

# Time management for busy families

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(HealthDay)—You want your kids to enjoy many experiences, but between afterschool programs, music lessons and team sports, your schedule can go haywire.

Try these ideas from the University of Florida Extension and Michigan State University Extension to keep your cool and teach your kids time-management skills at the same time.

The first rule is to make sure each child is really interested in each activity they're signed up for. If not, it becomes an unpleasant chore for them and for you.

Next, when possible, choose activities close to home, especially if they're stacked one after another. Map out and time your routes to minimize driving stress. Coordinate set days for carpooling with other parents of kids in the same afterschool activities to avoid the hassle of looking for last-minute rides. Sharing driving duties eases everyone's load.

Electronic calendars make organization easier. Smartphone apps can keep an extended group of caregivers connected. Create a calendar and to-do lists that all family members can access from any mobile device or computer. Check out your [app store](#) for ideas.

No matter how hectic life is, make healthy dinners a top priority. Use the weekend to plan the following week's meals and do as much prep work as possible, from food shopping to making a few meals in advance.

And what about homework? Experts suggest scheduling it after dinner, when kids can focus without any other distractions.

**More information:** The University of Florida Extension has more tips about [time management for kids](#) to help everyone stay on track.

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