

Pointers For Parents

Cleaning Up Can Be Child's Play

(NAPSA)—“Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share. Clean up, clean up, soon the mess will not be there,” goes the famous nursery song. For decades, parents have been instilling the lessons of cleaning in young children. Like learning to tie shoelaces or getting dressed, cleaning is an important skill that kids can begin to learn at an early age. In fact, 32 percent of Americans think it is appropriate to have children as young as 3 to 5 years old help clean the house, according to a recent survey of parents.

“From toy kitchens and lawn mowers to play cleaning supplies, children love mimicking mom and dad when it comes to chores,” said Jackie Cooper, director of marketing communications for Eureka. “By making cleaning a playtime activity, kids can learn to get involved in household chores and see that cleaning can be fun.”

Kids already know how to play with toys and make believe, so the trick is to transform chores into playtime. Consider the following advice and tips to make a child's transition from passive bystander to active cleaner a little smoother:

• **For Little Ones, Make It A Game**—When demonstrating what children should do, explain tasks as an instructor would teach a new game. Tell kids the rules and how they can “win” or get to the end of the game. Make the chore a timed race or reward the child who is able to pick up the most toys. Kids respond well to



The Cleaning Game—Getting children involved in the household upkeep is a great way to teach them about responsibility.

competition and will enjoy the sense of accomplishment when the “cleaning game” is over. A star on their chore chart or choosing that night's dessert may motivate some kids, while others may be excited by a simple hug.

• **For Pretweens, Keep It Simple**—As little ones get older, they can take on more responsibility out of the game environment. Make sure the delegated chores are simple enough for children to understand and handle, and try limiting tasks to two steps. Avoid tasks such as unloading the dishwasher, which requires remembering where everything goes and how to organize each type of dish. “First, dust under the table and then throw the paper towel away” is an easier two-step process that kids can master.

• **For Bigger Kids, Cleaning Tools They Can Use**—When they are old enough to use cleaning appliances and products on their own, bigger kids can help with more heavy-duty work. Many kids love to vacuum—and may have practiced for years with a toy version of the appliance. Some vacuum cleaners are particularly appropriate for pre-teens, such as the Eureka Optima vacuum, which weighs only 12 pounds and is extremely easy to use. It adjusts to different heights and locks into one of 13 positions—which means both you and your child can use the same “grown-up” vacuum, regardless of height.

“The Eureka Optima is great for children who are old enough to help clean because it has a light-weight design but does not sacrifice performance. With a standard 12-amp motor, the vacuum is easy for the kids to use while providing a thorough clean,” said Cooper. This cleaning tool also features an ergonomic “O”-shaped handle that lets wrists and hands move naturally along the circle for continuous comfort—so kids can avoid awkward twists and turns when pushing and pulling the vacuum.

“Getting children involved in the household upkeep is a great way to teach them about responsibility,” said Cooper. “By demonstrating safe cleaning practices and ways to make it fun, you can have a helper for life.”

For retail locations and product information about the Eureka Optima, consumers can visit www.eureka.com.