

RAISING ADULTS NOT KIDS

Without fail, it comes every week: trash night.

On this one night, I was on top of it, and it was early enough to enlist some help from my kids. My two girls were working on homework and my oldest son was at volleyball practice, but my youngest looked like she needed a break from her homework.



She was seven years old at the time, so, I knew she could take something from

“here” and bring it to “there” without a problem. I figured this was the perfect job for her, take the trash cans “here” and bring them to the curb “there.”

About 10 minutes later from outside I hear, “Dad!”

WORK OVER TIME GIVES KIDS

I discovered her in our driveway surrounded by a pile of trash bags—some of them ripped and half-emptied onto the concrete. Needless to say, it was a mess.

We laughed it off and worked together to clean everything up. The trash made it to the curb, she accomplished the task, and over time she felt important because of this new responsibility. This is a good example that work over time gives kids purpose.

As kids are growing up, we should involve them in practical responsibilities that they can accomplish at different ages that will allow them to experience the satisfaction of finishing work.

You must think about it this way: We’re not raising kids; we’re raising adults. Adults who we hope at some point will have a successful future. This doesn’t happen magically when they turn 18 or graduate from college. It happens over time.

Being “hands-on” looks less like us taking over and doing it for them and more like guiding and assisting until at some point, they won’t need us.