

Quick Tips for Busy Parents

Everyone must play the “organizing game” for it to work. Set a good example for your children by being organized yourself.

Children are often motivated by rewards and consequences. If your children do what you want within the timeframe you set, reward them (e.g. goodies, play a game, let them stay up a half-hour later). If they don't do what you want, make sure to enforce the consequences (e.g. temporarily taking favourite toys, “off limits” things/areas).

Planning

- Make lunches & snacks the night before, and make sure each child's backpack has everything needed for events / activities for the next school day. Leave the bags near the front door.
- Help your children to pick out tomorrow's clothes the night before. Arrange the entire outfit on a hanger, hook or dressing table.
- Label all items that tend to go missing with your child's name (e.g. gloves, hat).
- When you've signed school papers, use a binder clip to attach them to your child's schoolbook so they won't get lost/forgotten.

Chores

- Help your children to learn how to do chores by working with them, making checklists and/or drawing pictures.
- Get your children to help you to create a place for their things. This way, they will learn how to organize and they will know where everything belongs.
- Write a chore list on a white board with erasable markers. Place the board at eye level for kids and have them check off each chore as they complete it.
- Make closets kid-friendly by putting rods and shelving at kid eye level. This will make putting clothes away much easier.
- Include “put things away at the end of the day” as part of the bedtime routine.
- Teach your kids to separate their dirty clothes by colour and put them directly into hampers or laundry baskets. Just be sure family members know to leave out anything that has a stain to be treated or that requires special handling.

Reduce & Store

- Have your children sort through their toys and clothes to give to charity / friends. Sometimes giving things away is easier if they help to decide who will get them.
- Store small toys and items in clear, behind-the-door shoe organizers, and keep easy-to-lose game and puzzle pieces in zip-lock bags in the game box.
- Only keep a few favourite stuffed toys on the bed. Store the rest in toy hammocks, toy chests or shelves.
- Let children keep special toys in their rooms, but contain shared toys to one area of the house only (e.g. the basement).



- So you'll always know where to find things, dedicate spots throughout the house for specific items. For example, one cupboard for all the school supplies, a plastic storage container under each child's bed for keepsakes such as awards, report cards and badges.
- Designate a place for each child's school papers. For example, folders kept in horizontal slots in a kitchen cupboard or colour-coded file folders in a crate.
- Rotate your children's artwork. Let your kids choose which few pieces they would like to display at any one time, and file the rest in a drawer/clean pizza boxes (go through the collection every few months).
- Designate a place on the kitchen counter where your children can leave anything that needs your attention. Use a basket to contain the paper, but remember to go through it regularly so that nothing important is overlooked.

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MORE TIME - LESS STRESS

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