



## JUST ASKING

BY MARY KLEST

### What are five ways families can get organized as children return to school?

I asked Clare Mantelman and Kim DeSimone, founders of Barrington-based Organize Now Inc.

CLUTTER HAPPENS, EVEN IN THE BEST of families. "A house lived in is not immaculate. Try creating an environment that can be tidied up in a manner of minutes," says Mantelman. With the dog days of summer over, it's time to take a new look at household management. Sharing a sense of humor and a wonderful detachment from the silly ways we stack our stuff, Mantelman and DeSimone offer back-to-school and other organizational strategies for busy families.

#### FILE

Are you tired of being asked, "Where's my paper?" Designate a spot in the home for school-related work. Maintain a current folder for each child. "Staying organized is a great way to prove yourself right," DeSimone says. You know where to direct the child and the child knows where to look. Keep a separate file for report cards.

#### PURGE

If you haven't done it already, go through last year's school papers, pictures, and projects. Pick what you want to save and file it in a legal-sized accordion folder and label it with your child's name, grade, teacher, and year. Throw away the rest. This is part of their "current year only" strategy.

#### CATEGORIZE

What goes together stays together. Store glue, tape, colored pencils, calculator, and scissors in one easy-to-reach place. Be ready to respond to those last minute requests for pizza party money and permis-

PHOTO: MARY KLEST



CLARE MANTELMAN (LEFT) AND KIM DESIMONE, FOUNDERS OF BARRINGTON-BASED ORGANIZE NOW INC, WITH CLARE'S SON (BACK) WORKING AT HIS "ORGANIZED" WORK STATION.

sion slips. Organize a drawer with some cash, envelopes, note pads, and checkbook.

#### AROUND THE HOUSE

Wheeled bins slide easily into a closet. Fill bedroom drawers with foldable items. Hang clothes in the closet to keep them wrinkle-free and easy to reach. Leave a donation bag for outgrown clothes and shoes. Locate toys where you want activities to occur. Use hooks in the mud room so backpacks and sports equipment can be hung easily.

#### LIMIT WHAT YOU ACCUMULATE

Before adding another bin or desk to store your stuff, ask yourself, "Why am I holding onto this?" and "How often do I use it?" Observe where items accumulate and discover why. Avoid clutter by limiting what you bring into the house.

#### CHOOSE PEACE

Clutter can fill your mind as well as your entryway. Being organized saves time and energy. It creates a peaceful environment and teaches children good organizational skills. Predictability adds serenity to everyone's day. Reclaim your peace of mind and quality of life; recycle, donate, or shred what you don't use. As Henry David Thoreau said, "Our life is flittered away with detail. Simplify, simplify."

## ENROLL NOW

IN

Cultural enrichment classes that focus on creative and innovative instruction for all ages.

## The Barrington Performing Artz Center

117 E. Northwest Highway

847-382-2789

[www.barringtonartzcenter.com](http://www.barringtonartzcenter.com)

### We proudly offer classes in

- Musical Theater
- Ballroom Dancing & Etiquette
- Dance - Specialized Classes (Private & Group)
- Exercise and Workout
- Shakespeare for Children
- Audition Preparation
- Music Reading
- Acting - Private & Group
- Opera Lecture & Performance
- Broadway Skills & Techniques
- Yoga For Kids International

#### *Presenting the Faculty:*

Janet Blake	Kathleen Goll-Wilson
Donna Hannay	Tina Kolodziej
Julie Salk	Nancie Kozel-Tobison
William Powers	Dorothy Rickerson
Leslie Roberts	Carol Lacasse
Carol Sesso	Christine Shelton
Ellen Werksman	David Engle

**All Classes Are Limited In Size And Focus On Personalized Instruction**