

THE TREVOR
ROMAIN COMPANY

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Prioritizing effectively.
- Establishing a homework routine.
- Creating a likeable space.
- Preparation is a process.
- The importance of check-lists.
- Your child's organizational style.

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:

Managing School Time 2

It's Sheer Madness! 2

Off the Floor 2

Plan & Prepare 3

Make a List 3

Work Together 3

Resources & Information 4

Helping Your Child Organize Efficiently & Effectively

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Managing School Time

While organization comes easier to some than to others, everyone seems to recognize the benefit of perfecting organizational skills. By maximizing productivity, we make the best use of our time which enables us to meet deadlines and allows us to achieve more.

Kids who learn the value of organization are more likely to meet school assignments with success while sculpting their individual style of work and enjoyment with time management. "We do not have control over time and the number of hours per day is limited, but the tasks that have to be done are numerous and there arises a need for organizing things and tim-

ing oneself" (Organizational Skills, 2009).



Practice makes perfect.

By modeling the dynamics of organization, children begin to operate in smaller, manageable segments instead of the "last minute" chaos that often comes when organizational skills are not instilled. Provide a family calendar and request that all assignments

be written in weekly by your child. A "Home" folder is a great way to keep up with papers that require parental attention.

Younger children benefit from weekly calendar events as they comprehend what is expected for the entire week. If a child is separated from a parent, it helps to write down visitation schedules and holiday plans. When students understand the expectations of the week, surprises are less likely to lead to turmoil.

Teach your child to prepare for over-night parent visitations and both parents should monitor school work.

(continued on page 2)

Space Savers

Organization doesn't need to be expensive. Here are some low-cost items you may already have in your home:

- Laundry basket or hamper (make sure your child has a place for dirty clothes).
- Pail or small bucket (small trash piles up quickly – throw away as you go! Empty weekly.).
- A hanging "shoe holder" can

hold more than shoes! (note cards, markers, tape, paper back books, etc.)

- Ice cube tray (push pins, erasers, loose change)
- Shoe boxes (markers, pens, pencils, highlighters, stickers)
- Small hooks (scissors, hole punch or tape)
- Jars (remove the labels and you have a place for rubber bands, paper clips, etc.)

- Pizza box (ask for a free clean pizza box – great for storing school work under the bed!)

Organization is not about cute, colorful bins and baskets. Organization is a process that takes time in the beginning but with practice becomes habit-forming, saving everyone time in the end.



“Consciously or unconsciously, we apply organization strategies in our everyday life.” (Organization Skills, 2009)

“No more homework humiliation.” (Scholastic, 2009)

Think of creative ways to use your space.



Managing School Time (continued)

Older children benefit from a monthly calendar, detailing classroom assignments, project deadlines and extra-curricular activities. Book reports, sports practice and subject assessments are clearly articulated as students are encouraged to begin working towards goals and mastery of expectations.

Educators are now going on-line, often posting calendars or news of events and assignments. By accessing

the internet, you are readily able to monitor progress and accountability. Your child needs to understand that “arranging things in the order of priority is also an important task; otherwise what has been done after the given deadlines might not be of any use” (Organizational Skills, 2009).

By looking at the “big picture,” your child learns to work in smaller units of time, visibly reducing stress.

“Effective organization skills create lifetime habits and set the stage for success in high school, college and on the job” (Family Matters, 2009). Every job has assignments and requests that often seem too huge to conquer in the beginning. By learning to tackle things in small chunks, children learn that anything can be obtainable with time, dedication and determination.

It's Sheer Madness!

It's time to leave for school but your child has misplaced their homework.

You get a call at work. You hear, “I need you to bring my homework.”

It's bed time and your child says, “I have a book report tomorrow.”

You drive by the bank and hear, “I need to pay my library fine!”

It's almost dark and your child says, “I have a test tomorrow but I forgot what I'm supposed to study.”

What's needed?
A HOMEWORK ROUTINE.

