

THE ABC's of organized kids

Wouldn't it be a big help if your kids earned an A+ in organization this school year? "A lot of it is good habits," says Molly Gold, president and founder of Go Mom! Inc. "Helping kids become more organized is about training them to do it." Luckily, this mom of three and organization expert gave us some tips on helping your kids help themselves.



A

Adjust to family habits. Do your kids always drop their coats and shoes in the front hall? Consider placing bins, hooks or shelves there. "If you put something where they're naturally going to dump it, then it's going to be more organized," says Molly.

B

Be prepared for the paper avalanche. Those permission forms, homework sheets and school notices pile up. Try creating in and out boxes for each family member. Then work with your kids to empty backpacks into those spots after school.

C

Coach kids through the daily schedule. Let kids know what happens after school: snack time, 30 minutes to play, homework, etc. "If you start off early training your children that within those first 30 minutes after coming home from school they've got to shift gears and then get back to the homework, they'll do it," Molly says.

D



Develop a master family calendar. A large wall calendar is a good place to track everyone's activities, as well as whose turn it is to feed Fido or take out the trash. It gives kids good practice at using a key organizational tool, and eventually, you won't always have to remind them to check the calendar.

E

Establish a homework spot. Help your kids take ownership of homework by giving them a place to work. The kitchen table is fine. Just turn off the distractions (phones, music, etc.) and keep a good stock of school supplies nearby.

F

Free your mornings of stress (or at least reduce it). Start by leaving at least an hour for your kids to get ready. For younger children, try making posters with pictures of what needs to be done in the morning: make the bed, brush teeth, get dressed and turn off the lights.

G

Give young kids alarm clocks. Time management is critical to organization. Work with your children to set alarms every night and get up when they buzz in the morning. You'll eventually relieve yourself of wake-up duty.

