

A Guide for Youth to Manage Busy Schedules

Young people frequently maintain schedules that are more packed than those of adults. Adults, in turn, may experience burnout and the need to reassess their schedules and priorities. It is beneficial for youth to allocate deliberate time to prioritize and manage their schedules in a manner that aligns with their values. This guide aims to assist youth in effectively managing their schedules and balancing commitments such as school, Sabbath, self-care, sports, church, family time, and social interactions. Managing such a diverse schedule can be challenging yet immensely fulfilling. Engaging youth and their parents in this activity can foster valuable skills and habits for all involved parties.

Here are some practical tips:

1. Prioritize Commitments

First, have youth (and parents) list their commitments and things on their current schedule, including hours of sleep. Next, prioritize these by categories “must do, no flexibility,” “love to do, they make me who I am,” “like to do,” and “do it, but could take it or leave it.” Now color-code these into categories like spiritual life, social life, academics, self-care, and extracurricular activities to emphasize the importance of balancing our lives.

2. Create a Weekly Schedule

Help them create a weekly schedule that includes time for all their activities. Use a planner or digital calendar to visualize how their time is allocated.

3. Set Realistic Goals

Teach them to set achievable goals for each week and see what might wait until next week or might be let go of altogether. Break down larger tasks into smaller, manageable steps to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

4. Designate Specific Times for Activities

Designate specific times for study, sports, church activities, sleeping, and socializing. Consistent routines can help maintain balance and ensure nothing important is neglected.

5. Incorporate Sabbath and Rest

Stress the importance of Sabbath and rest. Encourage them to think of what things recharge them physically, mentally, and spiritually. This could be reading, watching tv, napping, or spending time with a person that makes them the most joyous.

6. Encourage Communication

Foster open communication with parents, teachers, and coaches. Let them know about the youth's commitments to avoid scheduling conflicts and to get support when needed.

7. Teach Time Management Skills

Introduce time management techniques like the [Pomodoro Technique](#) (25 minutes of focused work followed by a 5-minute break) to enhance focus and recharge appropriately.

8. Limit Distractions

Help them identify and limit distractions such as excessive screen time or social media.

9. Allow Flexibility

Teach them the importance of flexibility. Sometimes unexpected events happen, and they should be able to adjust their schedule accordingly.

10. Encourage Self-Care

Emphasize the importance of self-care including sufficient sleep, healthy eating, and physical activity. A well-rested and healthy body can handle a busy schedule more effectively.

11. Balance Social and Family Time

Help them find a balance between social time with friends and family time. Both are important for their emotional well-being and personal growth.

12. Use Technology Wisely

Recommend apps and tools that can assist with scheduling and time management like Google Calendar, Todoist, or Trello.

13. Plan Ahead

Encourage planning ahead for larger projects or exams to avoid last-minute cramming. Regularly reviewing upcoming tasks can help them stay on top of their responsibilities.

14. Reflect and Adjust

Periodically review their schedule with them. Discuss what is working and what is not. Make adjustments as needed to ensure they are not overburdened.

15. Set Boundaries

Teach them to set boundaries and say no to additional commitments if their schedule is already full. Learning to manage their limits is crucial to true and lasting self-care.

16. Highlight the Importance of Enjoyment

Remind them to include activities they enjoy in their schedule. Balance is key, and having fun is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

By implementing these tips, youth can learn to manage their busy schedules effectively while maintaining a healthy balance between their various commitments. This work is forever work, and for many doing this with loved ones like parents and friends can be helpful as others may help you see what you can't see and help!

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