

# 11 EASY WAYS

## YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR CHILD WITH GETTING YOUR STUDENT TO SCHOOL ON TIME

The hours before school can feel a little more zoo than Zen. However, using these 6 easy steps from the author Laura Vanderkam and her list of strategies for smoother mornings.

Parts adapted from the article by: Gail O'Connor

### DESIGNATE A "LAUNCH PAD"

The antidote to the explosion of shoes, jackets, and book bags all over your house—and trying to locate them before you leave? A dedicated departure (and landing) zone using whatever space you've got: the mudroom, a hall closet, or a corner with hooks. "That spot remains sacred: Coats, backpacks, and shoes come off there and stay there," says Vanderkam. It doesn't matter if shoes aren't lined up Pinterest-perfect, she insists: The point is that they are *there*. Kids—and moms—just need one everyday pair by the door. The launch pad can also be the place to charge your phone, stash keys, and stow sunglasses, so you can grab them on your way out.

### REFRAME MORNINGS

There's a certain narrative about mornings—craziness! chaos!—but they don't have to be that way. Family dinner might not happen if life after school or work is hectic, but family breakfast could happen. That's quality time together. (Bonus: Breakfast is a happy family meal since everyone likes it—and all but the littlest ones can even grab their own.) Keeping positive will set the tone for the day—and week.

### Make knowing what time it is easy

Keep clocks on hand — in the bedrooms *and* in the bathroom — so kids will know if they're falling behind schedule. For older ones, an old-school alarm clock is better than a smartphone alarm, because it'll reduce the temptation to start checking social media first thing in the morning.

That gives you just enough cushion not to stress about making the school bell in time. Example: "The school bus gets to us at 8:40, but my kids put shoes and coats on at 8:32 "If it takes them two minutes, you can hang outside for six minutes. But if they dawdle and it takes them five minutes, you are still fine."

### PUT SHOES AND JACKETS ON EXACTLY 8 MIN BEFORE YOU

Standardizing the essential steps can help, so you can go into autopilot before your morning caffeine kicks in.

### BE CONSISTANT

Setting a timer to ring intermittently ("15 minutes 'til the bus! Five minutes! Time to go!") is a popular tactic.

### INVEST IN A TIMER

If you invest a little time organizing your closet on the weekend, you'll cut down on a morning time suck: indecision. Pair down your wardrobe to a set of nine outfits, work or casual, that you know look great on you, and rotate them.

And if you're losing time in the morning over kid fashion battles, stop. Yes, you could help her pick out and set aside her outfit the night before. "If your child can dress themselves, usually around age 4, just let them,". Those crazy fashion combos she comes up with are part of the charm of having young kids—a stage you'll even miss someday.

### MAKING GETTING DRESSED EASY

Every Friday, Look ahead to the following week to get a general feel for the landscape—to divide duties, such as driving, with your student and try to spot anything looming (like an after-school activity with a late pickup). Small details go in, too, so there's no last-minute panic. Plan ahead, if a field trip is coming and your student needs extra clothes mark in on the calendar so you can be prepared.

### GIVE YOUR CALENDAR A ONCE-OVER AT THE END OF EACH SCHOOL WEEK

The ultimate timesaving trick: Let them buy it. If that's not an option, make lunch when you're already in the kitchen. Use time efficiently for example: if you just started boiling water for pasta for dinner, that's a good time to make a sandwich or if you're serving breakfast, cut fruit and put that into small containers for the next couple of days. Train your kids to help: At the end of the day, everybody takes their lunch box out of their bag, dumps the remains, and puts it on the counter. Even better: Have kids make their lunches; they can start as soon as they reach elementary school.

### BECOME EFFICIENT ABOUT LUNCH

#### Store it in the Car

You may dream of shoes neatly placed in bedrooms, but you might be better off stashing them by the backseat. One mom we polled always keeps socks and hair brushes in her car for getting ready on the go.

Avoid last-minute scrambling by asking kids about permission slips, tests, or reports cards at night, *before* the morning rush.

Create a family inbox for important paperwork so anything you need to see will actually get to your attention (and not stay stuffed in

### STAY ON TOP OF SIGNATURES