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The mission of K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Sciences is to link education with life experiences to help people improve their lives, their families and their communities. Family and Consumer Sciences professionals support essential life skills including Community Development, Healthy Lifestyle Choices, Leadership & Volunteer Development, Relationship Development and Resource Management.

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Cut the Clutter and get Organized!

American consumers have a desire for purchasing a great deal of “stuff,” which has led to clutter-filled homes. In addition, families have less time to keep everything organized. The lack of organization causes stress for the person in charge of the household. Children and other family members in the home also feel unsettled by the lack of organization. Some of you might be getting the spring cleaning bug and also are ready to cut the clutter!

What causes clutter? Here are a few things that cause clutter:

- Newspapers and magazines
- Mail
- Bills
- Books and papers
- Toys and games
- Hobby materials
- Tools and hardware

How do you know if clutter is a problem? Ask yourself a few of these questions:

- Do you say, “This house is a mess” more than three times a week?
- Do you have piles of paper all over the house?
- Do you spend lots of time looking for things?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, it IS time to Cut the Clutter and get Organized! Where to start might be what you are thinking. A positive attitude goes a long way. Involve all family members so the pressure to get organized isn't all up to you. Create a chart that gives everyone a job and assign a specific day to complete the task.

Minimizing clutter will take time. If you have a lot of clutter, set aside a couple Saturdays to tackle clean up. In each room, start at one point and work clockwise around the room until you reach your starting point. Use the box approach to sort the clutter. Sort items into boxes labeled, Keep, Store, Give Away/Sell and Throw Away. If you break the cleaning down one room at a time or one room a week, before you know it your house will reflect your hard work. To maintain your clutter free home take 10 to 15 minutes every evening to put things back in their place and keep using your chart that assigned tasks to all family members.

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