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# I N S I G H T S

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FOR FAMILIES



## Good time management leads to better school success



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INSIGHTS FOR FAMILIES is provided by your child's school in recognition of your role as a partner in education. Insights is produced by Marcia Latta, communications consultant.

Self-discipline and good organizational skills — prioritizing and completing projects, motivation, lack of procrastination — have a greater connection to academic success than intellectual ability alone. A study published in *Psychological Science* found that “highly self-disciplined adolescents outperformed their more impulsive peers on every academic-performance variable, including report-card grades, standardized achievement-test scores, admission to a competitive high school, and attendance.” [www.sas.upenn.edu/~duckwort/images/PsychologicalScienceDec2005.pdf](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~duckwort/images/PsychologicalScienceDec2005.pdf)

The competition for your time is stiff. Long to-do lists can cause stress for parents and children, but adopting some self-management skills can make daily life smoother and create habits that help students succeed in school.

Education.com has the following tips to help you teach your child time management:

[education.com/magazine/article/teach-time-management-key-success/](http://education.com/magazine/article/teach-time-management-key-success/)

**To save time, everything in your house should have a designated place**, including: back packs, lunch boxes, coats etc. It's easier to find something if that item has a home.

**Set up a monthly calendar with each child.** Use your school district's global calendar to add school vacation days, exams or other testing dates and any other important events. When school begins, help your child expand the calendar with a color coding system: red for tests or quizzes, blue for long-term projects, black for nightly homework and green for fun activities.

**Practice estimating time with activities** such as a family dinner or sports practice. Begin by practicing this skill with everyday activities over the summer, and then encourage your child to use the same strategy with his or her homework. By recognizing the actual amount of time necessary for schoolwork, chores and fun activities, your child gains an awareness of the passage of time and the importance of managing time efficiently.

**Teach your child how to divide long-term projects into manageable tasks.** It is easy to combine this strategy with practicing how to estimate time accurately. For example, have your child list the steps associated with preparing a family dinner. After the activity is divided into specific tasks, your child can estimate the time each step will take and compare this to the actual time. Learning how to divide large projects helps students initiate and complete daunting academic assignments by breaking the large task into manageable pieces.

**Avoid procrastination.** Some students cancel afternoon or weekend plans because of homework but still delay completing the work until the last minute. Teach your child to pair difficult or

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boring tasks with a reward. Working from a “To Do” list helps both you and your child prioritize tasks and plan time effectively.

Establishing good habits early is the most effective way to ensure that they stick. Younger children can get in the habit of self-discipline with these easy, visual tips from GreatSchools.org:

[www.greatschools.org/students/academic-skills/1560-time-management-for-kids.gs](http://www.greatschools.org/students/academic-skills/1560-time-management-for-kids.gs)

**Create a chart for your preschooler or kindergartener** for the bathroom wall and call it “Body Beautiful.” Illustrate hygiene tasks, such as brushing teeth, with words or images. This teaches how to visualize and finish tasks independently.

**Limit screen time.** Television is a common waste of time. Plan ahead and set limits with your child’s input on the amount of television per week. Write the plan based on viewing preferences and schedules. Also, consider that screen time includes computer and video games.

**Create a chart for older children, too.** Charts with time blocks for each task are helpful for children ages 7 to 12 years old who are learning to manage their own time. Have your child include all school and chore responsibilities and check off each task when done. This teaches personal organizational skills and scheduling.

**Create a separate homework chart.** Have your child make a homework chart and list assignments for Monday through Friday. After finishing assignments, your child can mark it as completed. This teaches children how to keep track of deadlines and duties.

### **Planning tools can provide extra help**

All students have their own learning style. Consider these tools to help your student manage time better:

- **Timers:** Set a basic kitchen timer for homework sessions or musical practice.
- **Analog clocks with post-it notes:** Label the face of the clock with the task and time your child will start it.
- **Online calendar with task list:** If your child uses a computer, an online calendar such as Google Calendar, helps schedule tasks by day, week or month.
- **The Lazy Meter:** There are numerous smartphone apps and computer programs that help manage time. The Lazy Meter is an online to-do list that schedules tasks for one day at a time. It helps students focus on a daily goal and check it off when complete. [www.lazymeter.com](http://www.lazymeter.com)