

# Homeschool Teacher Control Journal



Dear Home Educator,

First of all I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart because you have chosen to teach your children. This can be a tough thankless job, and I want to make sure you know how much I appreciate you! My dear daughter-in-law is a home educator, my mother was a teacher, and my son's father is a teacher. I have seen their struggles with class schedules, administrative issues, lack of money, and not enough time in a day! All they ever wanted to do was make a small difference in a child's life.

This is exactly what you do! You give the children in your care the foundations they need to succeed in a vicious world. These babies thrive on structure and this is exactly what they get from you. They know what happens next; this is all any that of us want, to feel like we are in control of our lives. Sometimes just the knowing is enough to calm us down.

You are homeschooling your children, and it is imperative that you have your home in order and you are dressed to shoes each morning and your class starts at the same time each day. If you are not willing to do these things then you are not ready to teach your babies. Teaching is a chosen profession; you have to act like you are in control. Don't whine to me about their education being the most important thing. If they can't find a clear surface to write on then there is a problem.

Your classroom is also your home. It blesses your children day in and day out with the satisfying structure of your routines. Keeping your home and school supplies in order will bless your children and give them a peaceful place to learn. You give them something they can depend on.

You can start now to regain control over your home while also doing school with your children. My goal with this Homeschool Teacher Control Journal is to help you use The FlyLady routines to organize your home and school materials.

Every teacher I have ever known has been overwhelmed by their teaching materials. Storage closets can't hold it all. The materials take on a life of their own. Our homes become cluttered with items that have no specific place in the classroom. It is essential that you declutter every day. It can be

just one 27 Fling Boogie a day; this will keep your teaching clutter at bay. You can help new homeschool mom build up their collections by setting up a give-away box to share at homeschool events.

I do not have a degree in education but I do know how to teach. We are very creative people or we would not have chosen to help others by sharing our skills with them. I have seen our system work for every profession and it can work for you too! You just have to adapt it to fit you and your classroom. This is just an instruction manual to help you think about what needs to be done and how to implement it.

I will say it again and again. Children thrive on order. Living in CHAOS (Can't Have Anyone Over Syndrome) is not conducive to a good learning environment. You set the tone for your home. They are watching you! They are listening to your every word. It is up to you to show them instead of tell them. This way they understand what is expected of them.

When you are not spending precious minutes searching for things you can spend more time being creative with your teaching techniques. You can do this! All of you! One BabyStep at a time! One habit at a time and with our simple routines we can turn our classroom into a place of peace and where there is peace there is learning!

You can do anything for 15 minutes!

FlyLady

[www.FlyLady.net](http://www.FlyLady.net)

## How to Get Started?

This is the million dollar question. You were not handed an instruction manual for how to manage your home and your classroom all-in-one. You may not have been taught as a professional teacher on how to arrange your classroom, how to store your teaching materials, or how to organize your day from start to finish. We have a tendency to allow time to get away from us. This is why I think it is most important for you to have a timer in your home. We can get sidetracked so easily and our timers keep us focused.

Every fall we start a new school year. With this comes the anxiety as well as the hope of a fresh start. We go into the year wanting to be organized and by the end of the year we find ourselves struggling just to get through the day. It is not going to be like that, this year!

Here are the tools that you are going to need to build your Teacher Control Journal.

- Paper - let's get creative and use colored paper and white.
- Sheet protectors - Don't know how many we will use.
- Hole punch
- Timer
- Colored Markers
- Dry erase markers
- File folders in colors
- a box or crate for files
- a plastic box for each child to keep special projects in
- a Calendar with big blocks
- A Three Ring Binder
- Zipper Notebook cover to put it in. Our Office in a Bag works well to keep from losing things.
- Dividers - You may have to make them out of file folders because of the sheet protectors being wider than most dividers. The office supply store may have some dividers for sheet protectors.

This is your list; Go gather them up for your first day school organization!  
We want to be prepared!

## LESSON # 1: Start the New Year Checklist

Right now I want you to think about what you have to do before the first day of school. Make a rough list in no particular order. We will rearrange them later for your Teacher Control Journal. Here is an example Tami gave me for her July/August Setup.

### July/August Set-up

- Decide on the school calendar for the year (Most of us have 180 school days per year.)
  - When will you start?
  - How many days a week will you do school?
  - When will you schedule breaks?
  - When will you end the school year?
  - Create a Master Calendar with these days. Start with pencil and paper. You can use this to set up an online calendar later, if you wish.

### Classroom Set Up:

- Decide if you want to do any decorations for your school area
- Have a system for each child's school materials to be stored when not in use.
  - Some people use plastic bins
  - Some people use a cabinet with doors that close
  - Some people use rolling carts with removable storage bins
- Decide where to store special projects your children wish to keep
- Make sure your book collection actually fits on your bookshelves
  - If you are using lots of boxes and bins to store books, invest in bookshelves to make it easier to find needed materials
  - If you have too many books, you need to purge.

### Curriculum:

- Create a separate list for each child in your school
- Make a list of subjects you want to cover with each child
- List books you want to use for each subject

- Check your bookshelves and resources on hand before you buy anything
- Review your list with your husband and set a budget
- Start school shopping. Remember that lots of stores do back-to-school specials on school supplies in August.

### Schedule/Planning

- Review the books you purchased and decide how much you need to cover in each book to finish within the school year
  - I usually make a yearly plan and then divide it up by month. Each week I make a weekly schedule.
  - You can use online tracking tools to help you plan how much to cover each week to complete your books.
- Create master schedule
- Make a teaching plan for each student
  - Paper and pencil planners can work well, but if you have multiple students, you might want to use an online planner, such as Homeschool Manager ([www.homeschoolmanager.com](http://www.homeschoolmanager.com))
  - Have a plan for your babies and preschoolers. They need a routine and your time, too.
  - Review your State Requirements for homeschoolers
  - Plan when you will conduct standardized testing or portfolio reviews, if required by your state
  - List any regular appointments or therapies on your master calendar
  - Add supplemental classes, co-op meetings, or club meetings to your master calendar
  - Plan out first two weeks. Include:
    1. Time to talk about how to use any new books or materials
    2. Set up student notebooks together
    3. Plan time for any review that might be needed
    4. Check reading levels
    5. Conduct Math Assessment
    6. Spelling pre-test
    7. Plan a special outing for a day in the first two weeks of school. Something simple like meeting friends at the park.

