

### Cleaning your room

This week we are focusing on being devoted. A good place to begin being devoted is by maintaining a clean bedroom. I know the whole persona of “I am a teen and a guy, I am going to have a messy room like the rest of the world,” may seem cool, but in reality it only creates chaos in your life. How many times do you go looking for that outfit or that thing and can’t seem to find it? It is best to learn how to keep a room that is clean and orderly.

This week you will be learning how to declutter, organize, and clean your room.

#### Declutter

You will need the following for this task:

- a box for donating
- a trash bag for garbage
- a basket for items that go elsewhere in the home
- a wet rag for wiping out the insides of things

Almost everyone owns too many things, unless you are a minimalist. But even a minimalist can acquire too much and will need to weed out every once in a while. Before you begin you will need a clean workspace to work at in your bedroom. I recommend using your bed as your work zone.

Start with an article of furniture like a night stand. Begin by emptying out all of the drawers and shelves and putting the items onto your bed. Next, start looking through and grabbing the trash items and throwing them away. Don’t keep things that are broken, or of no value. If you find things that go in other areas of the home like paper clips, books, or items you borrowed, put them in the basket to go elsewhere. Look at your items and decide if you no longer have use for them. A good way to tell is if you haven’t done anything with it for over a year. After you have sorted through your pile, wipe out the inside of your drawer to remove any dust or dirt. You can then begin by organizing and placing your items back inside.

You are going to move in a clockwise pattern as you work your way around your room decluttering and organizing. If your bed is next, start by removing everything that is underneath it. Do the same process that you did for cleaning out the nightstand.

Let’s start on your dresser. Remove all items off the top of your dresser. Place anything that does not belong here and place it in it’s proper place. If you have a jar for coins, put all the coins inside of that. Throw away pieces of trash. There shouldn’t be a whole lot of things on top of your dresser, keep it clean and neat.

If you don’t have to have an item out, put it away. You want to have things looking neat and clean. When the top of your dresser is clean, begin by going through your drawers.

Take each drawer and dump it on your bed. Go through all of your clothing, throw out any ripped, stained or too small items. If you have some that need repairs, set them in a separate pile. Make a note to repair them. If you haven't worn the item in a year, donate it. Keep only what you like to wear and feel comfortable in. Wipe out the insides of your drawers before putting items back into them. Fold each item and place them back in the drawers neatly.

For bookshelves take all of the items off. Go through the books and decide which ones you want to keep and which ones to donate. Wipe off the shelves and place all the books back on the shelves. Put them back in some sort of order. Sort them according to the types of books. If you have school books, put those together. Fiction books, put them together. Place them all vertical on the shelf. This creates a taller, more organized looking shelf. Any CD's or DVD's go through and decide if you want to keep them out. If you have them on your music player and don't need them out, put them away in a box under your bed or in the closet.

You have probably moved around most of your room, keep going until it is done and then we move on to the biggest, probably the messiest----your closet!

Take everything out of your closet. Use your rag and wipe out the inside corners and any shelves to remove cobwebs and dust. If you have carpet, vacuum the corners and cracks.

Now go through the clothing. Throw out old, ripped, and stained clothing. Anything that is too small, put it in the donate box. If you have any that needs repairing, put it in the pile to be mended. Then start sorting the different types of clothing that you have in piles. Put all your t-shirts, your long sleeve shirts, and any button up shirts , into separate piles. This will help you to have some order in your closet. It will also help you to see if you have one too many of something 😊 . Put them back in your closet. Put the items that you don't frequently use towards the back. This can be jackets, suits used for special occasions, or out of season clothing. Then put your clothing in a pattern. I like to do tank style shirts, t shirts, long sleeve shirts, and dress shirts, in that order. I also take it one step further and within my t-shirts, I sort them according to color. This helps give you an organized look to your wardrobe. It will also help you determine which types of items that you need when you do have to go shopping for clothing.

If you keep your shoes in your closet, depending upon how many of shoes you own, you can either neatly set them out on the bottom or purchase a shoe rack. These are fairly inexpensive at the store and holds many pairs of shoes.

Use the top of your closet to hold seasonal items such as gloves, hats, scarves, etc. You can get inexpensive boxes or baskets to hold these items.

