

## *News Release*

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### **Home Improvement Projects: A State of Mind**

#### Tips from Renovation Psychologist Dr. Debi Warner

PARKERSBURG, W. VA. – Home remodeling and improvement projects can be stressful on any family. Without proper mental preparation, the disruption to normal activities and household flow caused by renovations can transform even the most easy-going homeowners into the Hatfields and McCoys.

“The most important thing to remember with home improvement projects is your dream and each other,” recommends Dr. Debi Warner, licensed clinical psychologist and author of the book, *Renovation Psychology*<sup>®</sup>. “It’s critical to focus on the fact that home improvement projects are an investment of time, effort and money designed to improve your home and lifestyle.

“Recognizing the strengths that each family member brings to the project can help energize your family. Think of it as your ‘home team.’ One member may be best at organizational details and researching products, while another has vision to see the project through completion. Still another person may be best at making brownies or other soothing treats for the family while the house is undergoing changes.”

According to Dr. Debi, who has radio and television shows on the topic of renovation psychology, there are several tips to keep in mind that can help families successfully navigate even the most complicated renovation process.

**Tip #1** – Research and communicate all aspects of the project in advance to everyone involved on the ‘home team.’ If, for instance, you’re going to have your kitchen renovated, make sure to research the products you select and discuss their features and benefits with all family members.

**Tip #2** – Make a dry run of your alternative living plans before construction begins. For example, if a bathroom is being renovated, block it off for several hours well before the project starts, and then rehearse a game plan to use alternative bathrooms in the house. Get people used to different routines in advance to make the actual project go smoothly.

**Tip #3** – Ask children for ideas. Because kids are less attached to a set way of doing things, they often have the best ideas of how to solve a problem. Consider “breaking the rules” during renovation times to accomplish the ultimate goal --- keeping the family safe, happy and stress-free.

**Tip #4** – Establish a “go for it!” state of mind. Dwell on the positive results of the renovation, not the mess and potential frustration of getting to those end results. Be flexible and adapt as situations change. Keep your overall vision in mind for the renovation project.

**Tip #5** – Adopt a team spirit. Have fun with the renovation by creating slogans on T-shirts, mugs and other items around the house. Some ideas include: “Smith Family Renovation – 2007,” “Extreme Makeover- Smith Family Edition” or “Going for the Attic – Smith Family 2007.”

“One project that people seem to have concerns about that can be easily calmed is a full-home window replacement,” says Dr. Debi. “Homeowners fear that birds will fly in their homes and envision that their house will resemble Swiss cheese with lots of holes

for days on end. After doing some research, consumers discover that these concerns are unfounded.”

Since many homeowners have lived in their homes for only a decade or less, most people have not faced a full window replacement project before. By doing some research, they can discover that this is a fairly easy procedure.

The experts at Simonton Windows® recommend that homeowners can reduce their stress levels during a replacement project by doing the following:

- Remove window treatments before installers arrive to provide easy access to windows.
- Decide and communicate with the installation team which doors will be used to gain access to the home, which restrooms are available for crew use and what procedures you feel most comfortable with for home access.
- Make arrangements to keep young children and family pets secured and away from workers at all times.
- Find out your installer’s weather policy. While they may be fine working in the rain or snow, you may not want the interior of your home to get muddy or wet. Decide together what are acceptable weather conditions for your project.
- Discuss removal of old windows in advance with the installer. Sometimes either the new or used windows may need to be stored at your residence for several days. Direct the team where to store the windows, how to protect them and a timeframe for removal.

For additional ideas and insights from Dr. Debi Warmer, visit her web site at [www.RenovationPsychology.com](http://www.RenovationPsychology.com).

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