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# How Do Parents Teach Their Children About Work? A Qualitative Exploration of Household Chores, Employment, and Entrepreneurial Experiences

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## Abstract

This qualitative study examines the question, “How do parents teach their children about work?” The sample included 90 emerging adult “children” (between 18 and 30 years old), 17 parents, and eight grandparents. It spanned two generations in eleven families, and three generations in five families. Altogether the sample totaled ( $N = 115$ ). Analyses revealed three major methods for teaching children about work: (1) implementing household chores and allowances, (2) facilitating paid employment, and (3) encouraging entrepreneurial experiences. Through each of these methods, children were taught valuable financial principles. Entrepreneurial experiences specifically taught children to work hard for money, to manage earned money via budgeting and saving, and to be independent. Implications for parents, educators, therapists, and policy makers are discussed.

**Keywords** Entrepreneurship · Qualitative · Teaching children · Work · Financial socialization

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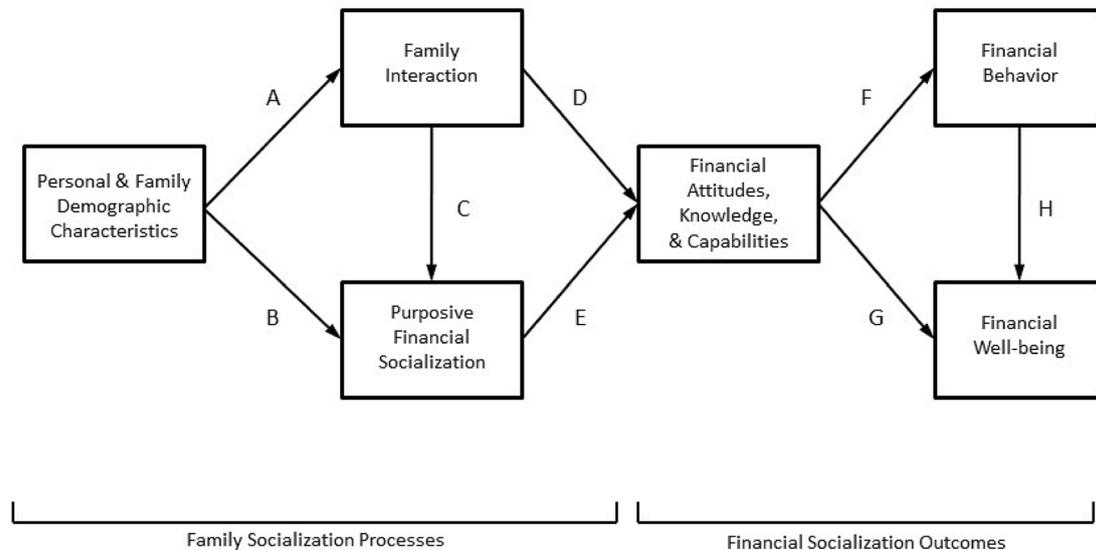
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During the past 50 years or so, the traditional transition to adulthood has dramatically shifted, creating a new developmental stage known as “emerging adulthood” (Arnett 2000). Emerging adults have been defined as individuals who are “between adolescence and adulthood” (Nelson and Barry 2005, p. 242; ages 18–25) and who do not consider themselves full-fledged adults. Many factors signify a successful transition to self-reliant adulthood such as choosing individual beliefs, obtaining an equal relationship with parents, and gaining financial independence (Shim et al. 2015; Xiao et al. 2014). Achieving financial independence uniquely separates a child from his or her parents because it signifies a physical divide and advancement to adulthood (Jorgensen et al. 2017; Shim et al. 2010). However, many emerging adults have delayed or even failed to reach this milestone due to insufficient financial knowledge and poor spending habits (Lusardi et al. 2010; Shim et al. 2010).

Additionally, many emerging adults have been shown to lack financial knowledge, misuse credit, and accumulate large amounts of debt (Hancock et al. 2013; Shim et al. 2010). Lusardi et al. (2010) discovered that most college students have not learned basic financial topics such as inflation, risk diversification, and simple interest rate calculations. Those students more frequently accumulated debt



**Fig. 1** Conceptual model of family financial socialization theory. Used with permission from Dr. Gudmunson

instead of wealth (Hancock et al. 2013), which has been associated with dependency on one's parents (LeBaron et al. 2019; West et al. 2017). In summary, many emerging adults are struggling to achieve financial well-being.

The ability to work hard is one aspect that may be important to establishing financial well-being (LeBaron et al. 2018). Consequently, this study explores how children have been taught by their parents to work hard.

## Literature Review

### Theoretical Framing

To better understand how emerging adults are guided successfully, or unsuccessfully, into physical and financial independence, we turn to three theories (LeBaron et al. 2018): the social learning theory (Bandura 1986), ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner 1986), and family financial socialization theory (Gudmunson and Danes 2011; image 1). Social learning theory suggests that we learn from our social interactions, thus suggesting that children learn about finances from the interactions with their parents. Ecological theory posits individuals are influenced by the various external environments around them, thus suggesting that children may learn about finances from the influence of their parents (LeBaron et al. 2018).

The family financial socialization theory suggests that emerging adults' financial attitudes, knowledge, behavior, and ultimate well-being are largely influenced by their individual and family characteristics, their family's interactions and relationships, and the purposive (or explicit) financial

socialization they receive (Gudmunson and Danes 2011). To help emerging adults overcome their financial struggles, family financial socialization theory suggests researchers should look to personal and family characteristics, family interactions and relationships, and explicit financial socializations for help. In this paper, we focus on lines "D" and "E" of the FFS model (Fig. 1). Both those lines relate to family financial socialization.

### Family Financial Socialization

Across varying countries, contexts, and economic situations, research has found that parents do play an essential role in their children's financial socialization (Clarke et al. 2005; Grinstein-Weiss et al. 2011; Kim and Chatterjee 2013; Moreno-Herrero et al. 2018; Serido et al. 2015; Shim et al. 2015; Webley and Nyhus 2006). Particularly, family financial socialization theory suggests that parents can teach their children about finances through implicit means, such as modeling financial behaviors that are observed by their children, and by explicit means, such as intentionally discussing and teaching financial principles to their children (Gudmunson and Danes 2011). Both methods of financial socialization have been linked to healthy financial behaviors and greater financial well-being in emerging adulthood (Clarke et al. 2005; Grinstein-Weiss et al. 2011; Kim and Chatterjee 2013; Norvilitis and MacLean 2010; Serido et al. 2015).

Additionally, when parents facilitate experiential learning opportunities for their children, such as having their own savings account or engaging in nascent entrepreneurial activities, they are more likely to implement healthy

financial behaviors and be more financially capable in young adulthood (Kim and Chatterjee 2013; LeBaron et al. 2019; Moreno-Herrero et al. 2018; Studdard et al. 2013). Therefore, the more involved parents are in teaching their children about finances, in modeling healthy financial behaviors themselves, and in facilitating opportunities for children to put into practice what is taught, the higher the likelihood that their children will experience less financial distress as they enter adulthood. As parents lead by example, openly communicate, and provide opportunities for children to work, emerging adults may successfully transition to financially independent adults (Hibbert et al. 2004).

