

Busy, Busy, Busy Time of the Year

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This is a busy time of the year as we readjust to school year schedules. Here are some tips to help you along the way.

Content:

As a single mom and full time student myself, I find this to be the busiest time of the year for me. Add onto this the fact that I homeschool my daughter and you'll find that I, like the majority of others that I know, am having a difficult time balancing my family's varying schedules. I would even dare say that 24 hours just doesn't seem to be enough time in a day for me. That is why I'm finding myself having to look at time management. I am trying to shift from complaining about the time that I don't have to being grateful for the time that I do have. Spending quality family time together is one of my highest priorities but when running around from activity to activity, it is hard to find. Here are

some strategies that I choose to employ in order to gain control of my time:

(1.) I objectively determine the initial priorities for my family. These are based upon last year's schedule, my daughter and my personalities, finances, current commitments and the comfort level of my family. I find that I want to focus on academics, balance my time, make sure that we're both enjoying ourselves, and that there is time for friends, family, quiet time, reading, and playing.

(2.) I have a notebook in which I keep our calendar for each week. These are based on the decisions that were reached in #1. Some things that are included are school hours and activities, work schedules, activity schedules, religious events, family time, meal time, homework time, sleep time and most importantly NON-scheduled time. Of course, I have to also take into account travel time, preparation/clean up time, waiting time, etc. and how we can make the best use of these times as well (ie carpooling, walking to activities, bringing work along for waiting time). I have also removed a variety of things as my daughter and I definitely thrive upon a more relaxed schedule.

I also find that it is important to establish a routine. This makes life run much smoother. Some areas where routines are a must are school, chores and meals.

I am always working on eliminating clutter in my household, not only because I'm a frugalist but also because I find that there's a lot of needless time being wasted looking for things. I have set places in my home for keys, school items, library books, bags, purses, lunch kits, etc.

I immediately deal with paper. For instance, I know that I must keep a portfolio for both Ashley and my education. As such I take time to update them weekly. I also read and recycle mail right at the mailbox, write all pertinent information off school papers, newsletters, mail, flyers, etc in my family notebook and recycle them as well.

As hard as it is for me... I do my best to avoid perfectionism, aiming for completion and excellence instead.

I try to limit details. There are so many choices available to us in life but when limiting them you're actually saving yourself time.

I am big on limiting time wasters such as watching TV, playing video games, surfing the Internet, or talking on the phone

I would have to say that it's really all about making a shift in perspective. The school year naturally keeps us busy but we must make the choice to keep busy with important things instead of being overwhelmed by disarray. I hope that this will help you all gain better control of your time!

Reverend Brenda Hoffman, is ordained by the Unitarian Life Church, and has been delivering holistic health and wellness advice for over 7 years since receiving a BA in psychology. As a home-based professional and mother of 1, she operates a holistic wellness network. She invites you over to <http://www.yourhealthyfamilyhome.com/> to learn how to improve you and your family's health.

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