

Scheduling Family Events

By Sarah Welch and Alicia Rockmore



It's Thursday morning and everyone's almost out the door. Your youngest asks if you can pick her up at 3 and take her to the mall. Your oldest wants the car to go to his friend's house after school. The middle one remembers that her school play rehearsal ends at 5 and so she needs a ride home. Your husband chimes in that he has a client meeting and won't be home until 8. To think that five minutes ago you were looking forward to a relaxing day.

Getting everyone's schedules in order seems like an impossible task, especially if your family's routine is anything but. How do you make sure everyone in the family is where they need to be when they need to be there? Communication is critical, a task easier said than done, especially if you're dealing with teenagers. With some easy and effective steps, it is actually possible to get everyone on the same schedule.

Alicia on "Managing Scheduling Conflicts"

"No matter how organized you may get in regards to schedules and calendars, there is always bound to be a conflict some time. It is just the nature of being a family. If two people need to be picked up at the same time, for example, each person has to take turns either waiting to be picked up, or finding their own way home. The next time a conflict occurs, however, the person who waited/found a ride, gets top priority. Or if mom can't make it to a particular swim meet, then dad goes, but mom needs to go the next time."

Sarah on "Responsibility"

"One of the better side effects of putting together a family calendar is the sense of responsibility that comes with being in charge of your schedule. If a child forgets to let people know they need a ride until the last minute, while their brother has said he needed one for the past week, that child will soon learn that being more responsible for their schedule will help them get what they need in the long run."

When you're putting together the perfect family schedule, you have to do more than just tack up a Puppy Of The Month calendar on the wall.

1. The Regular Schedule

Book clubs. Soccer practices. Or, if you're like us, physical therapy appointments. Some appointments are regularly scheduled, and the times don't change week-to-week, but rather month-to-month or quarter-to-quarter. Rather than write down the same information every week, have one whiteboard or poster board with everybody's regular schedule Mon – Sun.

2. The Events Schedule

Doctor's appointments, vacations, concerts. Some events are one-offs or special events. All these dates should be kept on a big, regular calendar that goes next to the schedules. Encourage everyone to write these events down as soon as they know about them, so that when you turn the calendar to a new page, you'll immediately be able to see what the upcoming month has in store.



3. Get Specific

Some things just can't fit into a regular calendar square. Things like reminders on what to bring to a potluck, or specific directions to a ball field, need a little more explaining and a little more room for explanation and specific information. For such extra notation, it's smart to keep a notepad or board for notes nearby so that you can communicate with others around important dates and events.

.....

We are the co-founders of Buttoned Up, inc., a company dedicated to helping stretched and stressed women get themselves organized (along with everybody else they're responsible for too!). We welcome your thoughts! Please send ideas and questions to us at: yourlife@getbuttonedup.com or visit us at www.getbuttonedup.com