness of the child. Apprentices usually began by learning to care and maintain the shop and tools. Businesses were busy and there was usually not a lot of time for training in the business. The apprentice had to do all the grunt work and pick up the business, a little here and a little there along the way.

Morning before the household rises is a perfect time to have uninterrupted deep cleaning time. You are less likely to receive phone calls, visitors, and other interruptions. Set aside 15 minutes to an hour a day for deep cleaning. Begin at your front door. Work clock wise, top to bottom in each room. Clean the cobwebs, wipe the ceiling, clean the walls, dust. Work only until time set aside is done. Each day, work at your deep cleaning for the allotted time. When a child is eight, he is old enough to work with you one-on-one to learn how to deep cleaning. They learn not only the tasks, but the systems of running a home.

Entrepreneurship

12-18 years old.

By 12-16 years of age, most children are reared through family work and deep cleaning are trained enough to be able to work outside the home—cleaning, mowing, babysitting, taking out garbage cans, cooking breads or pies etc. for neighbors. It is a good lesson to determine what skills they have, what they can do, and figure a business and marketing plan. Just be cautious, while creating a business plan and strategy can be educational, be careful the new business does not detract from study time.

Stewardships— Simulation for Life and Work

12-18 years old.

When a child is twelve, they should have had four years working alongside of mom deep cleaning. They should be ready to be assigned stewardship over a major task, such as meal planning and preparation, or lawn care, or laundry. Every six months to a year they can rotate to another stewardship.

Shift from Apprentice to Stewardship- *Christmas Day in the Morning* by Pearl S. Buck

Graduation

“*Laddie: A True Blue Story*,” by Gene Stratton Porter.

Lesson: Have the child run the household for a month before leaving home for college, marriage, or career.

This is a doable plan, easy to follow, and developmentally appropriate for children as they grow. In doing this, you will notice increased peace, harmony, and order, develop in your home.