



MONEY TALK

FAMILY ACTIVITY KIT

PRESCHOOL EDITION

Money is a foreign and abstract concept for most preschoolers. Food, clothes, and toys just *appear*—they're not earned or purchased. One way to begin instilling financial responsibility in your child is to create a foundation of awareness and appreciation.

Check out the activities below for ideas on how to engage your child in fun *and* educational games that teach them the basics of money management. Take the opportunities to talk about what money is and how your family uses it. Use concrete examples of coins and dollar bills whenever you can.

You can complete these activities in one night, over the course of a week, or repeat them as often as needed.

ACTIVITY 1: NAME THAT COIN

What You Need:

- A handful of coins (real or fake)
- (4) clear cups or bowls

What You Do:

- Mix the coins together in a pile.
- Separate the cups or bowls, and place them near the coins.
- Ask your preschooler to name each coin. If they need help, practice saying the names several times.
- Have your preschooler separate each type of coin into a separate cup or bowl (pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters).
- If they're able, use the coins to teach your preschooler a little math. Remove a quarter from the quarter cup and ask your child to use pennies, nickels, and dimes to replace the quarter's value. You can do the same for dimes and nickels.

ACTIVITY 2: HOW MANY COINS?

What You Need:

- A handful of coins (real works best)
- Several sheets of white paper
- Crayons

What You Do:

- Mix the coins together in a pile.
- Write down various dollar amounts on the sheets of paper. For example, \$1.50, \$.67, etc.
- Ask your preschooler to separate the coins by type.
- Demonstrate making a “rub” of the coins using the coin, paper, and crayon. (A rub is simply placing a coin under a sheet of paper, and rubbing a pencil or crayon on the paper over the coin.)
- Then, help your child separate the change into piles that equal the amounts written on the white papers.
- To end, let your preschool make “rubs” of the coin piles on the sheet of paper with the corresponding dollar amount.

ACTIVITY 3: PLAYING STORE

What You Need:

- A handful of coins (real or fake)
- Several toys, games, or stuffed animals

What You Do:

- Place the toys, games, or stuffed animals in the middle of the room.
- Beside each one, place several coins that will represent the “cost” of the item. (You may consider putting the coins on a paper plate, napkin, or note card to make sure they don’t get separated.)
- Give your preschooler a set amount of coins. The amount should limit the total number of toys they can “buy.”
- Help them “buy” which toys they want the most, explaining that they can only use the amount of money they’ve been given.



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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EDITION

Elementary schoolers are *right in the middle of developing a personal perspective on finance.* They are capable of understanding that money is a result of work, that working hard pays off, and that some things are worth saving for. As parents, it's up to us to use boundaries, chores, allowances, and that HUGE little word—**no**—to teach our kids financial responsibility.

Check out the activities below for ideas on how to engage your kid in fun *and* educational games that teach them the basics on money management. Get ready for some great conversation on your family values regarding money and finance as you have fun together. Here are a few questions to think about as you plan your time together.

What were taught as a child about money?

What do you wish you had learned but didn't?

What are your family values when it comes to giving, saving, and spending?

You can complete these activities in one night, over the course of a week, or repeat them as often as needed.

ACTIVITY 1: MONEY WAR

What You Need:

- Cardstock
- Coins or images of coins
- Tape
- Scissors

What You Do:

- Cut the cardstock into 30-40 rectangles of equal size—around the size of a playing card.
- Tape or write various dollar amounts of coins/bills to the cards. (.05, .10, .25, .50, .75, 1.00, 5.00, 10.00)
- Deal the cards facedown until you and your kid both have the same number of cards.
- Play "money war" by flipping over the top cards at the same time. Using some quick math, see whose card has the higher value. The "winner" gets to keep both cards.
- The player who runs out of cards first, loses.

To end the activity, spend some time talking about the favorite things you and your child like to spend money on. Talk about how much each of these cost and relate it to the cards. (When I buy a latte at Starbucks, it takes one of these \$5 cards or 5 of these \$1 cards.)

ACTIVITY 2: DOLLAR TRACKER

What You Need:

- (1) Poster board (or paper)
- Several colors or crayons in multiple colors

What You Do:

- Draw a large dollar sign in the center of the poster board.
- Now, have your elementary-schooler brainstorm all the things money is used for. Think about . . . school supplies, groceries, gymnastics, mortgage/rent, laundry detergent, eating out, gas, shampoo, hair appointments, clothes, doctor visits, etc. You may even want to print out your bank or credit card statement to get ideas.
- Using your list, create a brainstorm "web" using the dollar sign as your base.
- Now, go back and have your kid circle the items that are "needs" in one color and "wants" in another color.
- Using general figures, add up the total monthly costs of the "needs" and the "wants."
- Discuss the importance of budgeting for the "needs" and saving for the "wants."

