

School News & Notes

Get And Stay Organized Throughout The School Year

(NAPSA)—Life is full of challenges around school time. From waking up early to make the kids' lunches to racing to a soccer game after a sales meeting, the reality is that the back to school season affects *both* parents and children. In order for kids to be successful in school and in life, good family communication is key. Maria Bailey, Office Depot's Family Organization Expert, offers innovative tips for families to stay on track throughout the school year.

Tip #1: Establish a routine. Whether your child is going to school for the first time or moving up a grade it's important for parents to review their child's school and extracurricular commitments early for the upcoming year. Plan out a weekly schedule and try to stick to it.

Tip #2: Get organized early. Last minute book reports and science fair project deadlines can be trouble-free if you have all the school supplies you'll need ahead of time. Whether you are a stay-at-home or working parent, be sure to "take a day off" to get the family organized prior to the start of school and again after the holidays. Many retailers including Office Depot let you buy in bulk and save on the basics such as pens, notebooks and construction paper.

Tip #3: Create a "Family Communication Station." A new school year means new schedules, project deadlines and time requirements for the entire family. Avoid missed deadlines and morning chaos by creating a "Family Communication Station" that keeps students and parents on the same page. For



Creating a "Family Communication Station" can help you avoid missed deadlines and morning chaos.

under \$50, you can easily assemble the station by hanging a large cork bulletin board, small dry erase board and monthly calendar in a high traffic area of your home, such as the kitchen. Keep the calendar updated with activities and deadlines for each child.

Tip #4: Kid-Friendly In/Out Boxes. How many times has your child lost a permission slip before you got a chance to sign it? Assemble kid-friendly in/out boxes for the constant flow of papers and permission slips that must be reviewed and signed by Mom or Dad. Have each child decorate their own personalized box with stickers, markers and glitter.

Tip #5: Try to keep some consistency in your child's schedule. Be sure to leave one night free for the whole family to dine together. Talk with your kids about how they are balancing homework and extracurricular activities and listen carefully to what they say. Not only will this bring you closer, but knowing what the kids are up to can keep you even more organized.