Depending upon how cluttered your room is, this may take you a few hours or a few days. Just keep at it. Go through all of your room, and don't stop until you are finished. Being organized is a positive trait to be able to function without chaos in life.

## Cleaning

You have decluttered, and organized, now it is time to clean. Get out some basic cleaning supplies:

- Vacuum
  - Wood cleaner---with a rag and bucket (if necessary)
  - Window cleaner and rag
  - Broom---for cleaning spider webs off ceiling
  - Bucket with all purpose cleaner and water for wiping walls, heating vents, etc and a rag
1. **Removing cobwebs.** Start by taking your broom and going around all of the corners of your ceiling and removing any cobwebs that may be hanging.
  2. **Wiping walls.** Grab your bucket with all purpose cleaner and begin wiping the walls of your bedroom. Start at the top and move down. That way, if any drips occur, you can wipe it as you are moving down.
  3. **Overhead fans.** Carefully wipe each individual blade with water and cleaner. These are probably really dirty.
  4. **Window treatments.** If you have curtains, take them down and wash them. Hang them up wet and tug down on them as they are drying. If you have blinds, you can take them down and wash them in a bathroom---it takes some time, but you only have to do this once per year. Or you might choose to hose them off outside. Wipe each one individually.
  5. **Windows.** Use your cleaner and clean the windows. When you are finished, take and wipe anything else like mirrors, computer screens, TV screens, and phone screens.
  6. **Miscellaneous things.** Don't forget to wipe window sills, heating vents, light switches, door knobs, and closet handles.
  7. **Flat surfaces.** Anything that you didn't wipe off already, wipe. Pay attention to all of the edges and sides.
  8. **Floors.** Give your room a thorough vacuuming. Move in a pattern. Start on one side and vacuum every area. If you need to move furniture, do that. Get underneath the dressers and nightstands. Take the hose and vacuum underneath bed. Concentrate on all of the cracks and corners. Continue moving until you have finished the entire surface of the floor.
  9. **Wash bedding.** Remove all of your bedding and wash it. If you are able to hang it outside, let it air dry. There is something about climbing into bed and enjoying the smell of lined, dried sheets.
  10. **Air out your room.** If it is cold, open your windows and shut your bedroom door. Let your room air out for 15 minutes or longer.
  11. **Make your bed.** Tuck in the sheets and blankets at the foot of your bed. Have your comforter lay evenly on all sides of your bed.

To finish up your room, take your trash bag and throw it away. Immediately go and return all of the items that are to be placed elsewhere in your home. Don't just set it down somewhere, put it all away. Put away all of your cleaning tools where they belong. Rinse out the bucket if needed. Take your donate box and set it by the door to take with you as you leave the home next time.

## **How to vacuum**

Vacuuming is about thoroughly doing the entire floor of carpet. It is easy to skip around the edges or underneath objects, because you do not see them. What can happen is that you may notice a darker line around the edge of your room. That is dirt that has accumulated and usually it is where the edge of your vacuum reaches. The best way to get rid of that is by getting your crevice/edge tool and attach it to your vacuum. Go around the entire corners of your room. Move in a clockwise pattern. Remember to go underneath furniture that cannot be moved. After you have done the edges, start on the surface of the floor. Move in a left to right, back to front pattern. You need to go over the carpet more than one time to make sure that all of the dirt has been picked up. Do it slowly, to give the machine time to suck up the dirt. If you notice that it is leaving some pieces behind, check to make sure that your vacuum doesn't need cleaning out. It is pointless to continue vacuuming if it isn't picking up all of the dirt. Stop, and take the time to clean it out. Work your way out of your door.

Then you can stand back and enjoy a freshly vacuumed carpet. It may only last for a few seconds, but for a moment you can enjoy.

## **First aid basics**

Part of growing up is knowing what to do in an emergency. Being mature and able to be dependent on when an emergency arises is a blessing for everyone.

