



# The Family Resource Center

## Controlling Household Chaos

From PBS Parents ([www.pbs.org/parents](http://www.pbs.org/parents))

*The following is an excerpt from the article, "Why It's Important to Control Household Chaos" by Amber and Andy Ankowski.*

### How can you tell if your house is too chaotic?

If you have kids, some level of household craziness is completely normal. But how much is too much? Here's a collection of actual statements used by researchers to determine just how chaotic peoples homes are. Ask yourself how much you agree with each of the following—completely, not at all, or somewhere in between:

- There is very little commotion in our home.
- We can usually find things when we need them.
- No matter how hard we try, we always seem to be running late.
- It's a real zoo in our home.
- At home we can talk to each other without being interrupted.

- There is often a fuss going on in our home.
- No matter what our family plans, they usually don't work out.
- I often get drawn into other people's arguments at home.
- Our home is a good place to relax.
- First thing in the day, we have a regular routine at home.

You can probably figure out which answers above point to potential chaos problems. If you can't figure it out because you're too busy putting out figurative and/or literal fires in your family room, you definitely have some issues to work on!

### How can you fix household chaos problems?

If you think your home may be a little too chaotic for comfort, it's easy to improve your situation ASAP!

By replacing chaos with calmer, more structured family time, you can experience more positive family

interactions, better opportunities for making happy family memories, and benefits to your child's social and emotional development. Here are five simple ways to get started:

#### 1. Be a little boring

Design a basic structure for your family's day, complete with predictable, regular times for you to do normal, everyday stuff—like getting ready for the day, doing homework, sitting down with the whole family for dinner, and getting ready for bed. Having a set of activities everyone can count on will help you and your child meet daily challenges and free you up for more leisure time.

#### 2. Slow down

Have extracurricular activities overtaken your family? Avoid overscheduling, and you'll gain more opportunities to make memories together as a family.

#### 3. Get personal

Recognize that not every family's routines (Cont. on Page 4)

### Contact Us:

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#### Strengthening families since 1989

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## What's Happening?

Be sure to take advantage of the many fun activities in the area that parents and children can share!

**All events are FREE, unless otherwise noted (\$). For further details, contact event coordinators at the following locations or the numbers provided.**

**Prescott Valley Public Library (PVPL)  
Prescott Valley Civic Center (PVCC)**

7401 and 7501 E. Civic Circle  
(928) 759-3040

**Prescott Public Library (PPL)**

215 E. Goodwin Street  
(928) 777-1500

**Chino Valley Public Library (CVPL)**

1020 W. Palomino Road  
(928) 636-2687

Story Time for Pre-Schoolers- Ages 3-6 (CVPL)

Every Monday and Wednesday at 10:30am

Story Time for Toddlers- Ages 18 mos-24 mos (CVPL)

Every Tuesday at 10:00am

Toddler Story Time (PPL)

Every Tuesday at 10:00am

Preschool Story Time- Ages 3-5 (PVPL)

Every Wednesday at 10:00 or 11:00am

Toddler Story Time- Ages 18 mos-3yrs (PVPL)

Every Thursday at 10:00 or 11:00am

Lap-sit Story Time- Babies (PPL)

Every Friday at 9:30am

Preschool Story Time- Ages 3-5 (PPL)

Every Friday at 10:30am

Family Story Time—All Ages (PPL)

Every Saturday at 11:00am

"Love is Wild" (\$)

2/14, 10:00am-4:00pm

Heritage Park Zoo, Prescott

### Local Area Activity Sources:

Bounce House Express

Mendicino & Florentine, Prescott Valley

928-277-9018

Freedom Station

2992 N. Park Drive, Prescott Valley

928-775-4040

Go Bananas

Prescott Gateway Mall

928-583-7655

Synergy Gymnastics

6th St., Prescott

928-899-4589

Prescott (Heritage Park) Zoo

Willow Creek Rd., Prescott

928-778-4242

Switch Dance Studio

540 Sixth St., Prescott

928-308-1311

Summer's Dance Works

843 Miller Valley Rd., Prescott

928-583-7277

The Boys & Girls Club

335 E. Aubrey St., Prescott

928-776-9191

YMCA

750 Whipple St., Prescott

928-445-7221

Full Swing Batting Cages

2555 N. Crown Point Dr.,

Prescott Valley

928-515-2300

Prescott Racquet Club

1 Kingswood Dr., Prescott

928-778-0708

Prescott Dept. of Parks & Recreation

824 E. Gurley St., Prescott

928-777-1122

### Free Entrance Days in the National Parks

February 20: Presidents' Day

April 15-16 and 22-23:

Weekends of National Park Week

### Parent Talk Tip #625

*The Parent Talk Tip Collection* by Chick Moorman and Thomas Haller [www.personalpowerpress.com](http://www.personalpowerpress.com)

"What did you learn, and what do you intend to do differently next time?" is more useful than, "Tell them you're sorry."

