



## Information Pack

### IN YOUR PACK

**Why do you think you're in this mess?**

**Intro to Neat Freak's formula for PARENTING**

**Template – go forth and conquer**

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### Introduction

Congratulations! You are on your way to becoming a neat freak, someone who cares enough about themselves to find ways to make life a little easier to manage.

My name is Isabelle de Grandpre and I am the owner of *Neat Freak*, a professional organising company. I want to help you find ways to take the stress out of day-to-day living by providing you with tidying-up and time-management tips as well as samples of my easy-to-use templates. These should help you 'get your head around' all the things you need to do in a day.

You could be a stay-at-home mom (or dad for that matter) or a working parent with deadlines AND a family to manage. Whatever your reality, this information pack **highlighting Neat Freak's formula for PARENTING** is a way to get you started on your 'clean-up' journey with the compliments of *Neat Freak* and *MomsMatter*.

P.S. Neat Freak also has 3 more information packs – for the home, office and relationships. If you have signed up for this first one, you will receive the others. Enjoy!

## Why do you think you're in this mess (pun intended)?

I am hardly a psychologist but I do know that it pays to think about WHY you may be in the situation you're in. If you understand it, you know how to fix it and more importantly, how to avoid it in the future.

One of the most common reasons why a person can land up living in a 'landfill' and be unable to de-clutter or tidy up, is because that would mean throwing away items that remind them of something or someone. For others it may be because affecting a change in their life (any change) makes them wholly uncomfortable so they don't even want to contemplate it.

There are also those who can't get organized because they feel guilty about getting rid of items that were given to them by a loved one.

All that being said, I do believe that most peoples' problems with clutter and untidiness are tied up in emotions. If your emotions and your outlook on life are not 'tidy', it is hard to maintain an ordered environment.

Although I am a neat person, a trait that is VERY strong in my family, my mind never stops working. This has meant that I have had to maintain order in the environment I occupy or I simply would not get things done. I also routinely reprioritise what is important to me, making it easier to let go of unwanted items so I can make space for what is important to me now.



### Which one are you?

- If I get rid of things I've been given by my loved ones, I won't think of them.
- I am not fond of changing any aspect of my life – I am perfectly happy being surrounded by chaos.
- I have been given so many items over the years and although I appreciate it, I really don't use them and don't want them in my house. But I feel so guilty.
- My cluttered environment is a symptom of my cluttered mind.

### What can you do about it?

- Recognise that the memory of, or the affection you have for a loved one, is in your heart. Why not choose one or two special items instead of surrounding yourself with memorable items?
- Feeling guilty is difficult to overcome but remember that it is your life and you need to live it the way you want to, and if that means not being surrounded by family heirlooms, then so be it!
- If you make a list of all your priorities (which you should revisit regularly), list how you will achieve these. NB: Take 'baby steps' and call on friends and family for moral support if you need it. No man is an island.

## Neat Freak's formula: Neat + Systems = time for living & loving

Being neat isn't for everyone, this I understand, but there is much to be said for clutter-control and implementing an organisational system. The *Neat Freak* philosophy is that if you are neat and you have a system for every aspect of your life, you WILL have time to live your life and love those around you.

Keeping frustration levels low and having more time to have fun should be motivation enough to get started. But if it isn't, here are some pointers for parenting that will help you achieve the NEAT FREAK FORMULA.

### 1 Neat Freak Formula for PARENTING

Being a mother of two children I know what it is like to have to manage a household and keep everything running smoothly and I can assure you my children will probably testify to the fact that I definitely do not always succeed! So I'll take all the help I can get and am always on the look out for tips to get schedules and time management right. Here are a few time management ideas I've adopted which have given me more time to love my kids.

#### Day-to-Day

Setting and keeping to a routine has proven to be one of the best things I have done as a parent. Although the routine was first implemented out of necessity (my husband travels a lot for his work), I have guarded it because it helps me schedule my time and there isn't a rush to get everything done at the end of the day.