Make sure your child has a “homework spot.” Organize the space according to your style. You may have baskets, shelves or an accordion file folder labeled with titles like “Finished,” “To Do,” or “Parents.” By glancing in the

space, everyone knows what needs to be done.

Backpacks should be prepared the night before school. Make sure anything that needs a parent's signature has been signed and placed inside. Double-check homework assignments. If something is due, zip it up. The morning of school should require nothing more than having a healthy breakfast, getting dressed and grabbing your backpack!

Off the Floor

When thinking about organizing your child's room, remember to think all the way up to the ceiling. Secured “tall bookcases and open shelves make the best use of the vertical space in a room” (Online Kids Room, 2009). For a

child's eye level and below, create spaces for organizing items used more often. For games or toys used less often, store these items above eye level. “A sling made from netting can be quickly installed in an upper corner of the room to corral an army of stuffed animals” (Online Kids Room, 2009).

When placing a desk in a child's room, consider their learning style. Does your child prefer natural light from a window or do they like a darker space lighted by a lamp? Make sure desk supplies are labeled to assure the best use of study time. A likeable space usually becomes a likeable place!

Plan & Prepare



Many children *think* they know what is needed for a report or project but when it's time to do the work, they suddenly realize they are not prepared. Children need to *outline* tasks before tackling them.

◆ When asked to write a report, ask your child to organize their thoughts. What is your topic? Make sure the topic is not too broad or too narrow.

Just think about it!

You want to have enough information but not so much information that it becomes overwhelming.

What are the subtopics? These are topics that fall under your main topic's "umbrella." For example, if your topic is sharks, your subtopics might be sand sharks and tiger sharks. Each subtopic needs "ideas" – diet, physical features, etc.

◆ Book reports are easier when you know what is expected prior to reading. In other words, what will I need to do

or know when finished reading? Will I need to discuss the setting or theme? Do I need to list specific character traits? Will I need to give one summary or short chapter summaries?

◆ School projects vary in nature but children often ask for markers, poster board, glue, stickers, shoe boxes, etc. When a school project is announced, begin planning what is needed to avoid a late night run to the store. Ask your child how the project can be broken down into chunks and plan accordingly.

"It's time to introduce yourself to the art of making checklists."

(Scholastic, 2009)

Make a List

Lists generally make living easier! Teach your child to begin or add to lists in your home, saving both of you time and frustration. "Creating and referring to lists will develop the ability to strategize tasks and organize time" (Scholastic, 2009).

√ **Things to buy.** Keep a family grocery list. Encourage everyone to participate by writing

down foods that are almost out or items needed. Think about school snacks and lunches.

√ **Things to do.** It might be a household chore, an errand that needs to be run or a school request such as a fund raiser. Write down things that will require attention.

√ **Reminders.** A reminder can be a few words that remind you to tell someone about a phone

message or a test grade. Your child may need to remind you that the book order is due.

√ **Mail.** Keep track of bills and cards by writing down weekly reminders.

When lists are available, it's easier to prioritize what needs attention so that time may be managed accordingly.

Work Together

When tackling a messy room or improving existing organization, kids are much more likely to jump on board when they are involved in the process.

"Create a template of the room on a piece of paper ensuring that the measurements are proportional" (Online Kids Room, 2009). Using cutouts of the

room's furniture, place the furniture in various areas until it's a space that your child finds likeable.

Some rooms are more limiting than others. When choices are limited, find decisions that your child can be a part of. "Allowing children to decide spaces for their own possessions is em-

powering and educational" (Online Kids Room, 2009). As much as possible, allow your child to choose organization style and color. Once the room receives the "make-over," it becomes your child's responsibility to keep the room clean and organized.



Bookcases are great for storage.

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**Promoting social & emotional
fitness for kids.**

Daphne Morris, M.Ed., met Trevor Romain in 1992 when he visited a school as a guest speaker. Impressed by Trevor's profound and meaningful impact on students and educators, Daphne joined The Trevor Romain Company in 2006. A former elementary school principal, Daphne holds two Master's degrees in education.



Resources:

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