Further, in the field of economics, the intergenerational transmission of parental work attitudes has been thoroughly studied (Cemalcilar et al. 2018). In a meta-analysis reviewing the transmission of work values from parents to children, Cemalcilar et al. (2018) found that “[b]oth mothers’ and fathers’ work values, and their parenting behavior were significantly associated with their children’s work values...” (p. 1559). They also found that the similarity of parent and child work values decreased as children grew older. Yet even in this literature, the process of how those intergenerational transmissions occur from parent to child are still relatively unstudied. This paper intends to begin to uncover how work values are transmitted from generation to generation.

## Hard Work

Parents have been shown to play a key role in their children’s development of work ethic (LeBaron et al. 2018). This is unsurprising given that research has shown parents to be the primary influence on children’s financial knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors (Chowa and Despard 2014; Clarke et al. 2005; Grohman et al. 2015; Pinto et al. 2005; Shim et al. 2010), and hard work has generally been accepted as an important factor in financial independence and success (Roberts and Wensley 1997). Work is exerting “oneself physically or mentally... for a purpose...” (Merriam-Webster n.d.-b). It takes work (or exertion) to earn money, pay bills, manage finances, and complete many other tasks that are associated with financial wellbeing.

A hardworking person is one who “constantly, regularly, or habitually [is] engaged in earnest and energetic work” (Merriam-Webster n.d.-a) which could include financial behaviors. So, it is not surprising that Ayala and Manzano (2014) found that among other things, hard work is associated with entrepreneurial financial prosperity. Yet, we acknowledge that hard work is not a panacea for all financial challenges. Many factors (Gudmunson and Danes 2011; Xiao et al. 2011) including age (Jokinen-Gordon 2012), sex (Ergün 2018), race/ethnicity (Painter 2013), individual and family education (Ergün 2018; Painter 2013) and family status (Maldonado and Nieuwenhuis 2015; Malone et al.

2010) have been shown to influence financial wellbeing. Nonetheless, work ethic still stands a valuable trait that has been shown to be related to financial wellbeing (Ayala and Manzano 2014; Roberts and Wensley 1997).

## Chores and Allowances

Limited and sporadic research has been completed about chores and allowances in general or about how parents use them to teach children. However, in two studies by Furnham (1999, 2001), the majority of parents, 91% and 88%, respectively, were in favor of providing an allowance to their children after the age of 6. However, parental attitudes surrounding providing money to children vary greatly. For example, there was little consensus about whether children should be paid for chores and whether children should be paid for good grades (Furnham 2001). Parents believed allowance provided children an opportunity to learn the principle of delaying gratification (Furnham 2001). Additionally, children who receive an allowance have been found to be “more sophisticated with regards to financial decisions” (Furnham and Milner 2017, p. 1217) when compared to children who did not receive an allowance. Many parents believe that children should be encouraged to save some of the money they receive (Furnham 1999, 2001). Children who are taught to save and budget by their parents tend to be more future oriented and better able to control spending (Webley and Nyhus 2013).

Marshall and Magruder (1960) found that, when given the opportunity to gain, earn, and use money (through allowances and chores), children receive a wide variety of benefits including but not limited to an increase in financial knowledge and financial experience. Lastly, White et al. (2019) found that children who had chores in the home experienced increased self-competency. The research clearly delineates that allowances and chores provide benefits to children and their financial socialization. However, major gaps still exist in the literature as to how and why parents use chores and allowances. Further, little is known about chores and allowances’ ability to teach children about work. This study aims to increase the field’s understanding in those areas as well.

## Getting a Job

Extensive research analyzing the effects of paid employment on adolescent development has yielded contradictory results regarding the benefits and drawbacks of adolescent paid employment (Mortimer 2010; Staff et al. 2009). Much of adolescent-work research has focused on the intensity (i.e., the number of hours worked) of work and the negative outcomes of such intensity (Graves et al. 2017; Monahan et al. 2011). Adolescents who work more than 20 h a week while in school have been shown to experience negative

outcomes such as lower quality of life (Graves et al. 2017), decreased school engagement, and increased problem behavior (Monahan et al. 2011). However, the unidimensional focus of work intensity during the school year has still not fully answered the question of whether adolescent work is a good thing (Mortimer 2003, 2010). Despite these unidimensional research findings, the majority of adults and adolescents have reported positive experiences with paid employment when in high school, believing that it taught them many important life skills such as responsibility and integrity (Mortimer 2003).

Research has shown adolescents can experience positive outcomes from summer jobs (Alam et al. 2015; Leos-Urbel 2014). Females who participated in a summer job program through their school experienced an increase in income during high school and an increase in income after high school by 19% (Alam et al. 2015). Similarly, Leos-Urbel (2014) found that in a similar summer job program in New York, emerging adults experienced an increase in attempting and higher scoring on standardized tests and a slightly better school attendance during the following school year. The effects were even greater for those who were more at risk for deviant behavior (Leos-Urbel 2014).

Despite the research on the benefits of adolescent work, there has been little research on how parents use work outside the home as a teaching mechanism for their children. Our research furthers the body of work on adolescent-work by highlighting the experience of current young adults and their parents and how their parents helped to teach them important life skills such as financial responsibility and work ethic.

### Entrepreneurial Experiences

Historically the research about entrepreneurship has focused on what entrepreneurs are, what they need to succeed, and what happens after their successful careers (Dyer and Handler 1994). Extensive research has also explored how parents and scholars might nurture others to become entrepreneurs (Lindquist et al. 2015; Paço and Palinhas 2011). Further, two prevailing theories exist explaining how entrepreneurs come to be. First, the dysfunctional family theory suggests that when children grow up in an unstable home (say, without a father), they develop a subconscious desire for control (Dyer and Handler 1994). To satiate their desire, they create their own companies where they can control everything. The second theory is family capital theory which suggests successful entrepreneurs need knowledge and resources to succeed. Supportive and healthy families often provide those things for entrepreneurs. The theory suggests that to increase entrepreneurs, we need to strengthen families (Dyer and Handler 1994). Entrepreneurship research has also shown entrepreneurship's capacity to help children develop valuable skills

(Krueger Jr. 1993; Paço and Palinhas 2011; Studdard et al. 2013). When children have entrepreneurship experience from either their own endeavors or working in their parents' companies, children have been shown to develop skills such as using goal-oriented behaviors, innovativeness, leadership, adaptability, creativity, perseverance, and financial literacy (Krueger Jr. 1993; Studdard et al. 2013).

Although research has shown entrepreneurship experiences can teach children valuable lessons, little research has been done as to how those lessons are learned. This study intends to begin to illuminate how individuals learn through their entrepreneurial experiences.