Of course, like all things involving children, routines aren't infallible and they will surely be put to the test. That being said, I think because my children have been aware of what takes place and when (waking up,



homework, bath time and bedtime), they have learnt to be more responsible and less stressed themselves.

### School and homework

The best advice I can give you regarding school and homework is to not do everything for your children. Instill in them a sense of responsibility from a young age. They are more than capable of sorting themselves out for school. By this I mean:

- Get your children to set out their school clothes and help you make their lunch the night before. You will be grateful you did this when you suddenly realize there isn't a clean shirt at 6 the next morning!

Remember – if you implement this in your family, your children's clothes will have to be accessible and not placed on the top shelf (giving them the perfect excuse to not get ready).

- Place a schedule of their school activities and what they need for these in their room/s. They can then pack and prepare for the next day according to that schedule. If they leave their things at home, resist the urge to chase after them, as they will soon learn to pack what they need. The pay-off for being cold-hearted is that your children will learn to be more responsible and there will be less stress and misunderstandings in the home.



**“Setting a routine can be done if you are a stay-at-home parent or if you work. It’s just a question of implementing one that works for you.”**

Remember – most school activities change every term so keep the schedule in their room updated.

- Homework is a difficult activity to plan for because you may have children that finish at different times and each day may have a different schedule. Nonetheless, try and set a time and place for homework to be done each day and stick to it.

Once the routine of where and when is set and you don't compromise on it, children will know how to schedule their playtime and everyone will know 'where they stand' on the issue!

For working parents whose children aren't able to do homework at aftercare (or similar facilities), set this for a time that fits your schedule. You could even ask your children their opinion on the matter that way they might be more cooperative.

Although some of these time-management ideas for dealing with your children's schedules may sound awfully unfeeling, I am a product of such a philosophy. It has taught me to be independent and self-sufficient which I believe to be a great confidence boost for a child.

## Get going - What's the pay off? Intro to templates

Are you inspired yet? Here are some quick tips to start your *Neat Freak* journey.

1. Write down a list of the things in your children's life that you will need to organize.
2. Identify what isn't currently working for you – do you have systems? If you do, give these a rating.
3. The rating of your current systems for managing your kids' schedules should help you identify which isn't working.
4. Now research what could work for YOU and perhaps you could even get your kids' input.
5. If you are tidying up spaces you and your kids occupy, remember the 6-month rule – if you haven't used it for 6 months, you probably aren't going to.
6. Remember to try and get rid of any items you are throwing away responsibly. Look out for recycling depots and charities that need donations. This may make it all worthwhile.
7. MOST IMPORTANT – give yourself credit for every small space you deal with. You are taking ownership of what isn't working in your life and you are changing it.
8. PAY OFF – what is this you may ask? Think about it – it's all those extra hugs you'll be getting from your kids because you aren't stressed!
9. A tidy space means a tidy mind, which means more time for living and loving. Get the picture? Go on, you can do it.
10. TEMPLATES. Use the FREE Neat Freak template as a starting point.

# Other services available from



Consultations – ideas session (outline included)

Assisted tidying-up (not cleaning)

Organisational templates

Guest speaking

Gift vouchers

Tidy-up & 'purging' for relocation purposes

Website with tips & resources

----- **AND COMING SOON** -----

Organisational products

For more information : [www.neatfreak-sa.com](http://www.neatfreak-sa.com)

# Kids' 5-day Activity-per-Term Planner

<b>Child's Name:</b>	<b>Term &amp; Year:</b>				
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>During school</b>					
<b>Remember to pack:</b>					
<b>After school ACTIVITY 1 &amp; time</b>					
<b>Remember to pack:</b>					
<b>After school ACTIVITY 2 &amp; time</b>					
<b>Remember to pack:</b>					
<b>After school ACTIVITY 3 &amp; time</b>					
<b>Remember to pack:</b>					

**General notes for the term**  
(e.g. contact details for activities):



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For more tips, templates & info visit [www.neatfreak-sa.com](http://www.neatfreak-sa.com)

