

# HOW TO GET THE OLDIES OFF YOUR BACK

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I remember being a teenager. It might surprise you but it wasn't that long ago. I remember trying to wear the right clothes on free dress day to impress the other kids, stressing out about pimples, giggling about boys and totally freaking out if my mum ever embarrassed me in front of my friends. Which seemed to happen a lot...

I also remember the times my mum nagged me. To clean my room, do an assignment, apologise to my sister, or clean the bathroom (my weekly job). It was tiring and annoying having her constantly peering over my shoulder telling me what to do, and how to do it.

I'm sure you're in the same boat. Maybe your parents don't like your artistic way of spreading your clothes all over the floor like a rainbow. They may be less than thrilled about the foundation stains in the bathroom and super unimpressed with your report card. They may even resort to threats like "I'll throw this out if you don't clean it up" or even sending you to a boarding school if you don't get your act together.



So how can you get the oldies off your back so you can enjoy life?

Below are the steps to help get your life organised. Getting a few systems in place will make your oldies see what a responsible person you are, and they're going to back off. The more you can show them you're taking steps to live a more organised life, the more fun they're going to let you have. Plus they'll be nicer to you, which means you won't want to write nasty things in your diary about them anymore.

## // Fresh Start

It has to be said – if your room looks neat and tidy, your mind is clearer. So if you're stressing over an assignment, a friend problem or a hot crush, your room usually reflects how you feel emotionally. Giving your room a clean up, will help you sort through the emotional issue at the same time. I don't just mean a 15-minute sweep-it-all-into-the-cupboard clean either. I mean a good declutter.

Chuck out (donate) the clothes, shoes, make up accessories, etc. that you no longer like, or need. Use a plastic bag for rubbish and one for donations. Pull down the posters or pics that no longer inspire you. Give your room a good clean while you're there. A dirty or dusty room equals poor health so giving your room a thorough clean will energise you so you can take on the world!

## //Set the Space



Once you've finished the declutter look at the items you've got left. If you're a normal teen you should have chucked out at least a quarter to a half of your stuff. Getting a fresh start will help you maintain a good system in the long run. Now look at your systems. Do you have a desk or space to study? Create one. Make sure it's got all the stationery you need there. Keep the desktop clear and don't mix your study space up with make up, DVDs or anything else. You need to be able to focus on your assignments when you sit there, not be distracted by testing out that new eye shadow.

Do you need a basket for dirty clothes? Keeping your dirties in a basket that you can take to the laundry and wash every week will be a lifesaver. Your mum will think you're a legend and you'll stop adding emotional clutter to your brain with that floordrobe. You may need other tubs for shoes or baskets for special items (we recommend every person has a Memory Box to put their Memorabilia into). Have a chat to your mum if you need to but get your room organised with the proper storage. Once you have a physical boundary (i.e. A sock drawer) you can't overfill the boundary. That means if your socks reproduce and explode out of the drawer, you've got to chuck out a few.

## // Create good habits

Your parents will think you've had a lobotomy but will love it heaps more if you can implement some good habits. Putting your school stuff away as soon as you get home and putting items back after you're finished with them is like a dream come true for parents. They'll think you're super responsible and leave you alone. They may even be more likely to let you go to that party...

Here are a couple of tips, which are sure to keep your parents off your back.

- Put stuff away after you've used it
- Do some homework before jumping on Facebook
- Clear your desk daily, before bed
- Spend time each weekend cleaning your room
- Each time a new item comes into your room, get rid of another (i.e. new shoes, get rid of old shoes)
- Keep a box or bag in your room for donations

## // Study smarter, not harder

There's a term commonly used that refers to doing something smarter, not necessarily harder. The same applies to your schoolwork. Studying harder is not the answer, but if you're smart about the way you study, you'll find your marks improve dramatically without much effort.

## // Create a timetable

For your week with half an hour blocks. Using Microsoft Excel is a great way to do this. Block out the regular school hours and add in the after-school activities, the regular family things, etc. Once you've put in all the weekly activities look at the time left. If you've got 3 hours after school before dinner at 6:30pm schedule in 30 mins afternoon tea/relax time then an hour or two of homework and assignments. Have a 15-minute break in between to refresh your mind.

Spend each half hour of your Study Time on each subject. If you've got a Maths exam, Science assignment, English oral and PE assessment coming up start with the subject due earliest. You might do 30 mins on English, 30 on Science, 15 min break, 30 on PE and then 30 mins on Maths Study. Turn off your mobile and ignore Facebook and get into those assessments. Staying focused and switching activities after 30 mins is a great relief for your brain.

You can also create a Term Timetable – showing what assessments are due and when. Then you can easily begin planning your daily Study Schedule to give yourself plenty of time to get those assessments done.



## // Speak words of kindness

Heard the phrase, “If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all”? You may have had a bad attitude in the past because you're stressed, overwhelmed and not coping with life. Getting yourself organised will be the turning point of making your parents back off because they'll see you acting maturely and responsibly and they'll respect that. Once they see that your plan to get organised is not a once off event they'll stop nagging you and you'll have a better relationship. Once your relationship with your parents improves you'll find you're happier and nicer to other people. Even your little brother.

If you're tired of your parents bugging you, get organised! You'll have a clearer mind, a better attitude to deal with any issues that come your way, your marks will improve and your oldies will get off your back.

What have you got to lose?

## // GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

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Bonnie Black's background is in Primary Teaching so she has a natural affinity with children and has worked extensively with them in creating productive study spaces and organised schedules. In 2011 Bonnie created Little Miss Organised, specialising in domestic decluttering, deceased estates and organising skills for children. Bonnie and her team work one-on-one with students all over Australia and are dedicated to creating a generation of organised teens. Bonnie is now an Expert Member of the Australasian Association of Professional Organisers and was awarded Best Young Entrepreneur in 2012 at the Commonwealth Redland Business Awards. You can also hear Bonnie sharing her tips and advice as The Organising Queen on Brisbane's 96.5 fm.

To find out more or get in contact with the team at Little Miss Organised please call 1300 737 121, visit their website or join the conversation on Facebook.