### Literature Gap

Referring to the family financial socialization figure (Fig. 1), this paper focuses on the pathways labeled “D” and “E” and explores how parents' explicit financial socializations impact their children's financial outcomes. Although existing literature confirms that parental financial socialization *does* influence children's financial outcomes (Grinstein-Weiss et al. 2011; Moreno-Herrero et al. 2018; Serido et al. 2015), there is a gap in the literature about *how* that financial socialization occurs (Gudmunson and Danes 2011). In their hallmark paper on family financial socialization theory, Gudmunson and Danes (2011) acknowledged the current gap in process-level research and called for more process-level research on financial socialization. This paper is an effort to further understanding about the process of family financial socialization and to springboard future research in this field.

However, this manuscript is not the first process-level paper exploring family financial socialization. Rather, it is an extension of the work of LeBaron et al. (2018) that intentionally sought to fill the process level gap in the research. LeBaron et al. (2018) did so by exploring the whats and hows family financial socialization. In that paper, LeBaron et al. (2018) found that parents teach the specifics of “financial planning, work ethic, money management, and sharing” when teaching finances to their children by using methods including “modeling, discussion, and experiential learning” (LeBaron et al. 2018, p. 497). That manuscript summarized the research project's findings, but it did not thoroughly explore the specific processes used to teach about work. Nor did it explore what nuanced principles parents taught their children about work. This paper attempts to do just that.

### Present Study

In short, this paper attempts to help better understand the process of family financial socialization by answering two qualitative questions:

- (1) How do parents use chores and allowances, work outside the home, and entrepreneurial experiences to teach their children work ethic and financial principles?
- (2) What do children reportedly learn from their experiences?

It is anticipated that this paper will expand academic understanding of family financial socialization in two ways: First, it will go beyond parental influence of children's financial behaviors to show how parents can influence their emerging adult children's work ethic. Second, it will illustrate how parental financial influence can promote financial independence and stability among emerging adults. Additionally, it is hoped that a greater understanding of the financial socialization process will aid parents, educators, and policy makers in developing the work ethic, and financial knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of future generations.

## Method

The present study was based on a multi-site, and multigenerational, qualitative project called the “Whats and Hows of Family Financial Socialization” that was conducted from January 2015 to February 2017. The main goal of that qualitative project was to discover what and how parents taught their children about finances and what children learned from their parents' efforts to teach. In the present study we specifically examined and explored how parents taught their children about work and other financial principles, and what their emerging adult children reportedly learned from their families about work and financial principles.

While individual-level, psychological data are valuable, as family studies researchers we also attend to and highly value data and perspectives that take us beyond the individual participant—data that “give us windows” into family processes and relationships. Because of this interest, though limited in quantity, we also include multi-generational data from some parents and grandparents of the emerging adults in the present study.

## Sample

The sample for this study was a convenience sample of 90 emerging adult “children,” 17 of their parents, and eight of the emerging adult children's grandparents. The 90 emerging adults were between 18 and 30 years old and were attending college and were enrolled in university-level courses on family finance. Emerging adults were invited and drawn from three universities (i.e., a public university in the Midwest, a private university in the Intermountain West, or a state university in the Southwest). The instructors of the family finance courses invited all class members to participate in

the research study, and all willing students received extra credit. However, due to a surplus of volunteers, not all willing students were interviewed, and interview priority was given to males and racial/ethnic minorities to enhance sample diversity. We strived to interview parents and grandparents where possible in order to be consistent with Handel's (1996) position that “[no single] member of any family is a sufficient source of information for that family” (p. 346). Thus, in all student interviews, students were asked whether their parent(s) and/or grandparent(s) might be interested in participating. When students indicated that they might be, the interviewer collected contact information and invitations were later sent via email or phone by a member of the research team. The total sample spanned two generations in 11 families, and three generations in five families. The complete sample was ( $N = 115$  individuals), with the participants being 66% (76 of 115) female and 34% (39 of 115) male. In terms of race, the sample was 62% (71 of 115) White and 38% (44 of 115) ethnic and/or racial minority (including Black, Latino/Latina, Asian, and Pacific Islander participants).

## Procedures

First, the emerging adult children were qualitatively interviewed by members of our research team. Trained, undergraduate team members conducted the semi-structured qualitative interviews either face-to-face or over-the-phone. In those interviews, the emerging adults were asked variations of two open-ended questions: (1) “What did your parents teach you about money?” and (2) “How did they teach you those things?” After interviewing the emerging adults, their parents and grandparents were interviewed. In those interviews, the same two previous questions were asked. In addition, two other questions were asked: (3) “What did you teach your children about money?” and (4) “How did you teach them those things?” Interviews lasted between 15 and 60 min.

These questions were retrospective in nature and the resulting data were subject to limitations including participants' flaws in memory, (intentional or unintentional) revisionist history, and social desirability effects (Gilbert 2006). In spite of these identified limitations, however, retrospective approaches have the propensity to capture information about what was most salient or important to the reporting participants. As a result, retrospective data can be a valuable resource in identifying best practices for teaching and modeling wise family financial behavior, including those related to the entrepreneurial focus of this article. Of the 115 participants, 108 (94.0%) referenced a theme related to work addressed in the present study. Interviews were digitally recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The

**Table 1** Numeric content analysis

Theme	# References	# Sources	% Interviews	Average # ref. per int.
Chores/allowances	134	76	70.3	1.2
Paid employment	192	90	83.3	1.8
Entrepreneurship	38	30	27.8	.35
Total	364	108	100	3.8

We based calculations on the 108 interviews where “work” was mentioned, not the total 115 interviews from the larger study

multi-generational qualitative data were then coded and analyzed using a team-based methodology, as outlined next.

### Coding and Analyses

We employed a team-based approach to qualitative data collection, coding, and analysis that was designed to produce “more valid, reliable, and rigorous qualitative research” than the solo researcher (or “diva soloist”) approach often employed in qualitative research (Marks 2015, p. 494). More specifically, the four-phase, team-based (or “quad squad”) approach we employed involved multiple strategies for heightened reliability, including: (a) recording a detailed “audit trail” that documents steps taken and decisions made in order to facilitate a “replicable method of inquiry” (Marks 2015, p. 499); (b) constructing a research team that has a diversity of experience involving the phenomenon of interest (i.e., family financial experience); and (c) conducting the qualitative analysis and coding in pairs with an eye of concern on inter-rater reliability. The stated focus of this practice is that it permits multiple voices but “tempers the idiosyncrasies [and biases] of any single member” (p. 502).

