

## Organizing for Summer Fun

I often refer to myself as the “bag lady”. Not only because I love handbags and own quite a few, but bags of all sizes come in handy for organizing so many things. With summer activities around the corner, I have some suggestions on how to put those bags to use in maintaining order for all the clutter that comes with the heat.

When I think of summer, I immediately think of: swimming, traveling, day camps, summer sports, library trips, entertaining bored kids and best (or worst!) of all, a lack of a schedule!

Here is where the bags come in... I often coach clients to create zones in their homes for designated areas. The same can go for your recreational supplies. Designating a specific bag for each activity such as: swimming, baseball, soccer, library trips, travel entertainment, sleepovers, day camps, etc and having it handy, ready to throw in your vehicle can simplify your life.

If you are willing to take a little time to prepare and pack each bag, you won't find yourself missing items once you get to your destination. Freezing water bottles ahead of time and tossing them in the bag on the way out the door ensures you will always have a cool drink handy. On days when your bags are not needed, they can be stored on hooks or shelves in your garage, mud room, laundry room, or in each individual's bedrooms until they are needed.

Because schedules change constantly during the summer, maintaining an updated calendar, including all appointments and activities for your family, in one accessible spot is crucial. Taking time the night before to look over the calendar, gives you time to pack your “bags” and have them ready to go for the next day.

How about those days when nothing is scheduled and the kids are griping “I'm bored”? Having a special bag or storage box with new crafts, games, puzzles, etc can help you mute the complaining. When they are done, make sure to collect the special items and hide them away for the next “rainy day.” Allowing the kids to play with these special items at special times only will insure they don't get bored of the items too fast and will ensure that you always have this trick up your sleeve. This tip can buy free time for stay-at-home moms to either relax or get things done.

From my “bags” to your “bags”, I hope you enjoy the start to your summer schedule with a little more organization. It's not so bad to be a “bag lady!”

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