Here are some basic first aid skills that you should know:

### **Puncture wound or cuts and scrapes**

If a person has a small puncture, cut, or scrape it may or may not bleed. Here are some steps to take care of it:

1. Wash your hands, to prevent spreading infection
2. Apply pressure to the wound to stop the bleeding
3. Clean the wound with clear water. Remove any debris with tweezers. Make sure to clean the tweezers in alcohol first. If debris still remains, see a doctor. Carefully clean the area around with a washcloth and warm water.
4. Apply an antibiotic. Applying a thin layer of cream can help stop spread of infection.
5. Cover the wound with a bandage.
6. Change the dressing as it becomes wet or dirty.
7. Watch for signs of infection. If it doesn't heal, has more pain, is red or has any discharge, see a doctor.
8. If the bleeding does not stop or appears to be very deep, it may need stitches. See a doctor.

## **Burns**

These can be serious or in most cases not so bad. If you have a small burn just on the surface of the skin from touching a hot object, immediately place the area under cool running water. Keep the area covered in water until it feel better about 10-15 minutes.

If the area blisters, don't break them. Cover them with antibiotic cream and a bandage.

If you develop large blisters, see your doctor. If you notice signs of infection such as oozing from the wound or increased pain, redness or swelling see your doctor.

For severe burns, call 911 immediately.

## **Bug bites or stings**

Most reactions to bites are mild, causing only discomfort to a person. But in some cases it can cause an allergic reaction. For most, wash the area with soap and water. If there is a stinger, remove that. Apply a cold pack to reduce pain and swelling. Use a pain reliever if necessary. Apply a topical cream such as hydrocortisone to ease the pain and itch relief. Take an antihistamine such as Benadryl if you are experiencing an allergic reaction to the bite.

For a severe reaction such as difficulty breathing, swelling of the lips or throat, faintness, dizziness, confusion, rapid heartbeat, nausea, cramps, or vomiting contact a doctor or 911 immediately.

## **Heat exhaustion**

This is sometimes common with little children who have been outdoors playing in the hot sun. They may begin to start feeling faint or dizzy. They might have a headache, feel fatigued, or have many other abnormal symptoms. The best thing to do is if you notice they are acting differently, get them indoors out of the sun. Try and get them in an air conditioned room. Remove any tight clothing and elevate the legs and feet slightly. Give them cool drinks to sip on while you sponge their bodies gently with a cool wet cloth. If they don't seem to be getting better, call 911 or your doctor immediately. This can lead to heat stroke.

## **Frostbite**

At the other extreme, if you are outdoors in the winter time you can be exposed to frostbite in extreme temperatures. It is very important to have all of your skin unexposed while venturing out in to the blistery weather. Even if the weather is fair and you are having little ones outdoors to play, it is important that if their hands get wet with snow, you bring them indoors and change their gloves immediately. I like to keep my gloves off and in my pockets and I know that if I am freezing than my little ones are probably cold as well. They won't as likely tell you that they are cold, so it will be your job to only let them play for increments of time outdoors in the winter. When you bring them back indoors, do not put their hands in warm water. It will only cause them to burn. Gently massage them together to warm them up.

## **Falls or head trauma**

These are all sensitive issues and as with everything use caution. If my child is to fall down, I usually let them try and get themselves up. If they are able to stand up even partially, then I know that the fall is not that severe. Do not pick up a child who has fallen and lays there. You don't want to do more damage to them in case something is broken. Carefully try and calm the child down and see if you can find out where the pain is coming from. If crying continues for an extended period of time, ½ hour to 1 hour, I would suggest calling 911 or visiting your nearest ER. If the child can be comforted within a matter of moments, they will probably be alright. Don't immediately give a child pain relieving medicine, especially after a head trauma. Give their bodies some time to figure out what is going on and if you don't need to visit the ER, you can administer a dose to make them more comfortable.

## **Bumps/bruises/sprains**

If a child is hit in an area it may bruise, swell, or sprain depending upon what they did to it. The best thing to do is get the child to sit or lay down comfortably. Elevate the injured area and apply a cool ice pack to help with swelling. Doing this for a few moments is better than not doing it at all. If the child continues with increasing in pain or the area continues to swell, contact an adult to let them access the situation.

I would hugely recommend taking a CPR and choking class. Your local fire department or hospital should offer these classes. You never know when that one time you could save a person's life by just knowing what to do in an emergency. Being a mom of 10 children, I have, on two occasions experienced my child choking and had to perform the Heimlich maneuver. These are valuable things to know. It will take a few hours out of your life, but well worth the time.