The qualitative data were analyzed by a team of ten undergraduate and graduate students. The team was separated into five coding pairs. First team members transcribed the interviews. Following that, open coding (Strauss and Corbin 1990, pp. 61–75) was performed by coding pairs in order to identify related themes. Coders met weekly with their partners to review their analyses (open codes), thus providing a check and balance system (Marks 2015). As coding progressed, we performed a Numeric Content Analysis (NCA) of the Open Coding Concepts in each interview to determine what concepts recurred and how many times they were mentioned in each interview (Table 1). We then narrowed the open coded concepts from interviews down to the top 10–15 concepts. Our team then examined these prominent remaining concepts and begin to eliminate “pretenders” from “contenders” (i.e., salient and frequent concepts

that verifiably emerged across multiple interviews). In some cases, two or more similar concepts were combined to form a single, stronger theme. The focus of the present paper was one such theme (Marks 2015, pp. 496–497). The core theme was then re-analyzed using NVIVO 11 to explore and examine varying expressions and manifestations, as well as related processes (“hows”) and meanings (“whys”). Lastly, NVivo 11 qualitative software was used to catalog recurring themes and supportive data. For a detailed explanation of the methods used in this project, please see Marks et al. (2019).

In the present article, in the spirit of consensus recommended in Marks’ (2015) team-based methodological approach, we report only themes documented and approved by all team members. Those themes are presented next, along with about 50 supportive and illustrative excerpts from the primary data in the voices of the participants themselves.

### Findings

In response to our research questions, “How do parents teach their children how to work?” and, “How do parents connect financial principles to these teachings?” we found three themes: (1) implementing household chores and allowances, (2) facilitating paid employment, and (3) encouraging entrepreneurship. Chores and/or allowances was mentioned in 70.3% of the interviews, paid employment was mentioned in 83.3% of the interviews, and entrepreneurship was mentioned in 24.8% of the interviews. Through each of these methods, children were taught valuable financial principles including the principle of work.

#### Teaching Method 1: Implementing Household Chores and Allowances

Parents used a wide variety of chore and allowance systems to help their children learn the value of “hard work and other financial principles. Of the 108 total interviews, 76 included discussions about chores and allowances. Most participants defined chores as completing needed work at home such as, “[helping] in the kitchen...[doing] dishes...[vacuuming]... [cleaning] your room...[making] your bed, things like that.” Allowances were defined as parents regularly paying their children money. For example, one father, Jeremy,<sup>1</sup> “paid [his children] a dollar for every year old they were. So, if they [were] fifteen then they got fifteen bucks a week.” In the following paragraphs we will explain (1) the variety of purposes and methods parents used, (2) how they adapted to their children’s needs, and (3) what children learned from their experiences doing chores and receiving allowances.

<sup>1</sup> Pseudonyms were used for all participants to protect confidentiality.

## A Variety of Purposes and Methods

Parents used chores and allowances for a variety of purposes. Some parents did not pay their children an allowance because they wanted to teach that unpaid work is a normal part of life. One respondent, Matt, an emerging adult, speaking of his childhood reported, “[My parents] gave us chores, [but we] didn’t get paid for chores. So, they taught us to really be motivated to work rather than just for the pay.” Teresa, a mother, claimed a similar pattern in her parenting tactics:

We didn’t ever do the allowance thing. Our philosophy was, and we would say this outright, which is, “Dad works really hard for the family earning money, I work really hard for the family doing all of the house things, the kid things, the cooking, cleaning, all of that. Plus, earning a little bit of money on the side. And your job is to also contribute to the family and that will be different in different ways. Sometimes we’ll ask for help.”

Other parents did pay their children an allowance. Among the allowance-paying parents, it seemed there were two types of allowances. One allowance was a “free allowance” paid without any requirements for work. Many children explained that they would just get “some money each week like a regular stipend, there wasn’t any stipulation for it.” The other allowance was a “wage allowance,” paid if chores were completed. Many other children explained, “[if] they did their jobs then they got an allowance.”

Most parents who used the “free allowance” system still required their children to complete chores. Ron, a father, explained what he and his wife did in this domain: “[we] didn’t give them money for chores... but we did give them allowances along the way.” Also, although some parents treated chores and allowances as separate entities, many children felt obligated to complete their chores because of their “free allowance.” For example, John, an emerging adult, explained,

[My parents] never specifically mentioned my allowance was for doing chores, but for me personally, when my mom would say, “Hey, do you want to help me weed in the garden?” Instead of saying “no” it was like well, they... give me an allowance. It was more of an obligation.

Another emerging adult, Spencer, echoed this sentiment: “They would just give me some money each week like a regular stipend. There wasn’t any stipulation for it because my chores were already done. It goes without saying that I had chores during the week.”

Of the parents who used a “wage allowance” system, some parents paid their children for every job they did while

others had some unpaid chores and some paid chores. That balance is illustrated by a mother named Alma:

We never paid our kids [a free] allowance.... You don’t get money for nothing. We let our kids understand: if you want money, you have to work for it. If you want to buy something, you’re going to work for it and not just buy it. We paid [for]the necessities and of course Christmas gifts, birthday gifts, but when [they’d say] “Oh, I just want this” like video games and all that stuff, [they’d] have to buy it with their own money. I didn’t just go out and start buying them stuff unless it was really a necessity. So, they got no [free] allowance money. They had to work. They had to do chores in the house, besides their obligations as being part of the family: you help in the kitchen, you do dishes, you vacuum, you clean your room, you make your bed, things like that. That’s normal, just being part of the family, helping out.[For things] that would be my responsibility...[if] they want[ed] to do it, they [got] paid for it. They start[ed] doing this at 5, 6 years old. I didn’t like cleaning the fridge[s]. So, my daughter got a couple bucks [for cleaning one], [for] two fridges she got 4 bucks. Cleaning baseboards, “I wanna do that.” Pay a couple bucks to... my son. Give him a spray bottle, give him an old toothbrush and a little rag. And he just goes around the house spraying and cleaning.

## Adapting to Children’s Needs

Parents used a variety of organizational and compensation systems to meet their individual children’s needs. Two parents described how they adjusted their allowance systems for each child. Holly, the mother, explained,

The oldest child had a lot of needs... so we gave him an allowance because he couldn’t get a job because we were living in Europe at the time.... We gave him a substantial allowance every month and said, “You take care of all your separate things in your budget,” but our second son didn’t have the same [need]. He was so different that wouldn’t have worked.

Ron, the father, added, “With the last child, she was the very responsible child, she was a very thrifty child, and so whenever she needed money, I just gave it to her.” Summing up their experience, Holly stated, “So, we did allowance differently with each child.”

Among the organizational systems parents used, some parents paid their children every week in cash, some parents paid their children digitally and stored the money in a bank account. One family built a system where the children received pay when they completed their chores but had to pay the parents money if their chores were not completed.

Aside from paying children money to complete chores, parents also created their own money-like incentives to encourage children to complete their chores. One example from the various incentive programs included “Big B Bucks.” Children earned “Big B Bucks” by completing chores and could spend their “Big B Bucks” on various things. Kody, a child from that family, explained,

If we wanted to watch a movie night on Friday night, we knew we needed three bucks, three Big B Bucks by the end of the week, and there were other little prizes. I loved collecting baseball cards, so I could spend some on that if I wanted to.

