

Tidying Up With Kids »

By Bethany Braun



Marie Kondo is an organizing guru, founder of the KonMari method, and author of the *New York Times* best-sellers *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* and *Spark Joy*.

What are your tips for parents to stay organized with kids?

The first thing parents should teach their child is not how to organize toys, but how to fold clothes correctly. Folding clothes is equivalent to taking care of what you wear daily, and by habituating your children to fold clothes, they naturally begin to learn the KonMari way of organizing—to value the things that are important to you.

Do you find that there is value for children in being raised in an organized home? Being organized means knowing what is important to you, and also knowing what it means to value what is important to you. Children with these skills have the power to make decisions and accomplish things under their own criteria when they face many situations as they grow up.

Any tips for negotiating with a child who might not want to give up or let go of certain items? If the item is something valuable to the child, there is absolutely no need to let go of it. Parents should not decide whether the item is necessary or not. What is important is how the child feels about it, and whether the child wants to keep and take care of the item.

Can you recommend any organizational tips that children can practice? Like I said before, to teach children how to fold clothes first. Other than that, it is basically the same with adults—to keep only what you want to keep and value, to designate a “home” (a specific spot to keep things) for each item that you own, and to put the items back to their “homes” every day.

How do you balance children’s creativity, which can also be messy, with an organized home? There are two points. First, designate a play area for the child. Teach the child where the play area is, and whatever goes out of the area, put it back every time. The second point is to put each item back to its “home” everyday. It depends on the age of the child, but if they are still little, parents should put the item back in its “home.” If they are big enough to think for themselves, parents should teach them to put the things that they value back to their “home” every day.