Parents - If you haven't already read the pages on "Developing Character in Your Children," you might want to go there first before reading these pages.

Tips for Parents to Encourage Orderliness

Children who are raised in an orderly environment will tend to value orderliness. However, they do need to be encouraged to develop the habit of orderliness.
They can learn about orderly procedures by working with you in normal household projects, such as cookie baking or repairing a bicycle tire. Discuss and demonstrate planning ahead by gathering materials in advance, determining the goal, the priorities, and logical steps in the project. Lay out the materials and tools in the order needed, clean up as you go, putting everything back in its place. Be sure your children understand how much time you saved by having the materials on hand when it is time for the project and by being able to locate the tools immediately, since they were in their proper place.
You can encourage your children to think in an orderly manner by helping them to think in "categories." Show them how to organize their clothing and their toys by category and help them find containers and labels to do so.
Help your children understand that orderliness is to be valued above neatness alone, although neatness is a component of orderliness. (Their rooms can be made to look neat, because all the mess has been stashed under the bed or in the closet. It is still difficult to locate an item because it isn't organized.)
As with any character quality, praise is a powerful way to encourage your children to grow in good character. Be specific, naming the quality and benefit they will enjoy by having that quality (for example, "You did a wonderful job making your desk orderly. Now that you found your drawing pencils, we can spend some time doing a project together!")

Use the chipmunk house poster [link] to reward orderliness. When your children show orderliness, let them glue some food (corn, beans, grain) onto the poster, of course keeping them in orderly piles as the chipmunk would!

Sorting Game

Have your children play a sorting game to gain orderly thinking:

Place a pile of diverse items in the center of the floor. Have index cards taped around the room of different categories. The children can take turns sorting by various criteria, such as use, color, size, etc. You could time each child to determine a winner.

Alternate sorting "game":
Bring the clean laundry to the center of the room and see which child can complete the task faster:
" Retrieve his own clothing
" Fold it in a way you have previously demonstrated
" Match socks and fold or roll
" Put it away neatly
" Pass your inspection.

Orderliness "Tips"

Try a "20 minute" blitz
(children have pre-arranged tasks and a quick pick up by all gets everything orderly again.)Use a timer and declare winners if you wish.

Do seasonal reorganization with the whole family involved.
Encourage the children to give items away and choose their favorite ones to keep.

Find creative ways to label and organize "categorical storage."

Establish some fun routines in the family schedule, such as pizza night, junk

food night, pancake night, costume night, etc. This builds wonderful traditions!

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Check out the Just for Kids pages for an animal analogy and a biographic sketch illustrating Generosity