

# Working together has held families together throughout the ages. Respected research says it is the one SURE way to keep your little ones from ever spending time in Jail.

*A 40 year Harvard University study of hundreds of eight year olds showed that the one thing almost guaranteeing that a child would never spend time in jail was learning to ENJOY work as a child. We hope the following outline helps prison proof your child.*

The time to start is when your three year old first wants to help. Let him. Three to five year olds learn quickly. They can play musical instruments, golf, even operate a computer if taught patiently. A good place to start is cleaning chores. Tell your child where things are kept and then each day, at the same time if possible, set the timer on the stove (five minutes for 3-6 year olds, fifteen minutes for older children). Put things where they belong. **Make it fun. Enjoy!!! Whistle while you work.** As the children grow older dedicate one day a week to laundry. It is easier for short people than doing dishes. If you have music tapes play them or make up songs. However you do it, do it TOGETHER. Working together gives a child a sense of being a contributor, of belonging. It is also a great way to nurture a positive self image. A good end to Whistle while you work is going for a walk or playing a game your children enjoy...a real game not a video game.

Assigning chores and leaving a child alone to do them often has the opposite effect causing power struggles and bitterness. The goal is for the child to enjoy work...make it fun and do it together. It really is the one thing that will keep him or her out of jail for life. **It might even keep him from being shot and killed at age 15 like one of my dear students just two years ago.** Surely it is worth setting the timer on the stove and turning on the music.

**Authors note:** At one time we were going to call this page: FOUR TO FOURTEEN THE DEADLY JOURNEY. The reason was to shine a spotlight on the fact that it is not spending time with our four year olds that determine who they are at fourteen. Do have a set time each day your child can count on being with you...doing something with you. Whistle while you work. If you have older children the process is even more important. Working together is one of the things most likely to give children a sense of belonging...a sense of family. **For more great resources for the children of divorce visit <https://www.bibleparent.com/pdf/dwork.pdf>.**