



Let's Get Organized!

*Promoting Organizational Skills at Home The Learning Team:
A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs*

Many people experience difficulty living with full schedules and numerous demands on time and energy. Organization can make the difference between a busy, productive household and one that is hectic and overwhelming. From an early age, children benefit from having structure and order in their lives and feel secure when they can depend on an outcome.

For toddlers and preschoolers, engaging in tasks such as sorting and classifying encourages logical and mathematical thinking. This, in turn, creates opportunities for the child to develop important organizational skills.

There are various ways in which accommodations can be made in the classroom, such as reducing clutter, limiting environmental choices, establishing predictable locations for items, and separating large spaces into smaller, defined areas. The following ideas may also help your child with organization at home:

- Encourage your child to help sort or put away laundry. (Colour code drawers, organize socks.)
- Use clearly-labeled or colour coded baskets and containers for toys, books, clothing, etc.
- Designate a specific place for essential materials such as keys, library books and equipment.
- Allocate time on a regular and frequent basis to get rid of clutter. (i.e. Identify what is important and what is not.)
- Stock your child's homework space with needed supplies and remove unnecessary items so they are not distracting.
- Use checklists for specific routines (e.g. Morning routine: get dressed, eat breakfast, brush teeth, comb hair.)
- Create regular, healthy patterns for eating, sleeping and exercise.
- Keep a master calendar for the household that lists the family's commitments, scheduled appointments and deadlines.
- Prepare for the day ahead. (Pack schoolwork and books in backpack, clothes and accessories laid out.)

Remember, the best habits and routines are flexible, creative and based on need. Happy organizing!