### Did you know...?

In 2016, Family Resource Center Personnel served 114 families and made 1,415 home visits through the Healthy Families Program. A total of 1,009 families were served through the First Steps Program. The Car Seat Program conducted 82 safety checks and distributed 68 car seats.

Wow...that is a lot of local families helped! Thanks for being part of our program!

## Controlling Household Chaos (continued from Page 1)

are the same. Think about what kinds of routines would be most effective at leading to productive and rewarding interactions for your family.

### 4. Prioritize

When trying to organize a particularly chaotic home life, start with small, manageable goals. Consider which changes would benefit your family the most and attack them first. Is your house always too loud for anybody to think? Try instituting set times for

noisy activities like watching TV, playing games or banging away at that drum set Grandma so thoughtfully got for your little one's birthday. After you've successfully made a change or two (and your house has started becoming less chaotic as a result), you'll probably find future changes become easier to implement.

### 5. Chart your progress

Try giving your kids a personalized checklist of the things they're re-

sponsible for doing before school or at bedtime. Seeing the physical schedule in front of them will help them remember everything they're supposed to do—and being able to check off each item as they get things done throughout the day can make it more fun, too!

Which steps do you plan to take to decrease the chaos in your house?

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## The Three "C's" of Reducing Household Chaos ([www.parentinghorizons.com](http://www.parentinghorizons.com))

Households with multiple children often experience in-fighting between the kids. There seem to be constant arguments about who gets to sit where at breakfast, what TV show they are going to watch, who gets to use the bathroom first, and the like. Most of this in-fighting is competition for Mom's or Dad's attention, and attempting to prove one child is more powerful than the other. Even households with just one child can erupt in chaos when that child struggles for power with adult(s) in the home.

No matter if you have only one child or multiple children, it is possible to regain some control over the household. This involves "going back to basics" and honoring the three "C's" of reducing chaos: communication, clarity, and consistency.

Communication occurs when you make sure you, as the parent, have been "heard" during the chaos. Generally speaking, your children are less likely to listen when you are louder and more angry. Think back to when you were in school. What did your teacher do to get the class's attention? He or she most likely turned off the lights and whispered. Success with communicating your wishes to your chil-

dren is more likely if you "tone down" instead of up.

Clarity is important. Your children will be more likely to listen to you when you use short, concrete statements rather than lectures. Say what you want your child to hear using simple sentences.

Lastly, consistency is your ability to remain focused in the midst of chaos. That is not always easy to do. Having a simple plan to refer to can help you deliver consistent messages to your children.

A consistent plan can communicate your message in a clear way through the use of a chart that explains house rules, or maybe taking turns going first. It includes the consequences of breaking the rules or commitments.

A House Rules Chart might refer to how to treat one another, how long it should take to complete chores, homework time, etc. If your children are old enough to give thoughtful input, ask them what sorts of rules they think should be included. Use a piece of posterboard to list the rules on the left side. Ask your children what they think the consequences should be for breaking the rules, and

list those on the right side, next to each rule. If you post the chart in an easily seen place within your home, you can refer to it when a child breaks a rule. Even if your children are too young to read, and you have to read the rule and consequence each time, having it written down will consistently communicate that you are serious.

The use of an egg timer is another way to clarify requests to your children, at least the ones that involve time. The type that has a dial for the correct number of minutes and makes a ticking sound often works well. For example, you can tell your child you would like her to be dressed in five minutes if she would like to have time to watch TV before leaving for school or day care. The timer provides a concrete visual "picture" of how much five minutes is.

By using the three "C's" you should begin to see less chaos in your home. Don't forget that encouragement is powerful. Give your children simple words of praise and thanks, which will go a long way in reinforcing their new, more acceptable behaviors.



## GETTING A LIBRARY CARD AT PRESCOTT VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY

To check out materials or to use the public Internet, you must have a library card.

You can obtain a FREE library card by visiting the Library and providing identification (such as a valid Arizona driver's license or alternate photo identification card) and proof of a current mailing address in Yavapai County (a piece of mail, for example).

Children of any age may obtain a library card. Persons under 16 years of age must have a parent or guardian present to obtain a card or to replace a lost or stolen card. If a minor from 16 to 17 years of age obtains a card without a parent present, the parent or guardian will be notified by mail.

- **Information Updates:** Please inform library staff in person or by telephone if the information for your card changes (such as name, address, e-mail address, or telephone number).
- **Lost Library Cards:** If you lose your library card, you can get a replacement card by visiting the Library. There is no charge to replace a lost library card.

For our families who enjoy reading using today's technology, be sure to check with a Librarian to find out about eReaders and online books!



Happy Reading!

Color this Valentine's Day Cupid and hang it on your refrigerator!