#### Materials needed lists:

- Make a plan for topics covered for the year
- Make a list of supplemental books needed
- Make a list of other supplies needed, such as craft supplies
- Make a list of field trips you want to take and start planning them
- Set up gradebooks for each student (either on paper or on the computer)
- Start a Books Read list for each child
- Start a Transcript if you have a high school student

#### Make labels:

- Make file folder labels with student names (decide how many you need per child based on the suggestions below)
- Unfinished work folder
- Writing journal
- Books Read List
- Science
- Social Studies/History
- Math Drill Sheets

#### For each child:

- Help your child list Morning, Afternoon, and Before Bed Routines
- Give each child a Student Control Journal to personalize
- Review with them how they will know what their assignments are (either a notebook or with online assignment book)
- Show them where basic supplies for school are stored. Give instructions on items that need adult supervision. Give them the responsibility to put things away after use.
- Explain how to use folders, if you set them up.

#### Student placements:

- Show each child where their school books are stored. They are responsible to put their books away each day.
- Set up backpacks for co-ops or supplemental classes, if needed

#### Student supplies

- Folders or notebooks you have set up
- Writing journal

- Reading journal
  - Assignment book (or online assignments set up)
  - Pencils
  - Pens
  - Crayons
  - Math text / math workbook
  - Reading
  - Grammar
  - Handwriting
  - Science
  - History
  - Electives: Bible, art, foreign language, drama, etc.
- Organize home library
  - Set up log to officially record school days, if required by your state
  - Consumables available as needed
  - Art and Craft supplies available as needed

Take Tami's lists and use them to help trigger your memory as to what you need to do. Then get started building your Setup list! A few minutes planning will save you so much time in the long run. This is your checklist. Put it in a sheet protector, because you will reuse this list every year. You will never have to make this list again. This list will fit the way you teach. You may have to pencil in new things that come to mind. So save the document in a folder called Homeschool Teacher Control Journal. As you build each section and develop templates for things. Save them here so you are not reinventing the wheel each year.

This is what a Control Journal is all about; not having to redo something each day, each week and each year. It saves you time and frustration having to rethink and rewrite the simple things. Your time is better spent being creative with your teaching skills; not the administration of it.

Now that I have set the stage by teaching you the principles behind this control journal; it is time to put it into practice. Isn't this what you do every hour of your teaching day? You introduce the subject. Give examples, have discussion and then you do an assignment that reinforces the principles learned.

**Beginning of the year Setup:** I want you to set your timer for 15 minutes and sit down and write or type this out to fit your classroom. It doesn't have to be perfect. You just have to be able to read it. Don't allow your perfectionism to stop you at this point. This is for your eyes only. It can be edited at a later date. A control journal with imperfections still blesses you and your students. I am not getting hung up on the writing of your Homeschool Teacher Control Journal. Let it go and let it flow out of you!

Read this testimonial from a homeschool mom and FlyBaby:

*Flylady: Well, I am on my way, again! This is my third, fourth, or something attempt at doing your system. I am afraid I am a tough nut to crack. I decided to take it slowly this time and try to make habit changes by focusing on your routines. I live in CHAOS all the time, FlyLady. I get depressed, but I look around and get so discouraged that I want to go bury my head under the covers... Anyway, I started by making myself and my children each a morning and evening routine. The morning routine has changed us so much. The kids are reluctant (due, I am sure to ages of not having one!) but with a few reminders, they are really catching on. Following this morning routine has helped me so very much. I'm afraid the evening routine has been more of a challenge for us. Maybe I am expecting too much at first. I am going to shorten the evening routines and then gradually add to them as we improve our habits... We homeschool and are frequently out of the house in the evenings and come home bone-tired to fall into bed. Anyway, I am determined to change things a little at a time. I appreciate the support and the fifteen minute crisis cleaning has been a real blessing this week. Otherwise, I would be panicked over the company and run around like a headless chicken... This has helped me stay calm and focused. So, here I am trying to change a little at a time... Thanks and God bless all of you! Fly Infant, Tina*

## LESSON #2: You Can't Organize Clutter

Every day we waste precious time searching for things we know are right in front of us, and we can't see them for the clutter we have surrounded ourselves with. You are setting the example for your students, and it is up to you to act the part.

You can't organize clutter; you can only get rid of it. This goes for your storage closets, file cabinets, desk drawers, desktop, table or any flat surface, and your brief case or tote bag. Decluttering the areas is not a one time task; it is on going throughout the year.

To declutter you will use the same method we use when we declutter our homes. Here are the tools you will need.

- A timer
- A Give away box
- A Throw away box with plenty of trash bags.
- A put away box.
- A water bottle
- A label maker or heavy duty tape and piece of card stock
- Colored Pens.
- A CD player with some fun music

A timer is to keep you focused. The water bottle to keep you energized. Keep one thing in mind as you declutter your classroom. The one with the most school supplies does not win. It is how we use what we have that makes the difference. By the time you have decluttered your school materials everything will have a place and everything will be in its place.

Set your timer for 15 minutes and start with one area. A fun way to do this is stand at the door and work your way around the room clockwise. First we are going to start with your desk. Once the desk is decluttered you can start at the front door. **YOUR DESK IS THE SHINY SINK OF YOUR ROOM!**

With your boxes by your side start on the left side of your desktop and go through one pile at a time; purging things you don't use, don't love, or trash. If something is worth keeping and does not belong on your desk then place it

in the put away box. Eventually you will have a box full of things to put in another place and you will have some decisions to make and the label maker to use. By the time this box is full hopefully you will have cleared out an area for storage.

Setting up a storage plan is simple when you think about the school year and the themes for each month. You may want to use banker boxes labeled by the month. You know what you need and when you need it.

Keeping things contained stops you from pulling everything out of a closet to find what you are looking for. There is a method to a storage system. Ask a friend who is Born Organized for her help on what works best for her. They love to share their wisdom with you. All you have to do is ask! We just need an example to help us. This is why I want to thank Tami Fox for her examples to help me to help you.

