

## Organized kitchen helps family function

By Sharon Harvey Rosenberg, [sharonhr@bellsouth.net](mailto:sharonhr@bellsouth.net)

It's an annual ritual. We make promises on Jan. 1. And within a week, our resolutions look as promising as the discarded gift boxes.

But there's a secret to making your resolutions stick, according to **Standolyn Robertson**, president of the National Association of Professional Organizers and owner of Things in Place, an organizing consulting company in Massachusetts. Make organization your top priority, she says.

"An organized life is really connected to every goal," she told me during a recent telephone chat. She suggests that we take a room-by-room tour of our home's public and personal living spaces. But the kitchen and the family room demand special attention.

The kitchen is the hub of the home, **Robertson** says. And she literally means business when she discusses the room's core value. She calls it the headquarters of the family business. The following steps will help you organize:

- Define your family goals. Do you want to increase the number of meals the family spends together? Are you trying to save money? Are you on a diet? Write down your goals (financial, health and entertainment).
- Brainstorm for ways the kitchen can support the family goals. If eating more meals together is on the agenda, examine your dining room table. Is the table cluttered and uninviting at mealtime? Are there enough chairs for everyone in the family to comfortably sit? Are your cabinets and refrigerator organized enough so that it's easy to take inventory and prepare healthy and/or frugal meals?
- Study your countertops. Too often kitchen prep areas are crowded with clutter. "Don't underestimate the value of having a clear counter," Robertson says. "It's your pallet for creating your meals."
- Are your tools sharp and available? Dull knives and inaccessible pots will not encourage meal preparation. Without the right tools, the family is more likely to order take-out food, skip meals and splinter into self-involved groups.
- Toss your chipped mugs and purge your cabinets of dishes that are damaged or not used. "Life is too short to drink out of a chipped mug," **Robertson** says.