



Organizer Isabell Wells, left, helped Debka Janak untangle her family's computer desks.

important documents aren't used for coloring.

- Only keep "active" paperwork on the desktop. File or dispose of anything you haven't looked at recently.
- Check for adequate lighting at your desk so that it's functional at all times of day.

To find out more about Wells' organizing services, call 781-449-8907.

Consistency Is Key

Jay Gulley is a handsome 7-year-old boy with tons of energy. Due to a diagnosis of autism, that energy is often directed to repetitive physical challenges, including jumping off his bed and climbing on furniture.

When Jay's mother, Wendy, wrote to us seeking a Boston Parents' Makeover, her concern for Jay's and the family's safety was clear. He was emptying cabinets and acting on unspoken impulses, including running out of the house. She moved quickly to install different cabinets and to test locks for the refrigerator, stove and front door.

Because the Gulleys strive to be consistent with the therapy Jay receives at home and at school, their recent focus has been on the basement playroom, where Jay spends much of his time.

"We've transformed it since May," says Wendy Gulley, pointing out sturdy new furniture that offers less opportunity for injury. Following advice from Liz Martineau, director of



Jay and Wendy Gulley on some of his new, softer surroundings.

To avoid future clutter catastrophes, Wells suggests:

- Photograph children's artwork and store it on a disk instead of trying to save masterpieces.
- Make clear the distinctions between kid's and parents' spaces so that

appropriate behavior.

The Boston Parents' Paper helped where we could, adding a Jay-proof **Little Tikes® Fold 'n Store picnic table** and a **large plastic Step 2® toy chest** that will allow his younger sister, Carolyn, to keep her toys in the same room.

Dinner Time, Again?!

Family mealtime everywhere is a challenge, and as parents, we mistakenly believe we're supposed to magically *know* what to feed children. That's what Rose Walsh used to think, too.

"It's easy for me to get overwhelmed because when I'm alone with the kids and they're hungry and pulling at my leg, it's stressful," says Walsh, of Falmouth. She asked the Boston Parents' Makeover for help feeding her twin toddlers, Jack and Alex, whose tastes and appetites differ. "I'm picky about what I put in their bodies," she says.

Enter Mary Kernan, professional chef and owner of **Homemade Today**, a service that provides busy families with meals made in their homes. Knowledgeable about many aspects of taste and nutrition, Kernan is also an athlete and eats mostly vegetarian, so she speaks Walsh's language.

In less than an hour, Kernan consulted with Walsh about food purchases, cooking techniques and nutrition, then produced five small meals that Walsh – and her boys – enjoyed,



Rose Walsh, left, enjoys Chef Mary Kernan's quick, healthy meals.

using products that are easily available. Among Kernan's tips:

- Plan the week's meals in advance and shop specifically for those meals. Walsh was grateful for this advice: "I usually wander around the grocery store looking at things" then buy randomly when the kids get cranky, she says.
- Buy a bag of precut vegetables to save time on salads and stir-fry meals.
- Experiment with a variety of ready-made sauces to add interest and heighten the flavor of foods.

As an experienced mom, Kernan also counseled Walsh on toddler eating habits. "His stomach is the size of his fist," Kernan says. Babies grow quickly and eat a lot before age 2, she says, but when things slow down, toddlers earn a reputation for being picky eaters. Kernan's tips:

- Let toddlers decide how much to eat.
- Don't make extra food to give a picky eater choices, he'll eat when he's hungry.
- Plan on four meals a day instead of three, but limit snacking in the hour before dinner.

For more information about *Homemade Today*, see www.homemadetoday.com or call 781-860-0050.