Now here is the goal. I do not want you to crash and burn when you have several things to do to get ready for the first day of school. We are going to take babysteps and pace ourselves through this process. This is another reason I want you using your timer.

### Lesson 3: Cleaning for the Classroom

Have you ever had to get ready for your mother to come and visit? You spend days cleaning and by the time she arrives you are worn out. I want you happy and rested by the first day of school. We use a simple little technique to keep us from crashing and burning. At the same time it keeps us fresh and excited about what we are doing.

We are going to do what I call Crisis Cleaning for the Classroom.

The object of crisis cleaning is to keep our energy levels up and not get bored with what we are doing. In our homes we spend 15 minutes in our kitchen, 15 minutes in our Living Rooms, and 15 minutes in our bathrooms. The last 15 minutes of each hour is spent with our feet up thinking about what we are going to do next, resting, and drinking our water.

Now if you would like to break your classroom room area up into zones this would be a good time to do it.

Zone 1 -The front of the Room

Zone 2- Your desk and where your students work

Zone 3 - The wall the door is on

Zone 4 - The back wall (or side wall, if your door is opposite of your back wall)

Zone 5 - The wall opposite the door

Now that was easy!

You can use Crisis Cleaning with the zones or you can include working on your control journal templates, decluttering and cleaning into the system. It is your room and you get to play any way you want to.

Just don't forget to take those breaks each hour. I don't want you to crash and burn! Pace yourself and have fun. Work with a friend. Put on some peppy music and FLY!

## Lesson #4: Daily Routines

Routines are the foundation of what I teach. A routine is a set of habits strung together into a chronological order. It is like learning a dance step. As the habits become part of us and our students we all know what comes next without even asking or telling. Your students love routines.

Here is a testimonial from a homeschool mom to give you an example:

I have four children, and we homeschool (adventure school - we get out and DO rather than sit looking at books). Anyway part of their life training is household management. I want them to leave home knowing how to run their own homes and to be empowered to do it Flylady style! So they do the morning routine with me, after breakfast and before our morning walk (also instilling a habit of exercise). It can be tough to keep four kids from running in different directions when they know it's time to clean so we make it fun! THEY have thought of three variations, and I wanted to share in case it helps other families make cleaning fun.

Variation 1: We only do three rooms on each floor (I'll tell you why in a minute). We set our timer for two minutes and attack the first room. We bustle around the room and distribute the clutter: anything that belongs in that room gets put in its place. Anything that belongs on another floor gets set in front of the stairs. Anything that belongs in a different room gets placed in the doorway of that room. It sounds confusing, but if you picture it, you're just staging the items for the next room rescue. At the end of two minutes we stop. We pick another room and start the timer. As we begin the other room we swoop up the small pile of things that were staged in that doorway. The part the kids like best is the stair chain. Remember the small pile at the bottom of the stairs? The kids pick spots on the stairs and pass up the items to me, at the top (or bottom). As they hand them to me I dash around and put them in their proper doorways. The kids love seeing me move my franny. And then they come upstairs and we do

three rooms. Why three rooms on each floor? Three rooms at two minutes a room is six minutes on each floor. Allow a couple of minutes for the stair chain, and we have a 15 minute HOUSE rescue. They are always amazed at the difference just 15 minutes has made in the ENTIRE house. Lately the kids have pretended they are bees buzzing the clutter out of their hive, as we attack each room. Whatever works - they are being creative and making cleaning FUN, and we are moving our bodies and getting some exercise - and some fun family time. (What happens to the small piles in rooms we didn't choose? I just put those things away, there are usually not many. Or I can put them in a basket in the entrance of that room for us to do the next day.)

Variation 2: We march through the house counting our multiplication tables. Every 10 numbers the lead drops to the end and the second person gets to lead. The leader takes us through the house as fast or slow as (s)he wants. Along the way we grab anything out of place and either run to put it away if it goes in that room (before the leader takes us out of the room), or we carry it and drop it as close to its room as the line takes us. We count up and then we count down. We may boogy, run, or act crazy in our line. When I lead it I might vamp, sashay, or act like Dory from Nemo ("who are these people following me??). It's like Follow the Leader while we clean. When our three year old leads the line he pretends we are chasing him and he runs with us running after, grabbing clutter and putting it away. It is fast and fun and so is the math learning. It's good to incorporate the body in learning math - it internalizes the memory better than does sitting looking at a multiplication table.

Variation 3: With no timer, the kids pick a room. One kid plays a drum (an African talking drum each one made) while the others clean. When the drummer stops, they freeze. They take turns drumming.

As you can see the variations are always coming. I love it as much as they do and besides the family fun, it reinforces that they don't need One Perfect way to clean. And they don't have to Clean Perfectly each time - as you say housework done imperfectly still blesses the family. The last thing I want to do is pass along perfectionism or a dread of housework, so I'm doing my part to make it as fun as possible.

Shannon in CA

### CHECK YOUR MORNING SCHOOL FLY LIST

1. Do you have your exercise clothes, water bottle, lunch, and snack planned?
2. Have you checked your Hot Spots and put out any fires?
3. Fill your coffee mug and water bottle.
4. Have your needed teacher supplies out.
5. Did you have any breakfast?
6. Fulfill your to-do list before school starts.
7. Have you taken a break this morning? Have you had any water?

### CHECK YOUR AFTERNOON SCHOOL FLY LIST

1. Did you have any lunch/water?
2. Have you exercised today?
3. Go do a 5-Minute Desk/Closet Rescue!
4. Have you taken a break this afternoon to just sit and be good to yourself?
5. Are you caught up on grading/filing?
6. Make copies/lessons for tomorrow, including necessary supplies.

### CHECK YOUR EVENING SCHOOL FLY LIST

1. Lay out your lessons for tomorrow. Are the copies made?
2. Is your DESK CLEAN?
3. Go put out your Hot Spots!
4. Finish before dinner is served.
5. EXERCISE after dinner, if you have not already done so.

## **START YOUR BEFORE BED ROUTINE AFTER DINNER**

We need our beauty sleep as well as rest for our bodies and minds.

