

Curbing Kids' Clutter

Get your kids' biggest messy zones organized and under control with three quick tips

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If your kids' shoes pile up near the door or their toys are spilling out of the closet, you're not alone. Andrea Wolf of NEAT (Need Everything Away and Tidy) organizing services in Huntington Woods notes that many of the families she works with have problems keeping kid zones clutter-free.

To combat the clutter, Wolf suggests that you forget about keeping everything neat – and, instead, find a place for your kid's belongings that's convenient, so they'll actually use it. Here are her tips for three of the biggest culprits.

- 1. Mud rooms.** Skip the fancy shoe organizers, says Wolf. Instead, she recommends large fabric bins with each child's name on it. Kids can put their coats, shoes, and backpacks right into these bins as they come in the door after school.
- 2. Kitchen counters.** Kids tend to dump their school folders out when they get home. To organize this mess, Wolf advises setting up a magazine holder for each child and a separate magazine holder for schedules and directories. Kids should stash homework in these holders so it's easy for them – and you – to see exactly what homework they have for that night. Ditto for the schedules. You won't waste time searching the house for the soccer schedule if it has a designated spot in your home.
- 3. Toy rooms.** Go through and get rid of the toys that your kids aren't playing with anymore. With the remaining toys, buy plastic bins to hold the toys and label the bins so that your kids know where to put their dolls/trucks/LEGOs, when they're done playing.