

Calm mornings = calm and productive kids!

Everyone knows that weekday mornings during the school year can be hectic. Parents who must get their youngsters ready for school while preparing for their own day often find themselves rushing through the morning and wishing there was just a little more time before they had to run out the door. While parents can't add another hour to the morning, unless they wake up earlier, there are ways they can be more efficient in the morning... and an efficient morning is typically a less hectic morning.

- **Get a head start the night before.** Instead of making kids' lunches each morning, make them before you go to bed. Along with your kids, lay out their clothes for the next day before they go to sleep each night. This way kids won't waste time in the morning agonizing over what to wear, and they'll put up less of a fuss in the morning if they had a hand in choosing their attire for the day.
- **Avoid turning your kitchen into a diner each morning.** Kids likely won't want to eat the same thing for breakfast every day, but give them fewer options so you aren't wasting time discussing what they are going to eat.
- **Limit time in the bathroom.** Spending too much time in the bathroom is another way families waste time on weekday mornings. Even if everyone has their own private bathroom, try to limit the time spent in the bathroom to 15 minutes per person. That should be plenty of time to shower, use the restroom and brush your teeth.
- **Locate must-have items before going to bed at night.** Your youngsters and you will need certain things before you can leave home every morning. Car keys, cell phones, wal-

- lets, eyeglasses, and backpacks are items all of you will need at some point during your day. Locate these items before you go to bed and place them in the same convenient place each night. This saves you the trouble of running around looking for lost car keys or wondering where your youngster's eyeglasses ended up the night before.
 - **Turn the television off in the morning.** Watching television in the morning can be very distracting; kids might want to watch cartoons and adults can grow easily distracted by news programs which can eat up time needed to get ready for the day ahead.
 - **Gas up the car the night before.** A pit stop at the gas station en route to school or the office will only add to the hectic nature of the morning. Check your fuel gauge each night before arriving home and refuel if you're running low.
- Weekday mornings during the school year can quickly become frenetic, but a few time-saving measures can ensure your youngsters start each morning off more relaxed and ready for a productive day.

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