1. Lay out exercise clothes and water bottle.
2. Lay out your clothes for tomorrow, including shoes.
3. Put things on the launch pad if you have something on the calendar the next day.
4. Review menu plan for next day. Move items from freezer if necessary.
5. Make a to-do list. (Keep it short!)
6. Go to bed by 10:00.

You can use the FlyLady zones in your school room. Every week declutter and detail clean each zone (but the kids bear the brunt of the responsibility here - never do for a child what he can do himself!). However, your desk still has to be clean each day before dinner. Five minutes at the beginning of the day, check to see that the learning area is tidy and running efficiently. You can use the jobs listed below for the children. Your plants will never die, library books will never be overdue, attendance gets taken, the room is always clean, and the Reporter and Meteorologist help remember to do calendar and weather, and they lead it instead of you. You can start teaching at 9:00 sharp instead of 9:30 - WITH a CLEAN room.

**Librarian** - returns all library books in book crate, straightens books, arranges pillows in the Reading Corner

**Custodian** - keeps floor clean, washes tables, makes sure desks are organized

**Secretary** - Files worksheets in each student's file, marks attendance

**Botanist** - waters, fertilizes, and prunes plants

**Meteorologist** - keeps track of weather charts on bulletin board, calls Time and Temp, gives the morning weather report

**Reporter** - keeps track of and performs calendar duties

Add to this as needed. I need to add a Veterinarian for animal care in the mornings. I hope these tips help other teachers, and that some tips help other Payroll SHEs. The best way to learn is to teach, and writing this testimonial reminds me of things I do well.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart!  
Teaching myself while teaching kids to FLY

What do you need to have done before you start school each day? This is part of your Before School routine. I don't want this weighing on you when you are ready to start your morning. Get it done so you can have fun. This is your homework; Grading papers, lesson plans, and recording grades. This is the most important routine of the day.

### Before School Routine

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

Make a list of the things you need to do each day before your children are ready to start school. This is your checklist. It is just like getting dressed to shoes to start your day. Don't forget the things you need to take care of yourself; water.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Class Routine for the Day

1<sup>st</sup> Hour \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Hour \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> Hour \_\_\_\_\_

4<sup>th</sup> Hour \_\_\_\_\_

5<sup>th</sup> Hour \_\_\_\_\_

6<sup>th</sup> Hour \_\_\_\_\_

Later in this Control Journal, I have listed some sample schedules. This is a suggested schedule to help you organize your day. Stick to it as much as possible. You may not need this many hours to homeschool young children, but your high school students will need this much time each day to complete their school work. With younger children, you may want to use 30 minutes of each hour for instruction and learning time, and the other 30 minutes each hour for quick household tasks, movement time, and water breaks. Young children are more productive in shorter lesson times, and they need to move around to help them process what they just learned.

## **Lesson #5: How to Build Good Work Habits**

Isn't it strange that we try to teach our students to break things down into BabySteps and yet we don't follow our own instructions? We take pride in ourselves for working well under pressure. If the truth be known we really do not work well under stress and we don't multi-task worth a flip either. We get sidetracked and nothing ever gets finished. We also have a tendency to let our homes go down the tubes when we start homeschooling. There has to be a middle ground and it starts with shining your sink and establishing habits.

You don't have to spend your Saturdays cleaning and Sundays playing catch up. You can do this, but you have to pace yourself, quit procrastinating that you don't have time, and set your timer. When we get in a hurry everything falls apart.

Here is what happens when we procrastinate. We have looked hard at our procrastinating personalities and why we are so good at putting things off till later. The main reason that we don't do something right now is because we think that it is going to take too much time and right now we don't have time or we don't feel like doing it now. I want to look at how this kind of thinking actually creates an avalanche effect and before we know it we are suffocating under a heavy load of guilt and we are paralyzed by our inactions.

For the most part we are a very social happy-go-lucky spontaneous vivacious group of people. We love to have fun at anything we do. When it comes to housework or other things that we may need to get done; we can come up with every excuse in the world to not do it. The main excuse we use is "I don't have time!" When the truth is we really don't want to do it because it is not going to be fun, or we don't feel like it. We don't like to do things that are the mundane boring aspects of living. That is one of the reasons that our

FlyLady routines get those things out of the way so we can get on with the enjoyable part of our day.

People ask me all the time if I spend all day cleaning. The truth is that as long as I do my simple routine (15 minutes) in the morning and a routine at night (10 minutes tops); our house is always company ready. This will work for any size home; now I do have to pick up after myself and keep my hotspots policed. This only takes a couple of minutes at the most.

Here is what happens when we put something off. Let's start with our before bed routines.

1. We go to bed at 1:00 or 2:00 am and have to get up at 7:00 am. We procrastinated by not going to bed at a decent hour. Then we can't get up on time.
2. After you hit the snooze button a few times and it is 7:30 am and the kids need to get up and start on their day. Now you have 15 minutes to get dressed, and you have no clean clothes and don't know where your shoes are.
3. Not only did you go to bed late, but you did not lay out your clothes for tomorrow. So there again you have procrastinated and you are rushing around.
4. Now you are feeling the time crunch and the pressure of running late again. Then the guilt starts to pile on.
5. With the guilt comes blaming others and not looking at what our role was in our perpetual tardiness. Then we have martyrdom and the loud yelling voices that just add to the stress along with the guilt.
6. Now we are half dressed and not paying attention to what we are doing. Not to mention that you have skipped breakfast, and you still need to feed the kids.

7. You have wasted time being angry because you procrastinated and didn't go to bed in a decent hour to get up and start your day on the right foot instead of behind the eight ball.

Just writing this makes me nauseated. I can't live this way anymore. The constant surge of adrenalin is hard on our bodies. We have to find a way to relieve the stress that our procrastination causes in our lives. Are you listening to me! Procrastination can kill us and maim our children. It can be a slow painful death of our bodies turning on us because of the constant surge of adrenalin with immune dysfunction or it can be a quick one with a car accident. You have a choice to stop this right now!

If I can ever get you to feel the peace that comes from just a few simple routines in your life; you will never go back to living this way.

Here is what you have to do!