### Lessons Learned from Chores and Allowances

It appears children learned important lessons about work and finances from their parents’ chore and allowance systems. Of the lessons learned, children seemed to learn about working for money, that working is part of life, and about managing money (saving, budgeting, etc.). Children appeared to have learned from their chore and allowance experiences that working often led to earning money. Ryan, an emerging adult, disclosed,

What having a task connected to an allowance showed me is that if you work or if you provide a service or a product, you’ll get money. That is how this world works. So, it taught me that principle and a work ethic.

Children also reported that, as they completed their chores, working became a normal part of their life. For example, Jason, an emerging adult, explained,

I got into such a habit of doing [my chores and filling out my chore chart] that I eventually started doing things without marking it down because it was just a habit for me and I truly enjoyed working because it was out of habit at that point.... And so by the time I got to college I just thought “Yeah, I ate my food and then I do my dishes.” I don’t need to clean for it now right away, but I am just in such a habit of doing it that it’s just a natural part of what I do, and if I am not paid, I’m not that devastated about it. I am just in a habit of doing it.

In addition, children reported that chores and allowances helped them learn financial principles such as saving and budgeting money. One set of parents, Frank and Nancy, explained their reason for giving their children an allowance: “We decided after a few years that they were never going to learn how to manage money if they didn’t have any money”. Those parents’ rationale appeared to prove successful because many emerging adult children reported learning money management skills from their experiences. Spencer

(from earlier) reported, “Well the first major thing that my parents taught me was how to save and compartmentalize [my] income, which was very simple at the time because it was just a \$10 allowance/week.” A mother named Catalina, reflecting on her experience, explained, “I would have an allowance for school clothes. So, at the beginning of every school year, my mom would give a certain amount of money and I [learned to] budget that to get [what] I needed.”

However, giving chores and allowances alone was not a sure way to teach about work and finances. One parent gave his children extra money whenever the children asked, even though the children had an allowance. Hachiro, an emerging adult and child from that family, explained,

[My father]... every month... would give us double our age. So, if I was 12, he would give [me] 24 dollars every month. But the thing is, is that if ... my siblings asked for anything, he would give it to us....[If] they wanted lacrosse sticks, if they wanted to go in a limo to their birthday party, he would just pay for that anyways. So, the allowance was almost rendered ineffective because we knew we could ask for more.

From Hachiro’s experience, the structure of the children’s income (i.e., how children could get money from parents) was an important factor that impacted the effectiveness of allowance as a teaching method.

### Teaching Method 2: Facilitating Paid Employment

While parents and youth alike found that working within the home—performing chores and receiving an allowance—was an important way to learn valuable life skills, most additionally felt that getting a job (defined as youth obtaining paid employment outside of the home) was another valuable venue for learning these life skills. Of the 108 total interviews, 90 included discussions about facilitating paid employment. In this section we will discuss (1) how parents influenced their children to get jobs, (2) how many parents felt that “your job is to get your education,” and (3) what financial and moral lessons parents reportedly intended their children to learn from their paid employment experiences.

#### How Parents Influenced Children

While there are consistent patterns for why parents wanted their children to work and why children themselves wanted to work, parents’ and children’s approaches to getting a job varied significantly from family to family. For example, one emerging adult, Abril, stated that,

I was required to have a job. My mom got me my first job. I went home, and she said, “Okay I went to the local bakery, and guess what? They’re hiring,

and you start on Saturday.” She was always that way. The intention was there to teach us those values; I just never remember a sit down [conversation about it].

Abril’s mother was very adamant about her children having employment outside the home but did not offer a lot of flexibility in how and where they should work. Nonetheless, Abril’s mother’s intention was to teach her children important life skills.

As seen above, parental attitudes towards work were especially salient in how children felt about and sought out employment. Another father’s excitement about his child getting a job motivated his child to seek out and enjoy paid employment: “They were always supportive of getting a job. And my dad, every time I would get a job I was excited about, he was really excited with me. So, that was really important to me.” This child, Matt, valued the excitement he felt from his parents.

While some parents actively encouraged children to seek out employment, respecting autonomy was another approach some parents used to teach their children about work and responsibility. One emerging adult, Olivia, reported that she “did have a job, but it was never forced”:

My mom was always like, “If you want to work, you can work, but you don’t have to. You could focus on school.” But I did [work]. I nannied all throughout high school, four days a week, so that took up a lot of time. So, over weekends I would work for a park district, but this was because it was fun to me. I wasn’t forced or anything. And now I work in college too.

Olivia’s mother’s attitude still left a lasting influence on Olivia, evidenced in that she continued to work while in school up through college.

Some parents, however, were not able give their child the option to get a job; some needed their children to get a job to survive financially. In speaking about how her parents got divorced and both were financially destitute, Maria, an emerging adult, said:

So, I was just like, “Well, I’m gonna work so I can pay for school my junior and senior year, and I’m gonna work so that I can buy a car, and I’m gonna work so that I can buy a new pair of jeans because I need them.” So, [my parents] were never really there financially for me. After like 15 years old, I’ve basically had to buy everything myself. It’s not that they were being mean, it’s just because they had bills to pay and other kids... I think it made me a lot stronger because I’m graduating at the end of this year and I don’t have any loans because I had to work for everything.

## Pursuing an Education is Work

In contrast to the parents in the previous section, some parents felt that seeking out paid employment outside the home was not the best option to teach their children the principles of hard-work and responsibility. One parent, Jeremy, stated: “Your job is to get your education. That’s your job. Once that’s done you can work and get a little extra money.” Another parent, Victoria, conveyed how she taught her children that schoolwork was like getting a job: “We really emphasized good grades so they could get scholarships to pay for college. We told them it’s like a job working for good grades.”

However, some of these same parents also reportedly recognized the importance of paid employment, in moderation. Speaking of her children, Victoria said,

By the time they were 16 we thought they should at least be working in the summer, but I didn’t want them working too much during school, but both my daughters taught piano lessons during school. That was about 4 hours a week and pays a lot more than minimum wage, and that’s what the girls did. The boys did potato harvest.

Emma, an emerging adult, also expressed that there should be a healthy balance between schoolwork and paid work:

I think that it is good to be focused on school, because if they get into a job that is too many hours a week when they are in high school, it makes it difficult to balance. But I do feel that work experience, at least for me, taught me to be responsible with my money because I was being paid. So, it taught me a lot of responsibility, both financially as well as personally. I think working out of the home prepares you for adult/college life in general. Having work experience in high school definitely helps more... financially once you get into college.

Both Victoria and Emma seemed to feel that while there is value in working hard to receive an education. Seeking employment outside the home also appeared to have taught them valuable financial and personal skills.

## Lessons Learned from Getting a Job

Of the many lessons learned outside the home, two major lessons stuck out as we analyzed their experiences: financial responsibility and hard work. Financial responsibility encompassed taking care of the money one earned. Hard work encapsulated working hard to get what one wants.

Parents frequently taught their children the value of money by encouraging them to work for their own money.

