

INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose - Australia's No 1 parenting educator

Getting kids to school ON TIME!

Missing a few minutes each day may not seem like a big deal but your child may be missing more than you realise if he or she is continually late.

“Come on Jack! Get a move on. School starts in ten minutes and you’re not even dressed yet!”

If this scenario sounds familiar then you are not alone. Anecdotal evidence suggests that getting children to school or pre school on time can be one of the most difficult tasks for parents.

Missing a few minutes each day may not seem like a big deal but your child may be missing more than you realise if he or she is continually late. Current research shows that mornings for most children are the most productive time of the day with 10.00am the peak period for productivity. When children arrive late and take time to settle as they inevitably do precious minutes are lost. A child who is fifteen minutes late to school each day misses one week of school every year.

How can you get your dawdling kids out the door without yelling yourself hoarse? Here are a few techniques and ideas for you to try to get your punctually-challenged children to school on time:

✓ **Establish a morning routine.**

Make sure your children know what is expected of them in the morning, and also what you will do. Resist nagging but be willing to take them to school even if they haven't fully prepared for the day.



✓ **Identify and remove distractions such as television.**

If the children are regular watchers before school change the routine and keep the TV off. It should only be turned on when children are completely ready for school.

✓ **Teach some of the basics of time management.**

The average adult underestimates by about 25 per cent the time it takes to do various jobs. Make sure you have realistic time estimates and stop packing so much into the time you allocate. Encourage older children to estimate how long it takes to do activities such as getting ready in the morning. Then they can measure the time taken to do these tasks and compare their estimates with real time.

✓ **Arrive at school ten minutes early.**

Plan to arrive at school early rather than be there on time. This idea works well for perpetual latecomers, whether young or old.

✓ **Model a good routine.**

Its pointless expecting children to be organised in the morning if you are in a muddle yourself. Set a good example by being as methodical as possible and avoid sleeping in unless your children are so organised that they get you breakfast in bed. And pigs might fly as well!

Published by Michael Grose

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