1. Set your priorities! I know you hear this all the time, so I am going to make this very clear to you! Is talking on the phone or the computer more important than your children's or your life? Is watching that movie better for you than a good nights sleep?
2. Lay out your clothes for tomorrow; use your creativity to accessorize your clothes. We love to do this but we never have time when we are so rushed. Look at your calendar and see what you need to do tomorrow. This will help you to pick out your clothes. Put your shoes with your outfit.
3. Go to bed at a decent hour; we can have time for ourselves in the morning when we are not rushing around like a chicken with its head cut off.
4. Put the alarm clock on the other side of the room so you will not be tempted to hit the snooze button. This is an ineffective habit that you have. When you start getting 7 to

8 hours of sleep each night you will not need that snooze button any more. You need to get your feet on the floor to turn off the alarm.

5. Put gas in your car when it is not empty. Look for times when you are not in a hurry to stop and fill up before you are running on fumes. This will not cost you as much money if you are only putting in a half of tank. You never know when you may need gas to get you to the emergency room in the middle of the night.

6. As part of your Before Bed routine; put everything you need to take with you tomorrow by the front door or in the car. This will keep you from having to search for things tomorrow morning and from forgetting something important.

7. Start your day without the chaos of the television by listening to beautiful music. The television is filled with bad news that we can do nothing about. Open up your heart to a new morning with your favorite music or silence.

8. Get up 15 minutes before the rest of the family so that you can be dressed to lace up shoes before their little feet hit the floor. You will be in control! Put on those shoes. All this is done because you laid out your whole outfit the night before; from jewelry to shoes and socks. You checked your calendar, and you know what to wear.

9. Without all the rushing you can sit down and eat a breakfast fit for the queen that you are! It may just be a yogurt smoothie but you will be filling up your personal fuel tank with good nutritious food not junk on the run. You may also have fewer digestion problems when you slow down your food consumption.

10. Now you are not rushing your children to get going on their routines and start school because you are ready for the day before they get up.

Every single thing we procrastinate about can be put into this avalanche scenario. Just stop and think when you hear yourself saying I don't have time or I don't feel like it right now. We are never going to feel like scrubbing the toilet but it sure is nice when you are hugging that piece porcelain during a round of stomach flu. We don't have to feel like doing it to just get up off our Frannys and do something! With this attitude, we are getting it out of the way so we can go play and enjoy our day without the stress and guilt that comes from procrastinating.

If you will just start with one little piece of this essay; you will be slowing down the effects of the avalanche. Soon you will begin to feel the peace that I have from my morning and before bed routines. If you will just get a small taste of this peace you will not want to live in the chaos of procrastination another day.

Are you ready to FLY by doing the little things in life that make living easier; routines?

## **Lesson #6: Setting up our Control Journals**

Here are some ideas on how you can combine your Homeschool Control Journal and Your Regular Control Journal. You don't have to do this, but you have to promise that you will not allow your homes to fall apart once school starts.

### **Weekly Afternoon Routines**

#### **➤ Monday**

- Prepare for tomorrow's lessons - check on copies
- Have assignments written out or on the computer
- Check off the morning's assignments and record grades
- Put out Hot Spots on counter and desk
- Check supplies list and library book list for items needed
- Work on dinner prep and check your laundry

#### **➤ Tuesday**

- Prepare for tomorrow's lessons - check on copies
- Have assignments written out or on the computer
- Check off the morning's assignments and record grades
- Put out Hot Spots on counter and desk
- Check calendar for appointments for the rest of the week
- Work on dinner prep and check your laundry

➤ Wednesday

- Prepare for tomorrow's lessons - check on copies
- Have assignments written out or on the computer
- Check off the morning's assignments and record grades
- File papers that you have to keep
- Put out Hot Spots on counter and desk
- Review lesson plans for next week; list items needed
- Work on dinner prep and check your laundry

➤ Thursday

- Prepare for tomorrow's lessons - check on copies
- Have assignments written out or on the computer
- Check off the morning's assignments and record grades
- File papers and put away teaching manipulatives/supplies used this week
- Put out Hot Spots on counter and desk
- Update attendance record, if required
- Work on dinner prep and check your laundry

➤ Friday

- Prepare for Monday's lessons - check on copies
- Have assignments written out or on the computer
- Check off the morning's assignments and record grades
- Put out Hot Spots on counter and desk
- Change tasks for children for next week
- Go to the library and run errands
- Work on dinner prep and check your laundry

Here are some ideas for dividers in your Control Journal:

Divider names:

- **Schedule** (includes plans, monthly calendars, plan outlines)
- **List of Subjects for the year**
- **Computer help** (includes passwords for various programs, manuals and handouts on various programs)
- **Assignment record**
- **Specialists schedules** (includes schedules/student information for Remedial services, Occupational therapy sessions, Learning Support, and Speech)
- **Checklists: July/August Set-Up; End of Year Checklist**

- **Permanent File** (attendance, standardized test scores, immunization records, etc., according to state law)
- **Book List** (books on hand and books you wish to purchase or borrow)
- **Contact Log** (any pertinent phone/email addresses related to homeschooling)
- **Encouragement file** (helpful or encouraging articles)

## Lesson #7: Schedule Suggestions & End of Year Checklist

Here are some sample schedule suggestions to help you with your planning.

### Daily Routine Notes (for Elementary Students with Preschoolers and/or Babies):

Morning Circle time with Mom (at the kitchen table or on the sofa)

- ◆ Morning Read Aloud Time, Singing, Bible Story, Science or History lesson (depends on what you want to do with them; this is for all ages)
- ◆ Calendar Time and Weather Report from the weekly Meteorologist (rotate this job each week, so each child gets to be the Meteorologist)
- ◆ Review assignments for the day with each child and get them started on independent work (language arts and math)
- ◆ While older children work on independent work, play with the preschoolers and/or babies
- ◆ Start the crockpot with dinner
- ◆ Start a load of laundry; switch it if you started one when you first got up

Spelling/Phonics Time:

- ◆ Spend 15 minutes doing spelling or phonics with each child; short lessons are very effective

Review Independent work:

- ◆ Review Math and Writing Assignments; check-off in your planbook as you go along

Loving Movement:

- ◆ Spend 15 minutes with the children doing some sort of movement inside or outside
- ◆ Have the children do a 15 minute room rescue while you switch the laundry

LUNCH:

- ◆ Include the children in lunch preparations; sit down and enjoy lunch with them

Quiet time/Nap time:

- ◆ Put the baby and/or preschoolers down for a nap
- ◆ Give older children quiet time with reading or a quiet project
- ◆ Mom can either nap or work on her Afternoon Routines

After nap time and quiet time, the children should work on their Afternoon Routines. Mom uses this time to finish up her afternoon routine, laundry, and works on dinner preparations.