One emerging adult, Charlie, discussed the expectation in his family to earn one's own money and the lesson he learned from that:

If you wanted your own spending money, you earned it yourself, always. I've never once received spending money from my parents to just use.... For me, I feel like it was valuable because it taught me the value of money. I never felt like I could waste my money on some frivolous thing. I always had to use it for what I actually wanted or needed.

Ron, a parent, echoed the previous statement regarding working outside the home and earning money:

I never had an allowance. Every bit of money that I got I earned myself. I had my first job shining shoes when I was 10 on the weekends at a barber shop.... So, I think that's mostly because my parents didn't have a lot of money and... I don't think they set out to teach me this, but by default I learned that money is hard to come by and you've got to take care of the money that you have, that you get.

Although Ron and Charlie come from two different generations, they learned the same lesson from an early age: money should be used responsibly. Madison, an emerging adult, also learned this important lesson and articulated that

even in high school it was kind of shocking to me that my peers wouldn't understand that \$20 is two and a half hours of work.... And I'm just really grateful that I had that perspective from early on. I'm not having breakdowns because I can't get everything I want.

This realization came because Madison was socialized from a young age that work and money are interrelated.

Inherent in learning the value of money and how to manage it appropriately is learning to be responsible. Many individuals also felt that their experience with paid employment taught them important life skills such as "responsibility," developing a "really good work ethic," and "[finding] joy in work." Kurt, a father, expressed gratitude that his parents taught him to work hard, and one way that his parents did so was by encouraging him to obtain paid employment:

The thing that has saved my bacon though, even though my parents are lacking in the financial realm, the thing my parents taught us to do is to work hard every time, all the time. Do jobs the way it's supposed to be done. And we do, [my brother] and I both. We just work hard, that's what we do. And that has been a great blessing. And so, if our primary income is insufficient for a need that we have, we're not opposed to adding on a part time gig, doing something. Let's make up the difference and take care of that need. We don't

do it just so we can buy a nicer house or have a nicer car, but we will take on extra work to get something for the educational need of our kids or something important that is for the family or something else. That was the greatest blessing they taught me, to work hard and find joy in work. The day I turned 12 I had a paper route. And the day I turned 16 I got hired at Taco Bell. I worked hard through high school, and that's just how we roll: we just go get it.

Not only did Kurt's parents teach him to work hard, but they also taught him to find joy while working.

Just as the parents of Kurt taught their children to work hard and be responsible, Nate, a married emerging adult, voiced his desire to teach his children these valuable life skills: "[My wife and I] both decided that we really want our children to know how to work to actually have a really good work ethic." Reflecting on his own life experiences, he further explained how paid employment played a significant role in teaching him these same principles, saying: "I don't think I gained [a really good work ethic] until high school when I started my own job." Gabriela, an emerging adult, also learned good work ethic from her parents through earning money for herself if she wanted to participate in recreational activities or travel:

You need to work for yourself if you want to travel or do those kinds of [trips].... If you want to keep doing it, you need to work for yourself and pay yourself, and of course we can help you, but the majority [you] will pay it.

Upon asking what Gabriela learned from that, she said she learned

that nothing comes easy. If you want something, you work for it. And that's what I've been doing since then, and it's good. If you really want something, then it will show, and you will want to work for it and do it yourself.

### Teaching Method 3: Encouraging Entrepreneurial Experiences

In addition to chores and allowances and getting a job, the data showed a reoccurring theme of parents encouraging entrepreneurial experiences. Of the 108 total interviews, 30 included discussions about entrepreneurship. Participants reported parents helping them start their own small businesses, including mowing lawns, teaching piano lessons, and selling baked goods. Often, these entrepreneurial opportunities came about with a particular goal in mind (e.g., to save up money for a particular purchase). Entrepreneurship taught participants to work hard for money (especially when

no allowance was given), to be independent, and to manage earned money via saving and budgeting.

### Work Hard

Matt, an emerging adult, mentioned his lawn mowing business and how he has “had a job ever since.” His business did not start on its own, however, and required work, effort and encouragement from family members. He continued, “[My brother and I] just printed off about 200 flyers and took them around the neighborhood and put them on people’s doors. Then the next week we had 12 lawns to mow.” Participants also mentioned other entrepreneurial endeavors, such as babysitting and teaching piano. While most acknowledged some form of parental involvement, some did not. Emma, an emerging adult, said, “I just had the idea to start teaching piano to some of the kids in the neighborhood.”

Through entrepreneurial experiences such as these, participants emphasized again and again how they came to value hard work in and of itself, even though they started the undertaking as simply finding a way to make money to satisfy their own needs. Running one’s own nascent entrepreneurial business, be that lawn care, babysitting, or piano lessons, appears to be a path of significant financial learning.

As an alternative to just giving them allowances, some participants reported that their parents would pay them for doing extra chores in conjunction with encouraging entrepreneurial experiences in the community. Kody, an emerging adult, said,

No allowance. [My parents] would occasionally provide opportunities to do extra work beyond just regular chores that could earn some money. Things like extra yard work. If I wanted to spend a couple hours in the garden, they would compensate for that. I started working just to get a little extra money when I was younger, just mucking horse stalls for someone [from church].

Alana, an emerging adult, said, “I think if anything my parents taught me the need to work for my own money, and so ever since I was young, they would have me bake or just go to work.” Working for their own money seemed to be an important part of participants’ childhood and youth. In addition to this, Nate (from earlier) mentioned the importance of teaching children to work for money by saying, “[My wife and I] are thinking of having jobs around the house like mowing the lawn or pulling weeds and being willing to pay them for that. To both teach them how to work and how to gain money.”

### Independence

In addition to simply working for their own money, parents also encouraged their children to work on their own, to find

opportunities to grow on their own, and to accomplish things without help, often in the way of starting their role as entrepreneurs. Beth, a grandmother, after bringing up how her children would work and find opportunities to work, mentioned, “They did it on their own. And they all did really well in school, so they got scholarships... to go to college.”

Mike, an emerging adult, emphasized how his parents encouraged him to engage in entrepreneurial activity:

Growing up, our parents gave us allowances, at least starting out, and then we would sometimes work for different things. It also helped me want to find work on my own. So, I went out, and I remember at one point I wanted more money for things. I talked to my dad about what I could do, and we talked about mowing lawns. So, I went to talk to my elderly neighbors. They probably don’t want to mow their lawns, so I can talk to them. It was good talking to them and [working for them]. And [I did] some other entrepreneurship work.

Encouraging their children to earn money outside of the home naturally led to parents encouraging entrepreneurial activity. Mike continued, “My dad really wanted us to go do stuff on our own rather than trying to get a job. He really pushed that, so whenever I [needed a job], he would say, ‘You should do something on [your] own.’”

