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Stay Organized with Your Nanny

Six tips for keeping your home -- and life -- running smoothly

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Now that we're well in to the New Year, it's time to stick to those resolutions and turn over a new leaf -- especially when it comes to the organization habits in your household. If that overcrowded playroom or cabinet filled with "extra stuff" is too difficult of a task to tackle, the easiest way to start may be with your everyday routine. Make organizing a group effort -- including your spouse, kids, and sitter or nanny -- and you will quickly realize that no mountain of laundry is too big.

Being as organized as possible helps ensure that your nanny spends a majority of his or her time with the children. After all, that's why you hired him or her. It also helps you to enjoy your limited time at home. If your nanny leaves an orderly household, you can jump right in to making dinner or playing with your kids and stop wasting time picking up the leftover craft supplies or misplaced socks.

Here's a few tips to help you include your nanny in your organization plan:

- 1.) Make mornings flow more smoothly by picking out outfits the night before. If the nanny is in charge of getting the kids ready in the morning, this routine will lessen the chance for early morning disagreements.
- 2.) Make sure that homework or permission slips go straight into your child's backpack and that lunches are planned out the night before. By getting the little things finished before the day begins, you allow more room to handle those unexpected mishaps! Either you or your sitter can devote your morning time to the children, which is just what they need for their day to have a good start.
- 3.) If you have more than one child, designate a Helper of the Day. This child will be responsible for helping whomever's in charge, answering questions of the caregiver, feeding the pets, and so on. But more than that, this child will also be Kid of the Day and will be able to do those "special" things that are often the source of sibling fights -- like sitting in the front passenger seat of the car, choosing the movie to rent, picking dessert for the night, and more.
- 4.) In regards to the dishes and laundry, they are both much easier jobs to do if you have specific roles laid out for you and for the nanny. For instance, if you prefer to have the dishes cleaned and put away before you come home from work, ask your nanny to fit this task into her daily routine. Similarly, if your children are picky about their laundry, simply let your caregiver know that you will take care of the dirty clothes.
- 5.) Encourage your nanny to enforce the "Clean Up After Yourself" rule. If your children get into the habit of picking up their coloring book and markers immediately after they finish their activity, it will be much less of a hassle than trying to get them to do it later.
- 6.) Let go of perfectionism. Know that no matter how much you plan ahead and organize the day, there's a good chance something will go wrong. Your nanny must always be open to changes. And, as a parent, you must understand the importance of taking things day by day. Remember that you don't have to the job perfectly to get it done!

About the Author: I work as an assistant at the Lillian Nanny Agency (www.LillianNannyAgency.com), a firm in Nashville that matches nannies with local families. If you have any questions about finding a nanny or maintaining the relationship with your nanny, feel free to contact Heather Dubuque at heather@LillianNannyAgency.com.

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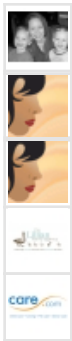
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