

# PFA Tips

## Playroom Rescue

Do you find yourself saying:

*“Our playroom is overflowing! I can’t remember the last time my kids played with half of this stuff.”*  
*“I ask the kids to clean up but they never seem to put everything away and it’s never in the right place.”*  
*“We had our toys in large bins, but they just dump everything out on the floor.”*

As a professional organizer these are complaints I hear a lot. If you have more than one child, different ages, different genders and or different interests, your toy problems are exponentially increased. Add in a child or children with ASD, and you can have an even greater challenge of visual or sensory sensitivities.

In addition to working with dozens of clients with these issues, I live with these challenges myself. I have three children, ages: 13, 11 and 5. Two girls and a boy, so you can imagine the wide range of interests that they have. For my oldest Julia, who is autistic, we have had to create systems that she understands, can follow and don’t cause her visual stress.

Even children without sensory issues can find a cluttered playroom overwhelming. So, it’s not surprising that ASD kids find it even more difficult. Here are a few of our tips to help eliminate the chaos in your playroom.

### Limit the amount of toys you have out.

Pack up 50% of the toys you currently have into several plastic totes. Rotate them every few months or on a snow days when they get bored. Not only will this cut down on the amount of clutter, but it will keep the toys “fresh” and interesting to the kids and look a lot more tidy.

### Purge old toys that are broken or are no longer of interest.

For books, toys and games that are still in

good condition, encourage your children to pack them up and donate them to a local charity. This is a great opportunity to teach them about giving back.

### Instead of open bins, use small to medium sized containers that have lids so that each one contains a toy category.

Everything will be contained and it will be helpful to both parent and child. This will also make the kids more likely to play with one category at a time.

### Consider how your child processes things.

Are they visual or not yet able to read? Use pictures and words on the outside of each container so that they can easily see where things belong.

### Encourage your children to clean up everyday.

This will avoid a huge mess at the end of the week. Set a timer every night for 5-10 minutes and have them clean up. Make this part of their routine.

These tips have worked for many other families including my own. And remember never be afraid to ask for help. Living with kids means you have to accept a bit of chaos and clutter, but the discipline of a system teaches kids much about life and responsibility. The goal is not to be “perfect” but to be able to find peace in your space.



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