



ADDITUDE

Strategies & Support for ADHD and Beyond

The Mother Load

- 7 Self-Care Mantras
- Embracing Big Family Chaos
- Childless by Choice
- ADHD Meds in Pregnancy



AM I HAVING A
MIDLIFE CRISIS?

+HOW
HORMONES
AGITATE
ADHD

HIDDEN
CAUSES OF
ANGER

A GUIDE FOR ADHD DADS

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- 5 Bond Builders
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4 Fixes for Messy Bedrooms

Help kids with ADHD maintain order with these streamlined systems.

BY LESLIE JOSEL

T'S A PIGSTY! I CAN'T EVEN SET FOOT inside! Doesn't he see it's a disaster zone?

When parents ask me to help their kids learn how to keep their rooms orderly and tidy, I lob this question back at them: Are your children's bedrooms set up to make it easy for them to organize and maintain order?

Sometimes we don't realize that our children aren't cleaning and organizing their rooms the way we'd like because they simply can't. My first rule is to eliminate all roadblocks. For example, take a tour of your child's bedroom at their eye level. Literally. As you tour the bedroom, ask yourself:

1 Are the dressers functional? Are the drawers hard to open or crammed full? Would it be easier if you replaced their dressers with clear, labeled boxes

in a shelving unit or with open clear bins along the wall?

I have found that if we give children with ADHD and executive function challenges organization systems that are complicated or require many steps, they are less likely to use them. Unfussy and streamlined organization systems work much better. For example, tossing a t-shirt or a pair of jeans into a bin is a quick and easy way to maintain order. And the same goes for closets. If using hangers is a major pain point, ditch the rod in the closet and install hooks.

2 Do their bedrooms have large bins to put trash in? Shopping bags, clothing tags, and empty boxes can sit in some kids' rooms for weeks. Do their bedrooms have trash bins that are large enough to accommodate the

clutter that accumulates? Large wastebaskets are essential to maintaining order.

3 What is the most significant cause of the bedroom mess?

If it's shopping bags and boxes, consider setting up an "unboxing or unbagging" station in your garage, kitchen, or wherever your household recycling bins live. Eliminating the unnecessary trash from their rooms means there will be less for them to organize and manage.

4 Do they know where everything in their rooms goes? Everything in their bedroom needs a home. If you don't know where something lives, it will live wherever you leave it.

Kids crave independence. Empower your children by giving them choices. For example, let your kids keep their closets however they want. But communal spaces, like the living room, must be clutter-free. Also, allow "clutter days." They can have free rein over their rooms Monday through Friday, but Sunday is family clean-up day. Post the "house rules" where all can see and make sure that natural consequences are discussed and enacted consistently. **A**

LESLIE JOSEL is an ADHD academic and parenting coach. She founded Order Out of Chaos, a virtual company with the mission of helping parents guide their students to success in learning and in life.

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