

# Have to vs. Get to – A lesson for everyone

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Are your kids upset because they "have to" go back to school? Perhaps it's time to flip that attitude. Wouldn't it be nice if they were excited because they "get to" go. Many children around the world are not so lucky as ours. A lot of those kids would do just about anything to get a chance at an education. Unfortunately, lecturing our kids about the subject will do very little to change their attitudes.

However, there is a way that we can influence our kids and their attitudes towards the things they feel that they "have to" do. We must take the lead in this and model the behaviors and attitudes that we wish to see in our kids. Think about how you talk or think about the challenges of your life. Do you complain that you "have to" go to work, make the dinner, clean the house or change a diaper? What do you think would happen if, when you talked to your kids about these things, you said how grateful you were to

be able to "get to" do them? After all, there are those people who aren't lucky enough to have a job, have food to eat, a house to clean or have a little bundle of joy that needs a new diaper. Next time you catch yourself saying "I have to . . .", trying replacing this simple phrase with "get to". Imagine sitting at the breakfast table and joyfully exclaiming that you "get to" go to work. This small change may not seem like much, but when your kids ask you what the heck you're talking about, you will have created a teachable moment.

Maybe at first they won't ask. Maybe they won't care or pay attention. Stick with your new, "attitude of gratitude". It will change your life no matter what anybody else does. I am willing to bet though, that if you keep at it, others around you (not just your kids) will be influenced. Your feelings, attitudes and behaviors are contagious. "Have to" vs. "get to" is a frame of mind. How we think about things determines how we feel about them. If you are excited about/grateful for the chores of life, think about how excellent your life will be. If you're happy that you "get to" go to work and you tell your kids about it, then maybe your kids will realize that school is a privilege and not a punishment. And if not, oh well, at least you've got the right attitude. It's the best bet you have for giving them the "get to" attitude.