

# Stay Organized This Summer

& Be Ready for the  
Next School Year



**Sasha Campbell, Owner, Organized Sunshine**

Ahh...Summer! While it is a time for kids and parents to kick back and take some time to breathe, it gives this professional organizer a bit of anxiety. Gasp! No Schedules? No color-coded calendars keeping track of the children's constant activities? For those of us that thrive on structure, it can be a time of uncertainty. And while some parents experience a bit of anxiety throughout the summer, it tends to be compounded with the last few weeks of summer when the "I don't know when I am going to do all this school prep before school starts" feeling sets in.

But what if there were a happy medium? What if there was a way to appease those of us who need structure without sacrificing the lazy, care-free days of summer? The good news? There IS!

Once a week set aside for a kid centered chore that needs to be done. Mark your calendar ahead of time and keep this appointment! Get your kids involved! Here are some ideas: Remember last year when the school year was about to start, and your child had still not cleaned out the backpack from previous year- the papers, the projects, and now the smelling gym shirt all spending the hot summer months tucked in a forgotten backpack?

Not this year! Empty all contents and find them a home (which may or may not be the trash can!) Clean the backpack itself, following the instructions. However, things as simple as vacuuming out the inside makes a world of difference. Attack stubborn stains with detergent or Clorox wipes. Even a washing machine can erase years of unwanted memories.

Now is the time to tackle the pile of schoolwork you have been collecting all year. Your strategy: sort, trash, or stash. Do you really need the 475 pages proving your child can do addition? Nope! Pick a few and throw away the rest. The reminders are keepsakes. Another week's task can be finding the right system or area to store these childhood treasures.

Next up: a closet edit! Has little Billy grown 3 inches this year? Will his current winter coat even fit? It is time to rid the closet of those smaller sizes. You don't need to tackle the entire closet at one time. Do shirts one week, pants another, etc. Then label the clothes according to size and season to store them for the next child. If you do not need to keep these clothes, immediately bag them up to donate or sell. Once you have determined your child's size, it will be much easier to buy supplemental clothes for the new school year.

These weekly mini-projects will not only reduce the end-of -summer angst but will also guide you through every year to come. Your kids will see and participate as well, thereby creating life lessons in organization. And while other parents are panic-stricken in those last few weeks before school starts, you can truly enjoy those lazy days of summer.

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