

10 Tips to Help Get Your Child Organized

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Getting organized can make life easier for kids with learning and attention issues. It might

take some effort in the beginning, but it's worth it in the long run. Here are tips to help your child improve organization skills at home, at school and beyond.

1. **Break tasks into chunks.**

Help your child break school projects or household chores into smaller, more manageable steps. This will show your child that each project has a beginning, middle and end, which can make projects feel less overwhelming.

2. **Make checklists and to-do lists.**

Once your child knows all the steps involved with a particular task, help her add it to an overall to-do list. Include regular homework and chores on the list. Encourage her to keep the list in a place where she'll see it often and to check off accomplishments as she goes. She might create it using a smartphone app ([/students-disabilities/assistive-technology-education/apps-students-ld-organization-study](#)), write it on a dry-erase board in her bedroom or print out a list to carry around with her throughout the day.

3. **Teach calendar and time-management skills.**

Encourage your child write down important tasks in a digital calendar or on a paper one. Then help her estimate how much time each task will take. After she completes the tasks, ask whether the time estimate was accurate or not. If needed, suggest adjustments for next time. It may also help to have your child write the due date directly on school assignments.

4. **Establish daily routines.**

Creating a regular schedule can help your child learn what to expect throughout the day. Use picture schedules, clocks and other time-management strategies.

This article was created for [Understood.org](http://www.understood.org).

Learn more (<http://www.ncl.org/ld-insights/blogs/free-new-online-resources-for-parents>) about this new resource.

5. Introduce idea organizers.

Show your child how to use outlines, graphic organizers or concept webs to organize ideas for school projects. Encourage her to take class notes in two columns, like the Cornell note-taking system (http://lsc.cornell.edu/LSC_Resources/cornellsystem.pdf). This system uses a narrow column on the left for main ideas or questions and a wide column on the right for all the details. Later, when your child is studying for a test, she can look at what's in the narrow column to review the big ideas and see if she can remember the details.

6. Use color-coding.

Assign colors to each school subject. For example, green folders and notebooks may be for English and blue for math. Use brightly colored pocket folders for items that need to be signed and returned. Suggest that your child use colored pens to help shift from the role of writer to the role of self-checker and editor.

7. Create fun memory aids.

Show your child how to create her own silly sentences, songs, acronyms or cartoons to remember information. (One popular mnemonic, "Never Eat Soggy Waffles," helps kids remember north, east, south and west.) She can use these memory aids for anything from preparing for an exam to recalling her locker combination.

8. Create an organized workspace.

Set aside a space at home where your child can work without interruption. It might work best if this is somewhere near you for times when she needs your assistance. Keep school supplies and technology such as calculators, tablets or laptops nearby.

9. Do regular backpack audits.

Schedule a time each week for your child to clean out and organize her backpack ([/students-disabilities/homework-study-skills/messy-backpack-help-your-child-get-organized](http://www.ncl.org/ld-insights/blogs/free-new-online-resources-for-parents)).

10. Help your child think ahead.

Before bedtime, review plans for the next day with your child. This can make her feel more secure. Together you can plan how to handle things if a change comes up in the schedule.

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Wendy 4132 · 4 months ago

Here's the issue I have with all of these tips. Nobody ever considers the fact that ADHD and other learning disabilities can be genetic. A parent may struggle with the suggestions listed above. Then what? What are parents who are in this situation supposed to do? Not everyone can afford help such as personal organizers and executive function coaches. Insurance doesn't cover these services even though it's been proven to highly beneficial. Schools are not always willing or likely to provide the depth of executive function training that a child needs to experience success or give the child the amount or time or other supports needed. This is especially hard if the child is high functioning, but struggles organizationally. Many view these kids as lazy or unmotivated. It's too bad after all we know, that these kids still endure horrendous school experiences due to a lack of understanding and misperception about their behaviors.

13 ^ | v · Reply · Share >



Shannon Curtis-Whitney → Wendy 4132 · 4 days ago

Wendy 4132 I so much agree with everything that you said!!! I'm a mother of boy who's ADHD and I'm also ADHD and I do struggle with keeping things organized a lot so it would be interesting what they would suggest for that situation!!!

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share >



Devra → Wendy 4132 · 4 days ago

Talk to your child's school about an IEP. Thus will ensure that they get the time and attention to help them succeed. If you have one already read through it or ask to have it revised to include help in the areas that concern you.

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guest → Devra · 2 days ago

Good luck with that. Unless you are in an exceptional school district, personal experiences have been such that schools don't care; and having a goal on paper doesn't mean anything if the schools are not providing sound, proven, measurable methods that can be reproduced when used with multiple students. They just want to pass kids through and let it be some other person's problem the next school year. Schools are not interested in providing effective remedial services. They instead use modifications or accomodations as a substitute for and instead of using them in conjunction to remediate students, from our experiences with the CSE "teams"...

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Cat → Wendy 4132 · 4 days ago

Thanks for posting this!

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