Daily Routine Notes (for Elementary Students and/or Middle School Students):

Time with Mom (at the kitchen table or on the sofa)

- ◆ Review assignments for the day; explain new concepts
- ◆ Calendar Time and Weather Report from the weekly Meteorologist (Give deeper requirements of Middle School Students on weather trends)
- ◆ Do any teaching time that involves all of the children (I teach the same history and science lessons to all of my children up through grade 8.)
- ◆ While children work on independent work, spend one-on-one time with each child to help with any questions or new concepts
- ◆ Start the crockpot with dinner
- ◆ Start a load of laundry; switch it if you started one when you first got up

Spelling/Grammar/Language Arts:

- ◆ Spend time with each child on language arts; return graded papers

Math:

- ◆ Review Math Assignments; check-off and record grades in your planbook as you go along

Loving Movement:

- ◆ Spend 15 minutes with the children doing some sort of movement inside or outside
- ◆ Have the children do a 15 minute room rescue while you switch the laundry

#### LUNCH:

- ◆ Include the children in lunch preparations; sit down and enjoy lunch with them

#### Project time:

- ◆ Uninterrupted time to work on reading, research, or writing projects
- ◆ Time to work on electives, such as art, music, or foreign languages

After Project Time, the children should work on their Afternoon Routines. Mom uses this time to finish up her afternoon routine, laundry, and works on dinner preparations.

#### Daily Routine Notes (Middle School and/or High School):

##### Time with Mom (at the kitchen table or on the sofa)

- ◆ Review assignments for the day and go over any new concepts
- ◆ Calendar Time and Weather Report from the weekly Meteorologist (with younger children, the older students can track weather more in depth)
- ◆ Students start independent work
- ◆ Mom starts the crockpot with dinner
- ◆ Mom starts a load of laundry; switch it if you started one when you first got up

##### Language Arts:

- ◆ Review Language Arts assignments for the day and record grades as needed

##### Math:

- ◆ Review Math Assignments and explain concepts not understood; check-off in your planbook as you go along

##### Loving Movement:

- ◆ Do something active with your children
- ◆ Have the children do a 15 minute room rescue while you switch the laundry

#### LUNCH:

- ◆ Include the children in lunch preparations; sit down and enjoy lunch with them

#### History:

- ◆ Review History Assignments; check-off and record grades in your planbook as you go along

#### Science:

- ◆ Review Science Assignments and do any experiments; record grades

#### Project time:

- ◆ Uninterrupted time to work on reading, research, or writing projects
- ◆ Time to work on electives, such as art, music, or foreign languages

After Project Time, the children should work on their Afternoon Routines. Be sure to give them some free time. High school is more labor-intensive for the students, and they need time to de-compress. Mom uses this time to finish up her afternoon routine, laundry, and works on dinner preparations.

# School Closing Checklist

## End of Year Close Down

### Student activities:

- Take standardized test, if required by law
- Write a paper (or paragraph) about what they learned that year and what was their most fun activity

### Collect student supplies

- Sort through pencil boxes and throw out broken items
- Math
- Reading/Grammar/Spelling/Language Arts
- History
- Science

### Sort Books on Bookshelves:

- Organize Bookshelves
- Sell or give away books you don't need
- Start list for books you know you need to order for next school year

### Craft Supplies:

- Sort and organize craft supplies
- Toss items that need to be tossed; you can't hold on to everything
- File special projects in each child's storage bin
- Make a list of items you need to replace for the next school year

### Copies: (Review July/August Checklist)

- Set up folders for new school year
- Print attendance sheet
- Start a list of books for each subject for each student for new year
- Start a Summer Reading List for each child; join the library's summer reading program
- Make a list of summer field trips and activities you want to do
- Print some math fact sheets for each child to do two or three times a week

### Schedule/Planning

- Clean out Control Journal
  - Print a permanent copy of each child's report card for the year and file
  - Start looking at your calendar to plan when you will start school in August or September
  - Research and purchase books and materials needed for new school year
  - Send in necessary paperwork to your state, if required by law
  - Complete transcript, if you have a high school student
- 
- Thoroughly clean out your school storage area or plastic bins
  - File any paperwork that you wish to keep
  - Clear off top of desk

**The next section is a blank Home/School Control Journal for you to fill out and begin to use.**

## **Before Bed Routine (This starts after dinner)**

1. Shine your sink
2. Lay out clothes for tomorrow
3. Put away any laundry
4. Make any phone calls you need to make
5. Put drinking glasses in the dishwasher
6. Take a relaxing bubble bath, wash face, brush teeth, moisturize
7. Clear off any Hot Spots; coffee table, kitchen counter, chair
8. Check Calendar for tomorrow's family activities
9. Turn off computer 10:00 pm
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_
16. \_\_\_\_\_
17. **GO TO BED AT A DECENT HOUR!!**  
**You need your rest!**

This is on the left side of the binder on the back side of a sheet protector. These two sheets face each other.

# School Before Bed Routine

1. Put anything you need for the next morning by the front door launch pad or on your desk.
2. Check your calendar for any appointments you may have.
3. Make sure the clothes you have laid out are appropriate for tomorrow's schedule.
4. Make notes for things you need to remember for tomorrow. Write them on the bottom of this sheet in dry erase marker.
5. Set your alarm clock

## Notes for tomorrow:

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This is on the right side of the binder in a sheet protector.

