

Selling With Children

HOME
APPEAL
SYSTEM

SET EXPECTATIONS

Sit down as a family and explain what is expected from each of the children during the marketing of your home. Cover their bedrooms and indoor play areas as well as the yard and driveway.

START PACKING

You'll soon be moving, so start filling the moving boxes with the kids' toys. Focus especially on small toys with many parts such as Lego's and Barbie Doll clothes. This will make straightening up quicker after your child plays and could make the house look less cluttered—and more attractive to buyers.

CREATE EXTRA TIME

For the duration of the marketing period, get yourself and the kids up 15 or 20 minutes early. Spend this extra time doing "daily chores" such as making beds, picking up clothes and straightening the bathroom counters.

HIGH CHAIR TRICKERY

If you have a toddler using a highchair at mealtime, you know it's impossible to keep your floor clean. Try investing in an inexpensive shower curtain and place underneath the highchair. A shower curtain can quickly be removed if a buyer is coming to view the home and will keep you from having to clean the floors every time your child eats.

SUPPLY TUB

Keep a small tub full of common cleaning supplies handy. Small tubs are easy for kids to carry around and will save you the frustration of searching for the Windex every time you ask them to clean. Try including a box of disposable wet cloths. These will come in handy for quick clean-ups of counters and window sills.

REMOVE SHOES

Most buyers understand that carpets can be cleaned. Even so, dirt or grease marks on your carpet can create a bad impression, which may cause a buyer to have second thoughts. While your home is on the market, be sure your children take off their shoes before entering the house.

DE-CLUTTER

Kids are notorious for keeping collections, posters, and knick-knacks in their bedrooms. These can shrink the feel of the room and make it hard for the buyer's children to picture themselves moving in. Be especially careful to remove popular "pin-up" posters. They can offend many buyers.

FIND A NEW HANGOUT

If your kids frequently invite friends over, this may be a good time to trade off with other parents. The fewer kids underfoot, the better during this time.

MAKE IT FUN

Try making cleaning a contest. Give a dollar each day their room is clean and charge a dollar every day it isn't. Create a "Board Game" where the kids get to advance their game piece everyday they keep up, with a fun reward at the end of each week. Let them earn a day off for every 5 days they do well.

RELAX

Don't be stressed with the pressure to have your house look like Martha Stewart's. If you're agitated, your kids will pick up on it. Stay relaxed and give yourself a break. If the buyers have kids, they will understand the impossibility of keeping your house perfect 24/7.

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