

Cutting through the clutter

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Life can become pretty cluttered, and it's hard for the best of us to stay organised and keep on top of our work.

For school kids, there's plenty of work to do, and they are still young and in the process of learning how to best manage their time.

Professional organiser Amanda Lecaude says that most parents are well involved in trying to organise their kids activities and homework habits – but there's a trick to doing it right.

"What's important is that parents encourage a good study routine," she says.

Helping kids organise themselves is important, so that parents don't end up doing all their kids' work for them, she says. "At the end of the day the responsibility to complete homework is on the



kids. Parents can help kids get organised and be involved in the logistics – but not the content."

The danger in helping kids too much

is that "if a parent gets too involved, their children don't learn."

Amanda explains that kids learn and organised themselves best when they have

some control.

"Parents should provide guidance, not answers," she says.

By facilitating kids' own time management, they can

learn by themselves.

To ensure your children are learning, parents should "make sure kids are working, and help them form good study habits."



Amanda's top tips for helping kids form routines:

- Prepare your morning routines – work backwards from when you need to be at school and allow time for everything that needs to happen.
- If you haven't already, think about transport options, particularly for older children – if possible have a practice run in the school holidays to give them confidence.
- Establish an after-school routine, including homework, for older

children and chores.

- Establish a bedtime routine – start this where possible in the week or two leading up to the start of school.
- Discuss and agree on all of these routines with the family so everyone knows what is expected.
- Have discussions around the use of TV and electronic devices.
- Older children could have a timetable or list on their door to remind them of what they need to take each day. Younger children

could use a white board or checklist to assist them, too.

- Keep the lines of communication open with your children – not only will it help everyone keep track of schedules and responsibilities but eliminate the need for one person trying to keep up with everyone's whereabouts all the time.
- Finally, it may be necessary to regularly review and change routines as the year progresses to suit your family.