

# Getting Rid of Clutter: Managing Your Child's Paperwork



Getting rid of clutter with kids in the house really is quite the project. Most of us have tried keeping up with the endless supply of paper that walks through the door with little success. The trick to getting rid of clutter (while keeping the important stuff) is having a system to deal with everything you will encounter.

With kids comes lots of stuff. There are toys, equipment, and all the papers that come home from school each day. While some of the paper can be tossed, there will be papers requiring immediate action and some should be saved for future reference. We have divided the clutter into 3 topics for discussion below:

## Getting Rid Of Cluttering Artwork

- Create a Gallery to display a child's artwork, using limited space such as a sliding glass door or a large bulletin board.
- Let your child decide what stays and what goes in the Gallery.
- Maintenance Tip: When the gallery is full, take a photo of the artwork before replacing with newer ones.

## Getting Rid Of Cluttering School Papers

- Sort through papers daily, tossing items you know aren't needed for future reference.
- Set aside papers needing immediate response.
- Papers for later reference could include long-term school projects like reports or research for an upcoming science project. Help your child store these important papers near his/her study area using either of these two methods:
  - Open file box – If your child is old enough, let them choose the color of files and encourage them to do the actual labeling of each file. This is a great way to transfer responsibility as well as create a sense of ownership in their file system.
  - 3-ring binder – Use tabs to designate different categories or subjects. Use dividers with pockets or sheet protectors to store smaller items or papers you don't want to punch.
- Maintenance Tip: Most homework assignments will eventually be tossed; however, as your child gets older you'll



probably begin recognizing certain talents such as writing or art. Allow yourself to keep 4-7 items each school year, storing them in a separate file cabinet in files labeled by year.

## Getting Rid Of Cluttering Activity Papers

- If your household has several active children, you'll probably want to separate your paper information first by child, then by activity such as Football, Piano, Choir.
- Binders or a hanging file system work great and make it easy to access information quickly and easily.
- Maintenance Tip: sort/purge your papers at season end as well as the end of each school year.

Getting rid of clutter with kids in the house is possible and can be done without throwing away precious or important papers. Just follow these tips and you'll do away with a good amount of clutter!

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