

A world much more dependent on home

“everyone is doing the work we don’t call work when women do it.”

In the age of COVID-19, every household has been touched by adjustments to the division of labor. But, data suggests that domestic work isn't being divided more equitably. Here's the breakdown on how to navigate these tough topics and proactively prioritize your plans for the future.



“Everybody likes to be compensated for the contributions they make to the world.”

- Kim Brooks,
New York Times



CURRENT CONTEXT

Times have changed, but women continue to do more of the emotional and physical household labor.

Even in dual-income families, women are more likely to be in charge of the schedule & social life of the household.

The more responsibility women feel for keeping everything together, especially when it comes to child-rearing, the more personal strain they feel. Women who feel labor in the home isn't equally divided are also less satisfied with their marriages.

There’s no one-size-fits-all approach to dividing labor. Research finds that the most important thing is that both members of the couple agree with how the tasks are divided.

A "Responsibilities List" can help.

ACTION MATTERS!

Research has shown that major changes to domestic routines have the potential to create new, more equitable ones



HOW TO: Make a Responsibilities List

1 Make your lists... separately

Make a list of things that need to be done in the home sphere. Make sure this list includes both indoor and outdoor household chores, parenting responsibilities, and things that need to be done on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis. Don't forget what some call “invisible work,” like planning, grocery list making, ordering necessities for the family etc.

2 How long will it take? How often does it happen?

How long does each responsibility take to complete? How frequently do you believe this chore or task needs to be completed? Next to each item you have listed, write out the duration and frequency.

3 Assign responsibility & hash it out

Go through your list again and put initials by each line, assigning that responsibility to partners and/or children in the home who you think should be doing the work. Share your worksheet with your family members. Compare and contrast the lists. Do you disagree about how often chores need to be completed, or how long they take? Now is the time to hash it out and come to agreements.

4 Finalize, commit, and post

When there's input from the whole group, and all tasks have been assigned and accepted, make a commitment to do your share. Make a final copy of the list, signed by each member of the household, and post it for all to see.