

Counselor's Corner – Beating Morning Madness

This is my last in a series on getting organized. Morning is renowned for being a tough time for families with school-age children. Most of us know it would be ideal to prepare bookbags and lunches the night before and wake the kids up earlier than they would like. Putting those into practice is the tough part. Here are some additional ideas that might help jump-start your morning routine:

- Create a “launch pad” for kids’ things by the door you exit in the morning. It can be a basket, chair, table, etc. Have kids place bookbags and everything they’ll need for school at the “launch pad” the night before.
- Develop standard checklists for each child, which they can use to make sure they have all they need, including homework, band instrument, gym clothes, sports equipment, supplies for any extracurricular activities, and library books. Maybe they don’t need their gym clothes or library book every day, but better to think about them every day than not on the days when those items things are necessary.
- When you learn about a project or event for which items must be created, immediately plan 3 dates on your calendar: one for purchasing necessary materials, one for starting the preparations, and the date the project is due.
- Set an alarm to go off every morning 15 minutes before you need to leave the house. Use this as your cue that everything needs to be wrapped up and ready to go ASAP. See if the whole family can be ready to go before the alarm goes off, and reward yourselves with dessert, a movie night, or similar family activity when you do.