



The Cognitive Emporium

10 Step Guide To Help Your Smart But Struggling Child Gain Independence

1. Picture a time where you felt most relaxed and at ease. Now picture a place where you feel most anxious. Which one would you want to go to sleep and wake up in? It's time to create a safe haven, a retreat, a place of rest, for your smart but struggling child, and that begins in the bedroom. Here is how you do it.
2. Take everything off the walls and remove everything from the shelves and on top of dressers, side tables, etc. Place them in one big pile.
3. Choose a space for 2 Piles: "Yes" and "No's". Next, pick-up each item and ask yourself this question: When I look at this item does it calms me? If the answer is NO, then it goes in the "No" pile. If the answer is "Yes", it goes in the "Yes" pile.

	Category	Space	Keep/Place
Yes	<i>List items in each square</i>		
No			

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4. Write down each item in the piles of “Yes” and “No”,s and organize them into categories: books, paper, school supplies, personal items, misc. (this will make the process much easier and allow you to place it quickly in its desired space). Making sure to write down the space where you see it moving to. (New Room, walls, closet, drawers, etc).
 5. Next ask yourself if this item brings value to the room? If the answer is no, then you can ask yourself if it would bring value in another room? If the answer is no, then it goes in a “get rid of this” pile.
 6. Plastic tubs make it a little to keep the chaos under control while you get it under control. Keep it simple with three: “Yes,” “No”, “Get Rid of” Move the “No” and “Get Rid” of bin out of the room as soon as you have looked at each item.
 7. The “Yes” items should all be categorized and you can now start to put them in their new location, remembering to keep the tops of the dressers and night stand free and clear. The only thing on the night stand should be a lamp, and or a clock if desired.
 8. If you need to make space in the closet or drawers this is a great time to go through the clothes by repeating step 4 but adding the questions relevant to clothes, for example: Do these fit? Have they worn them in the last 6 months? Seasonal? Storing clothes that are not currently being worn, in tubs with labels frees up space and energy for your child to locate appropriate items and pick out their own clothes. The same organization applies to drawers. By keeping the dresser drawers organized by category, it is easy to train your child to put away his/her own laundry because they know exactly where they go. (If the drawers are too full, this is a good indicator that you have too much stuff and time to take a good look at what is in there).
 9. The inside of a closet door is a great space to put a bulletin board (cork board, or white board). Train your child that this is the space where he can put his own stuff on. Some kids love posters, quotes, pictures, etc. You want them to have the freedom to add to their space, but you want to teach them the best way to display it. By training them “how and where” to put their creativity, while maintaining the calm, you have just taught them a lesson on organizing their own chaos. You can also provide them with plastic tubs to store their personal items. This is also very important. They will learn where to put “those items” when you ask them to clean their rooms. The whole goal is for them to be able to close the door on clutter.
 10. Once you have achieved all of the above, kiss your brain! You have just created a space where your child’s mind can rest, imagination can soar, and health and wellness can be achieved.