

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

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Time Management

REMEMBER:

- *Think about the things you need to do, rather than focussing on how much there is to do.*
- *Work out specifically what you need to do. Break tasks down into smaller pieces*
- *Think about when each task needs to be done. Plan for the short-term and long-term*
- *Think about how much energy you need to invest in each task. Are there any ways you can conserve some energy for bigger things?*

Being a parent means that you often need to do lots of different things at once.....

Parenting often involves many demands, and many different commitments. These demands are often competing with each other, and vying for your immediate attention.

You may need to do the food shopping, take the children to school, and pick up dry cleaning.

Somehow you also need to pay the bills, make dinner, and look after the baby.

In between that you need find a plumber to fix the bathroom, and book the car in for a service.

Oh, and you forgot your mother-in-law is coming to stay and you need to fix the spare room!

It can be hard to juggle all these different and competing factors!

If you feel overwhelmed from the number of things you have to do, you may also feel stressed and unsupported. You may not feel there is enough time in the day, or that you are able to handle everything that needs doing.

Try to think about doing the things you need to do, rather than putting energy into wondering how you are going to it. Focussing on there being “too much” can catastrophise the situation, and also takes up much needed time and energy.

Proudly managed by



Determine **what** needs to be done and **when**. What needs to be done today, and what can wait until next week? Also think ahead for the coming month. Include both short and long term goals, and be specific about the tasks and how much energy to invest:

1. Make a list of all your commitments
2. Rank these in order of importance
3. Consider factors that impact on when an activity can be done, e.g. work hours, personal time, duration, financial issues (e.g. pay-week activities), the involvement of others (e.g. after school).

Determine how you can do it:

1. Keep a running list of all activities and commitments coming up. A time line or calendar can be good to see things next to each other
2. Create a “to do” list for each day or a weekly schedule
3. Monitor your procrastination - remember how good you feel when something gets done
4. Get help from others, and use your support networks
5. Develop systems - work out routines for difficult tasks. Remember to think about the times you’ve recently succeeded in particular activities - what you would keep the same about what you did, and what things you could change? Think about which method is the best for each task.
6. Reflect on your day and what you did well - remember to focus on things that worked. Continue implementing the systems and strategies that worked rather than the ones that have been less helpful.

Finding the Healthy Balance

Procrastination activities are things that divert you from tasks you need to accomplish. Often we feel very guilty when we procrastinate, or we may feel we have justify why we put things off.

It is important to be aware of the things that distract you from your goal, e.g. daydreaming, sleeping, watching TV. That doesn't mean you have to stop these activities, only that you need to balance them with important tasks.

It is also important to have a healthy balance of positive activities. Finding the time to look after yourself and doing activities that make you feel good is essential for maintaining physical and mental wellbeing. And this is important for being a parent!

How to do it - Practical Ideas

1. Do the worst task first – some people find it useful to get the worst thing out of the way, leaving time for easier or more pleasant tasks
2. Do something that energises you and will keep you feeling energetic for the next task
3. Spend just a few minutes on a task – starting with 5 or 10 minutes may be enough
4. Set time limits
5. Do things at the right time of day and in the right place – when you won't be interrupted or having competing demands
6. Prompts – use reminder systems such as cue cards to jog your memory
7. Rewards – remember to reward yourself for your achievements, and keep the balance!