

Helping Your Child Get Organized Will Teach Them Skills and Responsibility - PART 2: THE SCHOOL YEARS

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Well, I hope Part 1 went well. You spent quality time helping your preschooler learn how to organize the toys and things in their room making it easy for them to maintain. Again, in a manner that was easy for them to recognize and relate to. Remember the time you spend with your child helping them to better help themselves is a priceless gift! As we discussed in Part 1, it takes discipline and patience on your part not to give in and do everything for them. Sometimes we do too much out of love and sometimes we do it because we think we are saving time or it is easier to just do it ourselves. Shame on us. We need to prepare them for a successful future which includes being self sufficient and responsible.

So now they are in school and you've prepared them well at home. Their grade school years are an important time to help them learn how to keep track of added responsibilities. It's the beginning of homework, after school activities and more. You definitely want to continue instilling good habits. It's a great time to set up a family info center. This can be placed in the kitchen, the living room where ever it best suits your family. The info center can have several components depending on the needs of your household. A decorative stand up file box is a great place for incoming and outgoing papers. I encourage you to have a folder for each child where you

would keep school papers needed the entire school year. This includes phone numbers, school policies things like that. After school activities can also be added to this folder such as team rosters, music lessons etc. That way everyone knows where to go for papers pertaining to each child. Mom and Dad should have folders as well. This gives your child a place to put papers that they'd like you to see or that you need to read and sign.

It is best to discuss this as a family to set rules. Such as, any papers you need signed by Mom or Dad need to be in the appropriate folder by 6:00. You decide on the rules and time limits that work best for your family. But if you didn't set limits they may put things in at 9:00 P.M. after you've already checked the folder. This can be a great time saver for busy families and it alleviates paper piles or important things getting lost such as permission slips. How many mornings have been ruined by families arguing because they can't find what they need and now you are all running late?

Remember it's about everyone working smarter not harder. Your whole family will benefit from an organized household. Help your child figure out what works best for them to keep track of their own responsibilities. Again, their responsibilities not yours. Does it work better for them to write in a notebook things they need to do

to be prepared for tomorrow? Or will a dry erase or chalkboard be a better visual. We all think and respond to cues differently. But you want to help them learn how to be prepared on their own. Do they need to pack their baseball glove for practice after school? Ok Mom and Dad how many times have we heard, YOU forgot my baseball glove or my lunch money? That's when you have to step back and say ok something is wrong here. My child needs to realize this is his or her responsibility, not mine. How can I help them to grow into an organized and responsible individual? Remember the more you help them now with organization the less you will have to do for them later! This will make for a very happy household all the way around! I am sure they will be extremely grateful when they are organized successful adults years from now. Happy organizing to you and yours. So... what will you stop doing for your child today? What could be improved upon to make your household run smoother?

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