

*Organize Your Life: Tips and Tools
to Make Sense of it All!*

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Importance of Organization

- Decrease level of stress in everyday life
- Improve time-management abilities
- Decrease tardiness
- Positive attitude change from reactive to proactive
- Improve quality of life

Organization Checklist

- Identify problem areas
- Create strategies for organization
- Prioritize areas to organize
- Implement strategies
- Make changes for sustainability

Identify Problem Areas

- *Look around!*
- *Trouble finding things*
- *Things that make you run late*
- *Difficulty locating paperwork*
- *Troublesome time of day*
- *Unorganized bill-pay system*
- *Homework*
- *Mealtimes*
- *Communication*
- *Defining family roles and responsibilities*

Create Strategies for Organization

- *Write goal*
- *Measure of success*

Prioritize Areas to Organize

- *Affordability*
 - *Time-saving*
 - *Daily concern*
 - *Daily routine*
 - *Safety*
 - *Biggest Impact*
- *List everything needed for task completion*
 - *location*
 - *time*
 - *cost*
 - *assistance*

Implement Strategies

- Teach entire family new system
- Have plan for accountability
- Rewards for utilizing system
- Assign roles

Make Changes for Sustainability

- Be prepared to make adjustments for success
- Not every method works for every person
- Same actions get the same results
- Beef up rewards initially

Organization Worksheet

Area of concern:

Goal for area with measurable outcome:

Items needed for task completion include cost, time, manpower:

Assign roles and establish accountability, include reward system:

Review and make changes if needed:

Useful Organization Methods

- *Binders* - budget, iep's, therapists, medical, homework, activities, art, articles, school-to-home communication, phone log, calendars, husband and wife communication
- *Bins* - paperwork, schoolwork, shoes, clothes, sports equipments, upcoming events - birthday presents, school projects, etc., outfits
- *Charts* - chores/money, behaviors/privileges, activities, schedules - parents responsibilities
- *Locks* - prevent messes, maintains organization

Paperwork

- *Care Notebook*
- *School Document Binder*
- *Teacher Resource Binder*
- *School Resource Folders*

What is a Care Notebook?

- *An organizing tool for families who have children with special health care needs*
- *Used to keep track of important information about your child's health care*

How can a Care Notebook help me?

- Helps you organize the most important information in a central place
- Makes it easier for you to find and share key information with others who are part of your child's team

Use your Care Notebook to:

- Track changes in your child's medicines or treatments
- Important telephone numbers
- Prepare for appointments
- File information about your child's health history
- Share new information with your child's health care and IEP team

Helpful Hints for using my child's Care Notebook

- Store the notebook where it is easy to find
- Add new information whenever your child's treatment changes
- Consider taking it with you to appointments, IEP meeting, and hospital visits

Steps to set up child's notebook

- Step 1: Gather information you already have. This may include reports from recent doctor or therapist visits, recent summary of a hospital stay, test results, etc.

Step 2

- Look through the pages of the Care Notebook created by the Center for Children with Special Needs from Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Seattle, Washington at http://www.cshcn.org/Forms/Care_Forms.pdf or www.medhomeportal.org for the Utah adaptation of the Care Notebook
- Determine which pages could be useful for tracking your child's health care needs
- Choose the pages you like. Print copies of any you think you will use. You can choose to download the entire notebook or just the forms you want and need.

Step 3

- *Decide which information about your child is most important to keep in the notebook.*
- *What information do you look up most often?*
- *What information do people caring for your child need?*
- *Consider storing other information in a file drawer or box where you can find it if needed.*

Step 4

- Put the Care Notebook together.
- Everyone has a different way of organizing information. The only important thing is to make it easy for you to find again. Here are some suggestions for supplies used to create a Care Notebook:
 - 3-ring binder
 - Tabbed dividers to create your own information sections
 - Pocket divider to store reports
 - Plastic sheet covers

Care Notebook Pages

- *Appointment and Care*

- *Appointment log*
- *Diet tracking forms*
- *Equipment*
- *Supplies*
- *Growth tracking form*
- *Hospital stay tracking form*

- *Information needed by emergency care providers*
- *Labwork/tests/procedures*
- *Medical bill tracking form*
- *Medical/surgical highlights*
- *Medications and notes*

- *Abilities and Special Care Needs*

- *Activities of daily living*

- *Daily schedule*

- *Child's page*

- *Communication*

- *Coping/stress tolerance*

- *Mobility*

- *Nutrition*

- *Rest/sleep*

- *Social/play*

- *Transitions*

- *Care Team and Resource List*

- *Medical/dental*
- *Home care*
- *Therapists*
- *Early intervention services*
- *School*
- *Child care*

- *Respite care*
- *Pharmacy*
- *Special transportation*
- *Recreation*
- *Family information*
- *Family support resources*
- *Funding Sources*

Modified for Autism

- The following pages may be added for your record keeping needs: www.dotoblearn.com
 - Daily schedule for every day of the week
 - Bedtime routine
 - Food chart: likes, dislikes, reactions
 - Sensory information
 - Behavior chart
 - Motivators
 - Saint Francis Hospital form