# Home Morning Routine

1. Get up and make bed immediately
2. Shower and get dressed to shoes, hair and face.
3. While you are in the bathroom; Swish and Swipe; pick up after yourself.
4. Eat breakfast and take vitamins
5. Start a load of laundry
6. Empty dishwasher
7. Bless your heart by moving; we hate the “E” Word.
8. \_\_\_\_\_

**Add new habits as you need them; do not over burden yourself with a routine that is too elaborate.**

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# School Morning Routine

You are going to have to think about your day and what needs to be done first.

These are the things that have to be done every morning.

Use a pencil to get started. Your morning routine will evolve.

1. Check last nights list of things to remember; Your NOTES:
2. Drink your water and have a healthy snack.
3. Check your calendar for appointments
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_

(Use the Sample Schedules to help you develop this list.)

# Home Afternoon School Routine

1. Did you eat lunch?
2. Drink water and eat a healthy snack
3. Reboot laundry
4. Start dinner; even if it is in your head.
5. Hot Spot Fire Drill
6. Swiffer the floor
7. Feather Dust

**Adapt this to fit your home and family.**

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# School Afternoon Routine

1. Clear off the Hot Spot on your desk
2. Eat lunch and drink your water
3. Check phone messages
4. Return phone calls
5. Return emails

Now I want you to think about each day; that things do you have to do in the afternoons. (refer to the list in Lesson 6 for ideas for afternoon School Routines.)

6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. Clear off your desk and make sure all school materials are put away. (Have the children take care of their items.)

Notes for tomorrow:

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# How to Build your Basic Weekly Plan for Home and School

Our Basic Weekly Plan is how we get things done. Use it to help you to remember things to do. This is not hard. So don't get overwhelmed by this.

I will break down my Weekly Home Blessing Hour into several days. Tami does her Weekly Home Blessing Hour with her children on Monday morning before they start school. You can do it either way. Please adapt it to fit your home and school.

Now I want you to list all the things that need to be done in your home and school during the week. Then take the list and spread it out over the days.

## HOME

## SCHOOL

**Grocery shop**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Vacuum**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Dust**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Get Rid of Magazines**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Sweep & Mop**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Change Sheets**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Empty Trash**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Clean mirrors, windows, & doors** \_\_\_\_\_

**Clean out your car**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Pay Bills**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Clean out your purse**

\_\_\_\_\_

## Testimonial

Dear FlyLady,

I have been on this list for 1 week and I love it. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the caring and constant reminders. I was going to wait and send you this e-mail until morning but I was finishing watching a movie (that I have not been able to do before), and I just couldn't wait any longer. I am now able to do my homeschool without fear of someone walking in and seeing my cluttered home. Like you were in the beginning everything in my house is clean "on the surface."

My husband wants me to thank you for your list he says "It is good to have the house in order (little does he know it is not even close) and to have his attractive wife back."

I had gotten to the point that I didn't get dressed until afternoon and didn't wear makeup anymore because I didn't see the point in wasting it when nobody cared (especially me) what I looked like. I now get up and dressed even to the shoes (that in itself is a miracle as I hate to wear shoes) put on makeup (sometimes I am still trying to get over that hang up) and do my hair.

For my final thought tonight I would like to share a little piece of my oldest daughter's prayer with you. She and I always say a prayer together and do the usual God bless Mom, Dad, all the grandparents, aunts and uncles, but tonight she added something that touched me very deeply she said, "Thank you God for letting Mommy find FlyLady's group." When I asked her what she meant by that she said her mommy is back to normal again. I didn't realize that I had fallen that deep into the hole of uncleanness in my home or in my spirit.

Thank you so much for all you have done for me and all the other participants in this list.

God Bless you and yours,

A Homeschool FlyBaby

# Monday - Home

- 1. Do my Morning Routine first
- 2. Empty trash
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Monday - School

1. Do my morning school routine and

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Tuesday - Home

1. Do my Morning Routine first
2. Vacuum or Sweep & Mop
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Tuesday - School

1. Do my morning school routine and

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Wednesday - Home

1. Do my Morning Routine first
2. Plan menus and make grocery list
3. Clean out refrigerator
4. Get rid of magazines
5. Look at next week's schedule
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Wednesday - School

1. Do my morning school routine and

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Thursday - Home

1. Do my Morning Routine first
2. Change Sheets
3. Shop for Groceries
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Thursday - School

1. Do my morning school routine and

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Friday - Home

1. Do my Morning Routine first
2. Clean out car
3. Clean out purse
4. Sweep and mop bathroom
5. Date Night
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Friday - School

1. Do my morning school routine and

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Saturday - Family Fun Day**

1. Do my morning routine and then go have some fun with my family

## **Sunday - Renew Your Spirit Day**

1. Do my morning routine and then fill my soul with love!

## **Projects: How I keep up with things**

We have so many things going on at one time and several people working on them. The first thing I did was brainstorm everything we are working on.

Then I took each project and put it on a page all by itself.

I have a couple of days each week that I take 15 minutes to go through my list of projects and make little notes on where we stand. Believe it or not; some of these projects are beginning to see fulfillment. We are so excited at the progress.

These project sheets help me to not have to keep all of this information in my head.

Now take a few minutes to brainstorm about all the projects you are juggling. Then make a sheet for each one.

## **Lesson #8: Giving Your Students Wings**

Our children will take what they learn, and it will become another brick in their foundations of life. You have the privilege of teaching them how to utilize routines and take advantage every free moment they have to get ahead.

Every day was predictable. They always knew the structure of their school days because they were the same each week. They will learn from you how to find the answers to their questions through reading and research. You can teach them to love learning. You will teach them how to get things done before a deadline. Don't teach them by example on procrastination.

Routines are the key to giving your students wings. You can ignite a love for learning in their heart that will carry them through life.

It takes commitment to give a child an environment conducive to learning. Here is an essay I wrote for a magazine that you can use to help your children's to make this school year productive.

Dear Parents,

This time of year everyone is writing articles on how to get the children ready to go back to school. I know this is an important topic for you but we have left out the main person that has to get the children ready for the first day of school: YOU!

You are the one that has to get up and get the family moving each morning. It is your responsibility to make sure they go to bed and get the rest they need to have a productive day. Your summer has been filled with a "happy-go-lucky" spirit. No one really had a bed time or their alarm set for morning.