According to Jason, an emerging adult, with the idea of working hard comes the satisfaction of earning money and doing so on one’s own. He said, “We were able to make the purchase and I was very excited. But I worked so hard up to that point. I felt very self-satisfied that I had saved and worked really hard to make that purchase.” Jason went on about earning and saving money without the help of parents:

And then when I was about 13 or 14, I earned another \$600 to purchase computer parts and then I built it myself! And, I really, really enjoyed those experiences, and my parents never once did say, “Alright, well here it is.” They would never just buy it for me. Instead, they said “Hey, you can work, and around this many months in the future, you’ll have enough money saved up that you can do it.”

### Manage Money

Participants reported that entrepreneurial experiences taught them to budget, save, and spend their money appropriately. Alana, the female emerging adult quoted earlier, remarked on her entrepreneurial experiences selling baked goods throughout her school years: “So every, every day ever since I was in elementary school, I would bake ‘cause my mom baked a lot. So I would make like brownies and cinnamon rolls, and I would sell them. And I had to pay for the expenses myself. So if I wanted to start a business,

I did it on my own.” In this instance, Alana was the one who was encouraged to pay for the expenses needed to run her nascent entrepreneurial business. This went hand-in-hand with the need to properly budget and allocate earned funds.

Another example of learning to allocate money comes from a grandmother named Isabella. She mentioned how she wanted a bike that cost a lot of money in her day and described her entrepreneurial experiences working for her money. She said, “My parents were also very big on working, so I would babysit. My first job was at Tasty Freeze. So, I always had money besides just my little allowance for whatever job that it was.” After finding out her parents would not help her buy the bike, she became more determined to save and buy the bike herself by working. Isabella continued:

So, I saved up and bought it, and it felt so good to know that you worked for what you bought ... And when [my parents] loaned money, and I started borrowing money from them when I was 18, you always paid interest. They would charge about two percent less than what the banks charged. So, they were really big about teaching us about interest and showing us how much just goes towards interest.... So, I became determined not to borrow money unless it was for a house; everything else I saved my money for.

In regard to a specific entrepreneurial experience, Holly, a mother, mentioned selling quilts in her childhood to earn money to contribute to the cost of a new church building in her community. By contributing to the building fund through entrepreneurship, she was able to get a better understanding of money. She said:

[The congregation]... set up [a communal fund] for the... new church building.... I remember feeling the need to contribute to that... so I gave [my money] to the building fund... that was my first understanding of money.

Along with budgeting, Gus, a grandfather, mentioned living during the Great Depression, and he talked about needed entrepreneurial activity and saving money. He said, “...by the time I got 10, my dad taught me that you ought to save money... so [my parents] taught [my sister and me] both... to save money.” Gus participated in a lawn mowing business to help earn money while living in that particular time. Entrepreneurial experience, regardless of the type, requires the ability to manage money. Proper spending and proper saving helped participants achieve their financial goals.

According to our participants, entrepreneurial experiences are not made up of solely one characteristic, but of many. An example of this comes from Justin, an emerging adult. He said:

A lot of my friends would get a toy just because they wanted it. My parents didn’t operate that way. It wasn’t because we were poor. Their philosophy was... we are going to save, and you have to wait. At the same time, if I wanted to save money then they would give me jobs and things to do to earn money....[My parents] encouraged me to work for my neighbors and be a businessman. The first time that I went and got a job outside the home was mowing my neighbor’s lawn when I was 10. That was the springboard that helped me have a lawn company in high school. My parents invested in me to buy the nice mower and trailer and stuff. They implemented rules... that 40 percent of the money was for future savings.... I hated it for like a year. I gave the money to my parents and then they put it into the bank. I never saw that until one time when [my mother] showed me that I had more than \$1000 in my savings because they were also matching what I put in. I was super excited, until I realized I couldn’t touch it until school. However, [from then on] I was less anti-savings. I started saving more like almost all of it. My parents then realized that they couldn’t match my income anymore, so I was just saving on my own then.

Justin learned to properly allocate money through savings and worked for his money, two aspects of entrepreneurial experience that were discussed previously. With learning how to save and work for his money through having a lawn mowing business, Justin reportedly ended up becoming financially responsible in the long run.

Mike, the emerging adult and entrepreneur previously quoted, when asked how he would want to teach his children about money, responded with:

It’s important to get money in children’s hands early. When you do that, you see more the side of things of what the expenses are coming out of things. Paying your own way for things. Getting the experience yourself and trying to figure out what you can do and managing yourself and those finances. Then when you get a job, the rules will roll over into that. I would want to share more about what investing means. Being more clear about what takes money. Like what you’re really paying for. Help them understand what we’re doing as parents to help provide for them so they can see the picture clearly.

Mike explained the importance of entrepreneurial experience in working and saving up money, all while doing it independently. These instances show how entrepreneurial experience consists of multiple aspects and not necessarily just one part. Participants, when engaging in

entrepreneurship, worked hard, worked independently, and worked to save and budget their earnings.

## Discussion

As mentioned previously, our findings illustrate a wide variety of methods used to teach children about work and other financial principles. This study helps us to begin to understand how parents help their children learn about work. Parents used various methods to teach their children, and consistent with family financial socialization theory (Gudmunson and Danes 2011), it appears parents can impact their children's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors about work and other financial principles. Although extant family financial socialization research has found parents do influence their children's development of financial behaviors and attitudes (Moreno-Herrero et al. 2018; Serido et al. 2015; Shim et al. 2015), this study is the first that we are aware of that explores how parents influence the development of hard work (a financial behavior and attitude) in their children.

Our findings suggest that of the three principle methods for teaching children about money (i.e., discussion, modeling, and experiential learning; Gudmunson and Danes 2011; LeBaron et al. 2018, 2019), experiential learning is especially key in children's socialization of hard work. Parents used three experiential methods to socialize hard work: chores and allowances, work outside the home, and entrepreneurial experiences. In addition, among the extant literature, only a few studies have explored the unique nuanced lessons children have learned about work from their experiences with chores and allowances (White et al. 2019), work outside the home, and entrepreneurship (Studdard et al. 2013). This study expanded upon the few extant studies by providing deeper insight into lessons children learn from chores and allowances, work outside the home, and entrepreneurial experiences. Many young adult participants we interviewed shared vital lessons they had learned about work from their parents' financial socializations. Specifically, the interviewed children reported learning about saving, budgeting, working for money, working as a part of life, working hard, fulfilling responsibility, and establishing financial independence. Children learned general principles about work from each method, and unique applications can be found from participants' experiences with the different teaching methods. In the following three sections, we explore how parents used the three methods of teaching, children's experiences with those methods, and implications for parents.

### Implementing Household Chores and Allowances

The first theme of how parents teach their children about work was using household chores and allowances.

Respondents reported that a variety of perspectives related to chores and allowances successfully taught financial principles. Some reported that they received a "free allowance" and consequently worked hard to complete household chores and were careful with their financial dealings. This is in harmony with Furnham and Milner (2017) who found that children who received an allowance were "more sophisticated with regards to financial decisions" (p. 1217) than children who did not receive an allowance. Some participants reported that receiving allowance money from parents was contingent upon earning it by doing chores. Restricting children's income to earning through work and allowances may encourage them to budget and save. This idea is reinforced by another participant's experience. His parents bought him everything he wanted in addition to giving him an allowance. Consequently, he was less motivated to save or budget his allowance. Additionally, some participants reported that their allowance money was received without any thought of repaying their parents by working. They reported their income was "free." Perhaps when children feel that their parents will buy everything they want, children may not experience a need to differentiate between wants and needs nor learn how to budget.

