

Creating Household Rules for the Family

Have you hanged a list of rules in your house, do you have any rules at all or are there some unwritten rules you expect everyone to follow?

Some parents don't create house rules at all because they expect a certain level of responsibility from their teenagers. But come to think of it's these unwritten rules that leads to a lot of arguments amongst family members because we don't always think or act in the same way.

For example, it's Mary's turn to wash the dishes tonight which she already has and the sink is spotlessly clean, but Simon had his meal late after Mary had already gone to bed.

What should Simon do? Clean his own plate because Mary has already gone to bed or leave it in the sink for her to clean in the morning because it was her turn to clean the dishes?

You expect your child to know what to do and when to do it, if you're kids are of the aforementioned type good for you, and if they are not, it might be time to create some rules for them.

When you create a list of rules and communicate the consequences of breaking them, you become very clear about your expectations from your family, and it will help make life a little easier for you.

Why Household rules are necessary

Household rules are important because they help the kids understand what's okay and what is not okay.

Household rules also prevent power struggles amongst the teenagers in the house

Household rules help to maintain cleanliness and order and create structure around the house

Household rules can instil discipline & good manners in your kids at an early age.

Household rules help kids learn to take responsibility for their actions.

Types of Household Rules

Family Rules – these entail your relationship with each other such as respecting personal space, telling the truth, respecting your elders, being polite to guests etc.

House Rules – These are the rules that create a clean, orderly and safe house for the family.

Our focus today is on the latter, here are some sample rules you can implement in the house.

Cleanliness

Always clean up after yourself

Wash your dishes if you find a clean sink.

Always make your bed in the morning

Washing hands, brushing teeth, and bathing must be done for good hygiene

Do not write or draw on the walls

Order

Always return something in its right place.

Separate your dirty laundry from the clean ones

Always fold your clothes and ensure your shoes or books or toys are neatly arranged

Always follow the cleaning timetable.

Security & Safety

Knock on closed doors before entering

Do not open the doors to strangers

Do not speak to strangers around the neighbourhood or on the phone

Always lock the door/gate whenever you leave or enter the house

Use equipment properly and follow instructions

Report any damaged equipment

Stay away from the no-go areas in the house

Do not play with sharp objects or jump from high areas

For family rules to work well, everyone needs to know, understand and follow the rules in whatever capacity. You can involve your teenagers if you want, it will help them understand why your family needs them and they're more likely to accept the rules as fair and stick to them.

Household rules are likely to change as your kids get older and as your family situation changes, so it's important to review them after some time and make changes where need be.

To summarize, identify the areas that need structure, create rules for each area, explain the rules to everyone in the family and use consequences for breaking the rules