Additional Useful Information

- Questions to ask when screening potential providers: www.autismtulsa.org under resources
- Ingredients of good research article: www.schwablearning.org

Create Your Own Organizer

- Use 1 notebook with sections, or different notebooks for each such as:
 - Medical: doctors, therapists, insurance
 - Explanation of Benefits
 - Homework: reading, math, handwriting, school calendar and events
 - IEP: current IEP, goals, past IEPs
 - DDS: home visits, Medicaid, yearly reports

School Binders

- *Binder or Section #1: Keep all past IEPs, report cards, progress reports*

- *Binder or Section #2: Should be taken to all IEP meetings and contain:*
 - *Educational assessments*
 - *Psychological assessments*
 - *Behavior assessments*
 - *Current iep, report card, and progress notes*
 - *Note page to jot down questions and concerns to be discussed at next IEP meeting*

- *Binder or Section #3: Communication log, include all school-to-home and home-to-school communication each year. Also include a phone log to document all telephone conversations throughout the year. Print and file email and other written communications.*

- *Binder or Section #4: Homework, artwork, anything you want to save. Especially paperwork needed for test reviews. However, when in doubt, throw it out!*

- *Binder or Section #5: Current events, calendar, flyers, reminders, contests, holiday parties, teacher needs, send money, lunch money, newsletters, birthday parties, teacher appreciation week, library books due, sports, extra-curricular activities*

Teacher Resource Binder

- Used to provide information about your child and your child's diagnosis
- Used as a resource for school professionals to access valuable information and personal experiences gathered from past educators who worked with your child

- *Teacher Resource Binder could include:*

- *Diagnosis*
- *Information pertaining to diagnosis*
- *Child's strengths*
- *Child's challenges*
- *Child's interests*
- *Motivators*
- *Schedule Examples*

- *Positive Reinforcement Strategies*
- *Sensory Needs/coping strategies*
- *What to do if...*
- *Special health needs*
- *Diet needs*
- *Social needs/opportunities*
- *Current IEP*
- *Signature page (read, signed, and dated)*

- *Professional discharge form*

- *What worked well?*

- *What didn't?*

- *Favorite activities*

- *Suggestions*

- *comments*

School Resource Folder

- Folder goes to:

- Special education teacher
- Regular education teacher
- PE teacher
- Music Teacher
- Art Teacher
- Speech Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Psychologist
- Bus driver
- Cafeteria staff
- Nurse
- Secretary
- Assistant principals
- principal

- *Items to include in folder:*

- *Photo of your child*

- *Diagnosis*

- *Autism information*

- *Child's strengths*

- *Child's challenges*

- *Child's interests*

- *Possible challenging behaviors and ideas for effectively coping with them*

Community Living Binder/Toolbox

- Provide family with appropriate supports to enable you to successfully live in your community
- Prevent isolation
- The more outings you go on, the easier it gets
- Choose less challenging outings at first
 - Example: Family Fun Night

Binder Tabs

- Places to visit including measurable goals setting reasonable outcome success
- Reward system/ accessible reinforcers
- Visual and written schedule, include grocery lists, first...then, timers
- Preparation lists including coping items, medication, adaptive functioning needs, coping items, time needed to get ready, pictures or pre-visit to location

Additional Binders

- Restaurant and Fast Food menus, include pictures of family on previous trip to same location. Prepare ahead to order food and pay for order.
- Tabs for getting a haircut, going to the bank, etc.
- Grocery store tab could include pre-made checklist. Have child help prepare a menu and shop for items. Cut out pictures from grocery store ads and paste them to index cards. Have the child match the picture to the actual item.

Organization Worksheet

Area of concern: Eating out at a restaurant.

Reasonable place to start – familiar food that is highly reinforcing. If starting with fast food, choose a quieter time of day. Choose a location without play equipment.

Goal for area with measurable outcome: Child will sit quietly and eat entire meal without throwing a tantrum

Reasonable goal to measure success – child will sit quietly and eat preferred food for without screaming or crying, for 10 minutes.

Items needed for task completion include cost, time, manpower: Print a menu and plan ahead. \$20.00, 40 minutes (maybe quicker on initial visits), mom, dad, sister, brother

Assign roles and establish accountability, include reward system: Mom will organize the Outing Box (reward, chart, list, books, fidgets) remember extra clothes, Dad will call ahead to make sure the ice cream machine is working, Dad will drive and pay, Mom will go for a walk or to the car with child preferably before a tantrum. Mom will take Sally to potty, Dad will take Johnny to potty. Mom will set the timer and administer rewards. Dad will make sure orders are correct, food is cut, condiments are given, and drinks are refilled. Choose places with motivators, balloon or crayons. End on a good note.

Review and make changes if needed: Notes on how the outing went. What worked and what didn't. Add environmental assessment. Was it quiet or loud? Busy or slow? Did you sit in a booth or a table? Next to a window? Who was there? When did the child seem most anxious? Waiting for the food? Waiting on others to finish?

A spiral notebook binding is visible on the left side of the page, consisting of a series of black rings connected by a blue cord.

Question and Answers