Then when it came to mealtime; everyone just ate whatever they could find when they got hungry. What happened to the structure in our day? What happened to our routines? If we are going to expect our children to jump on the routine bandwagon then we better be there leading the way; not just barking the orders.

We teach best by our example. Not just a simple do as I do, but an example that is set in love and from the heart. If you are not taking care of yourself; you are not going to be able to take care of your family and show them the value of routines.

Most of our lives we have run around putting out fires just to stay on top of housework, bills, jobs, and the responsibilities of parenting. If you are a born-organized person these things do not take a toll on you, but if you tend to get sidetracked then you know about putting out fires. A born-organized person just gets things done and the people around them do not even know that it has been done. If you were raised by a born-organized person you have experienced this for yourself when you got your own place. Wasn't it a

shock when the toilet started to grow things? Who knew that it was cleaned on a regular basis?

If you are this born organized-person, I am not putting you down. All I am saying is your children don't know that this is what is happening. When you tell them to go clean the bathroom or their bedroom, they have no clue. Mainly because it was just easier for you to do it yourself than to show them that there actually is a routine to housecleaning and most things in life. For the other 80% of us that are not born organized there is hope! We can learn to be organized. Imagine that! Taking the methods that a born-organized person does naturally and using them to help us gain control over our homes and lives and in the end give our children the tools to go out into the world on their own. Born-organized people can't even teach us sidetracked people what they do, because they have never had to figure it out; they just do it.

I have watched the people in my life that are born organized and what I have noticed is they tend to do the same thing in the same order every single morning. At first I thought that must be so boring and then I realized that it was brilliant. The brilliance comes from having the mundane things in life taken care of so you can have fun. Isn't that what all of us really want; to have little fun. We love fun and most of the time we are having fun; except when we are beating ourselves up because the kids are late to school again because you over-slept.

It is time for us to do school with your children and learn something that will help you enjoy life without the guilt we place on ourselves. I am going to call it FLYing School. We will start our first lesson with our Before Bed routine.

Without a before bed routine, you are running around the house in the morning in a panic. This is when we forget things. Your Before Bed routine helps you to start your morning on a calm step.

1. Lay out your clothes for tomorrow. Even if you have to do a load of laundry to accomplish this at first; it is better than having to deal with it in the morning when everyone is rushing around. When you lay out your clothes, your children are going to see you doing it. Now here is the fun part and we love to make things fun. Set your timer and make a game out of it.
2. Think about what you have to have when you walk out the door in the morning. Establish a launch pad by your front door. This can be as simple as a coat hook or table. If you have several children, one lady put an old dresser base in their entrance and each child had a drawer to put their items for the next day. Use this space to put back-packs, brief cases, or what ever you may need so you don't have to run home in a panic to retrieve the forgotten musical instrument. If you set this example your children are going to use it too, with a little suggestion from you.
3. Go to bed at a decent hour. This is the most important part of a Before Bed routine; start thinking about it long before your actual bedtime. Mine starts right after dinner with

a bath. Establish a bedtime for everyone in the house and this includes you. You may not need as much sleep as your babies but my guess is you are not getting enough as it is. We tend to want to play till the wee hours of the morning and then try to drag ourselves out of bed with only a few short hours of sleep. This has got to stop. You are like a little baby that has gotten his days and nights mixed up and you are trying to function on no sleep. This ineffective habit is killing you and telling your children that it is fine to not take care of yourself. You have to go to bed to set the example for your children. When you start getting the sleep you deserve you will find it easier to get up in the morning. Here is the reward to you and your babies: a parent who is not grouchy in the morning. It will happen if you will quit making excuses for staying up late. This is not the only time you can be alone.

This is a simple three-step routine that will make your morning run in a smooth fashion. You are going to love the peace that this brings to your morning. As these things become a habit, you can add a new habit but do not pile on too many at one time. Take BabySteps.

Next let's think about your morning. Let's not think about how it used to be; let us use a simple morning routine to get you going without the bad mood.

1. Your first step in the morning is to get up 15 minutes before the rest of the family. You are the director for this routine. You have to be dressed to shoes before the family gets up. I know this sounds difficult because you need coffee to get going and your morning show but stay with me here. It is important that you are fully ready so that when plan B happens you are not standing there in your jammies waiting to start the day when your children get up. Get dressed and get that out of the way first. This is so empowering to your day. Your clothes are already laid out. Hop in the shower, fix your hair, put on your make up, and put on your clothes. You are going to love feeling this good. That extra sleep is going to help. I promise.

2. When your children get up have them get dressed first, too. The longer they stay in their pajamas, the harder it is to pry them out of them. One parent had a rule: You could not eat breakfast until you were dressed to shoes. Don't worry about them getting breakfast on their clothes; that is what napkins are for. No whining allowed. (No Whine Sign: <http://www.flylady.net/d/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/NoWhiningSign.pdf>)

3. Tell the whole family what time the school day will start. Always factor in a grace period.

Now for the routine is that is going to help you have more time for yourself. It is your after school routine. The children are not going to like this, but you are the director here and this is an important lesson for everyone.

1. Have an ending time for school. Don't allow your school time to drag out until dinner time. Children need to know how to meet a deadline. If they are dragging out their school work, find some positive incentives to help them finish up in a timely manner. Tami has

trained her children to do their Morning Routine, School, and Afternoon Routine by giving extra time outside for play or going to the park to play in the afternoon. High schoolers need more time to do their school work, but they should be finished with their school day before dinner time each day. The beauty of homeschooling is that your children do not have to do homework. Use your morning and early afternoon hours productively, and you will all have some free time in the afternoons.

A timer is a valuable tool for keeping us focused. We have never been lazy. We just want to have fun. Using a timer allows us to focus on what we have to do and celebrate when it goes off with a little enjoyment; the best of both worlds.

Routines are not the straight jackets we have always thought that they were. They free us up to have fun and keep chaos from hurting us and our children. Use them and you will learn how to be organized. Take Babysteps in establishing your routines and let your timer help to keep you and your babies focused on the fun things in life.

For more help with your routines to assist your children check out my website. My services are free.

FlyLady  
[www.FlyLady.net](http://www.FlyLady.net)