### Facilitating Paid Employment

The second theme of how parents teach their children about work was that of "Facilitating Paid Employment." When participants explained their experiences working in paid employment, it seemed that children had better experiences when their parents encouraged their efforts in seeking paid employment rather than when they were forced to do so. When voluntarily choosing paid employment, our respondents indicated no animosity towards their parents when they had to work, which suggests children can adapt to the situations they are put in relatively well.

Participants from our study touched on the benefits of obtaining employment during the summer to avoiding excessive work during the school year. Research has shown that adolescents that obtain a summer job can have positive outcomes (Alam et al. 2015; Leos-Urbel 2014) while avoiding the potentially negative academic and behavioral outcomes that come from overworking while in school. Though, children from our study who worked out of the home and who focused solely on school appeared to benefit, but in different ways.

### Encouraging Entrepreneurial Experiences

The third theme of how parents teach their children about work was that of "Encouraging Entrepreneurial Experiences." Although this theme was mentioned less frequently than the other two themes, it appeared to be just as, if not

even more, effective in teaching children to work and giving hands-on experience with other financial principles. Outcomes and lessons learned from entrepreneurial experiences included the following: work leads to money, success, and skill development.

Because of entrepreneurship's engaging nature, when parents encourage entrepreneurial experiences, children often learn many financial lessons. Consistent with past research, entrepreneurs' experiences seemed to involve a combination of learning to work for pay and for free, learning to manage earned money (Studdard et al. 2013), learning how to set and achieve goals (Krueger Jr. 1993), and developing self-confidence (Studdard et al. 2013). Though it is not a panacea for teaching children needed lessons about work, because of its unique demands, entrepreneurship seems to teach a wholesome conglomeration of work, money, and independence.

### Limitations and Areas for Future Research

Our study, however, is not without its limitations. One limitation is that the majority of respondents were White, middle-class university students. Families in different demographic groups may use chores, working outside the home, and entrepreneurial experiences differently than we found. Families from varied demographic groups may also use additional teaching methods not mentioned in this article.

We also recognize that the three teaching methods we explored do not capture the complete story of how children learn about work. As mentioned by Gudmunson and Danes (2011), the characteristics of the individuals and families influence family financial socialization processes. Examples of individual and family characteristics include mental or physical health challenges, domestic abuse, socioeconomic status, and family culture. Due to the limited diversity of our sample, we were unable to explore how those characteristics influence the financial socialization in families. Future research could be conducted to see how individual and family characteristics influence financial socialization within the family.

Additionally, although our sample included some parents and grandparents, the majority of the sample was made up of the emerging adult children. Consequently, we were unable to complete comparisons between the multiple generations studied. Further, we did not have enough grandparents and parents to observe trends that occurred through families across generations. In the future, researchers could explore how families have changed their teaching methods about work and money over time.

Because of its qualitative nature, our study does not quantify how parents teaching their children to work impacts their financial and overall well-being, nor does it explore which teaching methods were most effective. Suggestions

that entrepreneurial activities collectively teach the greatest combination of financial skills were simple conjectures based on the data. Future studies may want to explore the longitudinal effects of teaching children the principles of work in the home.

Another limitation in this study is that it was completed based on previously conducted interviews. In those interviews, participants were asked about how they taught and were taught about money. Interviewers did not focus on how work was taught in the home; participants simply shared those experiences on their own. Consequently, we can assume that many experiences about work were not shared because we did not ask about them. This is also a strength of the study. Although interviewers did not ask specifically about how parents taught about work in the home, being that participants consistently mentioned work as part of their financial education emphasizes the apparent importance (to our participants) of learning to work in the home.

In addition to the research that could be done to address the limitations of this study, other areas might be considered for future research. Researchers may consider studying the varied effectiveness of household chores, work outside the home, and entrepreneurial experiences in teaching financial principles such as hard work and budgeting. Researchers may explore which of those methods are most influential in helping emerging adults launch from home. Researchers may also explore whether emerging adults who say they have learned about work (or are measured to have a strong work ethic) actually experience more financial success.

### Implications

These findings have implications for policy makers, family therapists, educators, parents and future parents. Policy makers involved emerging adult financial stability should consider the profound impact parents have on children's work ethic. Additionally, policy makers may consider requiring public family educators to teach parents about the importance of work ethic and how to develop it in their children. Similarly, policy makers could encourage public schools and day cares to work to develop the work ethic of the children they look after.

Family therapists and educators seeking to improve the work ethic of children may consider using chores, allowances, and entrepreneurial experiences in their efforts. Additionally, educators of parenting classes may consider encouraging parents to use the methods discussed in this paper (i.e., chores and allowances, work outside the home, and entrepreneurial experiences) to teach their children how to work. Due to the effective teaching power of entrepreneurial experiences, we encourage educators consider using entrepreneurial experiences in their teaching efforts.

Parents seeking to help their own children may benefit from using the three methods, as deemed appropriate, to help their children learn about hard work. But rather than advocating one teaching method over another, we believe parents should use the methods that work best for them and their children. Because there is no one-size-fits-all plan, parents should experiment to find out which methods work best for them and their children. Parents may benefit from first assessing their children's individual needs, learning styles, financial tendencies, etc. and then deciding how they can best teach their children how to work. In addition, because children also learned how to work through their jobs and schoolwork, parents might consider together with their children their desired career paths and decide together what balance of work at school, home, and jobs is best for them.

In addition, given the particular teaching power entrepreneurial experiences, we encourage researchers, parents, and teachers to foster entrepreneurial efforts in children when possible. We believe that as parents, therapists, educators, and policy makers work together to strengthen the work ethics of children around the world, children will develop stronger work ethics and ultimately experience greater financial wellbeing.

## Conclusion

How do parents teach their children about work? This multi-generational qualitative study gives us some insights. First, one-size does not fit all. There are a variety of paths to successfully teach children about work. Parental use of household chores coupled with allowances can be very helpful, especially when monetary rewards are contingent upon completing work assignments in the home. When parents facilitate paid employment outside of the home, children learn that money does not grow on trees or magically appear from a parent's wallet, but actually comes as the result of labor. And finally, entrepreneurial experiences in the community (such as, mowing lawns, babysitting, baking treats, or even mucking the neighbor's barn) teach children to work hard for money, to manage earned money via budgeting and savings, and to be independent. This study provides valuable insight into how to teach children about work and can be beneficial for parents and other educators.

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## Compliance with Ethical Standards

**Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

**Ethical Approval** The study completed was approved by the appropriate institutional research ethics committee. All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

**Research Involving Human Participants and/or Animals** This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by any of the authors.

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