ACTIVITY 3: FAMILY KICKSTARTER

What You Need:

- Internet Access
- Online spreadsheet or paper and pencil
- Optional** – art supplies, cardstock, and/or poster board

What You Do:

- Choose an afternoon or evening to sit down with your elementary schooler and plan a potential business.
- Start by making a list of their interests and talents and brainstorm how they could use both to earn money. Maybe your outdoorsy kid can mow lawns. Or your jewelry lover can make bracelets. Or your shopping buddy can find bargains to resell.
- Once you've decided on an idea, let the research begin! Gather numbers for how much it would cost to run the business. Take into account gas, supplies, sales tax (where applicable), advertising costs, etc. Come up with a general number for operational costs for one month of business.
- Now create a price list for what they should charge potential customers. Look online for similar retailers or service providers. See how they price their products and services to ensure your rates are competitive.
- Use a spreadsheet to figure out potential profit margins for the business, discussing the importance of hard work, clear communication, and quality products.
- **BONUS:** Expand the conversation by helping your kid name and create artwork for their business. The two of you could work together to come up with a logo, slogan, or even a few sample flyers or poster boards for marketing.
- **BONUS BONUS:** Actually *start* the business or company. You can teach your kid about investment, risk, and reward by setting up a weekly time to meet to develop, start, and maintain your kid's first business!



MONEY TALK

FAMILY ACTIVITY KIT

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL EDITION

By the middle and high school phases, your teenager has gained a good deal of experience with money.

Maybe it's a weekly allowance, babysitting, or a check from grandma every birthday. Or perhaps your teen has their first job—and maybe even a bank account or bills of their own. But there are still important values and lessons left for you to teach them before they move on to manage larger amounts of money with larger stakes.

Planning a Family Activity Night about money is a great way to engage your teenager in some activities that will launch conversations about your family values on money and finances. Here are some questions to think about as you plan your time together.

What were you taught about money as a child?

Is there anything you wish you had learned but didn't?

What values does your family have when it comes to giving, saving, and spending?

Check out the suggestions below for ideas on how to engage your teenager in activities that develop their money management skills. You can complete these activities in one night, over the course of a week, or repeat them as often as needed.

ACTIVITY 1: GROCERY STORE CHALLENGE

What You Need:

Paper

Pen

Coupon books or Apps

Calculator

What You Do:

- Teach your teenager the cost of grocery shopping with a coupon challenge.
- Have them dig through the fridge and pantry to create a list of items your family is running low on or completely out of. You may need to come behind them and add items as needed.
- Once the list is made, give your teen a budget, knowing it represents the maximum total cost of all items.
- Then, have them look through coupon books, apps, or emails to find deals or discounts on any items on the list. Accompany them or send them to the appropriate stores to make the purchases.
- Any money your student saves from the initial budget, they get to keep!

ACTIVITY 2: EXPENSE REPORT

What You Need:

Calendar (August-May)
Pen/Pencil
Paper
Retail advertisements, magazines, and/or Internet access
Calculator

What You Do:

- Grab your teenager for an hour or so, find a table, and place the supplies in front of you.
- Looking at the calendar, make a list of any major financial occasions throughout the year: back-to-school clothes and supplies, sports/club-related fees, camps, birthdays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, teacher gifts, seasonal clothing, social activities, etc.
- Have your teenager list all the dates on a sheet of paper in order of importance to *them*.
- Then, give your student a general dollar amount that represents the available funds to stretch across all of the listed occasions.
- Based on your student's preferences, work with your student to suggest a budget for each instance on the list. Discuss the difference between needs and wants, highlighting the importance of creating financial boundaries, prioritizing, and funneling resources appropriately.

ACTIVITY 3: FAMILY KICKSTARTER

What You Need:

Internet Access
Online spreadsheet or paper and pencil
Optional: art supplies, cardstock, and/or poster board

What You Do:

- Choose an afternoon or evening to sit down with your teen to plan a potential business.
- Start by making a list of their interests and talents, and brainstorm how they could use both to earn money. If they enjoy the wild outdoors, maybe they can open a lawn care company. If they enjoy sports like baseball or softball, giving hitting lessons may be a good option. If your teen is crafty, consider opening an Etsy shop online.
- Once you've decided on an idea, let the research begin! Gather numbers for how much it would cost to run the business. Take into account gas, supplies, sales tax (where applicable), advertising costs, etc. Come up with a general number for operational costs for one month of business.
- Now create a price list for what they should charge potential customers. Look online for similar retailers or service providers. See how they price their products and services to ensure your rates are competitive.
- Use a spreadsheet to figure out potential profit margins for the business and adjust the budget for the business accordingly. Discuss the importance of hard work, clear communication, and quality products.
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