



14 Skills Your Kids Should Have Before Moving Out

Both of my children moved out of the house when they went off to college. I was proud of them for managing life on their own. On the other hand, at one point during their twenties, both of my adult children moved back home at a point of transition.

“Adulting” is now an official term, a verb of sorts, describing the delicate challenge of a young adult knowing how to do life on their own. It’s a big deal. As of 2017, 31% of millennials between the ages of 25-35 still live with Mom and Dad. That’s almost one in three. In fact, more young adults [live](#) with parents than with a spouse or roommate.

So, why is “moving out” such a challenge today? Well, for one, inflation has outpaced young professional salaries. The cost of living today is much higher than the paycheck most recent graduates receive. Secondly, however, is the readiness of a high school or college graduate. Somehow, moms and dads have not prepared their kids to live without them. I’ve said it countless times: today’s parents have done a much better job *protecting* their kids than *preparing* them.

We didn’t get them ready to be an adult.

Below is a list I compiled that could spark a great conversation with your students. These are simple life skills that they will need when they move away from home. Use this list as a discussion starter and a “to do” list:

1. Draft a budget.

Becoming an adult means managing one's own income and expenses. Doing this without a plan is ill-advised. In fact, it's a crapshoot. I believe every young adult needs the experience of creating a budget to know where their money is going.

2. Read a contract.

Sooner or later, a young adult will be signing agreements for an apartment, a car, an appliance, a cell phone or some other possession. Learning to read such contracts and looking for the "small print" or the clauses that may haunt them later, is a must.

3. Change a tire.

While young adults will likely outsource their car needs (like changing the oil) to an inexpensive professional, learning to change a tire when it's flat is not only a great skill to know, but it will give them peace of mind if it ever happens. And it likely will.

4. Have a job.

Moving into an apartment is unwise until a young adult has a job. This is a no brainer, but you'd be surprised how often I meet teens who make plans to move out of the house and have little or no income. Jobs make us all appreciate money management.

5. Build your savings.

I suggest saving at least three months of living expenses before moving out. Rainy days happen more often than they'd expect, where they must live with no income in between jobs or due to an unexpected car repair. Savings give you peace of mind.

6. Develop a skill.

Too many teens never work a job, until they're completely on their own, after college. This is a disservice, as learning a skill they can monetize achieves so many positive outcomes, like self-esteem, marketability and confidence. We all must learn a trade.

7. Interview well.

Practicing how to interview and be interviewed builds executive functioning in a teen. Employers say people skills are rare; they differentiate a job candidate from others. Looking someone in the eye, shaking hands and basic communication skills are critical.

8. Learn cooking basics.

Eating out is in vogue, but it's almost always more expensive than cooking. I suggest a young adult learns to cook three recipes that they can rotate at meal times. This is a builder of confidence and resourcefulness. Of course, there's always Top Ramen!

9. Minimize your needs.

The richest people are not those who have the most but who need the least. One good step for young adults is to become a minimalist, who doesn't need new clothes or shoes each month. Learning to live on less is a great skill in uncertain times.

10. Value people.

My parents and John Maxwell taught me to value people as a new professional. I am task-oriented and naturally tend to value results over everything else. Learning the importance of face-to-face relationships with people was a sign of maturity for me.

11. Manage a credit card.

While my wife and I never buy anything we can't pay cash for today, learning to use credit cards actually built our credit score and enabled us to buy a house when we were ready. I suggest they get a credit card, earn points and pay it off every month.

12. Do laundry.

Some teens move away from parents and have never once done their own laundry. This stunts their growth because it's grunt work that each of us must learn to endure, and it is more difficult when they must learn to do it while managing a career.

13. Manage your schedule.

Managing a calendar is something most teens learn to do in school, but it can remain an undeveloped skill if their priorities are handed to them to adults. They must learn the issue is not prioritizing their schedule, but it's scheduling their priorities.

14. Clean a bathroom.

This task may be the ultimate in servant-leadership. Learning to clean a house, and especially a bathroom, cultivates an ability to endure almost any other job to be done. It can quickly eliminate any pretentiousness, pride or attitude of entitlement.

In the end, I believe these tasks enable a young adult to stay teachable and humble, and most of all, ready for real life.