

ROUTINES

At all times, and especially during this time of uncertainty and added stress, it is important for children (and adults) to have some predictability and routine in their lives.

Routines help children feel safe, and they allow both children and adults to stay calm by knowing what to expect.

Here, you will find some guidance and tools to support you with your routines at home.

A ROUTINE IS

a consistent and predictable way of doing daily tasks.

Routines help children learn new responsibilities and can make life easier for parents.

WHY ROUTINES?

Children prefer when their daily lives are predictable and they know “what comes next.” This helps kids feel at ease. When they feel at ease, kids behave better and feel more confident, so they are more likely to try new things.

What to consider when creating routines



When in your day would routines be most helpful?



Create a chart for the morning, evening, or throughout the day!



Make a list of things that need to be done for your day to run more smoothly and who will do them.



Consider what you want your child to learn to do independently.



Make a list for the morning.

- What time should your child wake up to start their day?
- What are the steps to get ready?
 - » Get dressed. Eat breakfast. Clear dishes. Brush teeth.

Make a list for the evening.

- What time should your child go to bed?
- What are the steps to get ready?
 - » Clean up toys. Take a bath. Put on pajamas. Brush teeth. Read a book or tell a story!

Routines can also be fun rituals or traditions that kids can look forward to!

Some examples: daily snuggles, weekly dance parties, or annual holiday celebrations. **You might try** asking a daily question, like, “How did you help someone today?” or “What’s something new you learned today?” Or, you could tell your child what you love about them every night before bed.



Most young children need 11-13 hours of sleep, including rest & naps.

Getting enough sleep makes a real difference. It helps kids:

- 🎓 Pay attention, remember things and learn.
- 😊 Manage their feelings and behavior.
- 💪 Grow up at a healthy weight.



Try to keep bedtime close to the same time every night.

Include calm, relaxing activities in your routine, like a bath, story-time, quiet music, and cuddling.

Avoid TV, video games or other screens, and active play in the hour before bed.

Make a routine chart with your child.

- This can be a fun activity you do together!
- Add pictures or drawings so your child knows what each step is.
- Decorate it with things your child likes.
- Hang it on the wall at your child’s eye level.
- Point to the chart and give enthusiastic reminders about what comes next in the routine.



We know that at this time in particular, there have been major changes to your own and your child(ren)'s routines. This is difficult for everyone, and it makes sense that things would feel challenging or overwhelming, especially if the people you might turn to for help have to keep their distance. We hope getting into new routines will help restore some sense of predictability.

We also know that keeping up with routines can be difficult. **The most important priority at this time is your family's physical and mental health. Perfection is not the goal--a greater sense of predictability is.**

Do what you can, give yourself grace, and remember that **your positive relationship with your child is the key ingredient** to their development.

WHEN THERE ARE CHANGES TO THE ROUTINE



Do your best to stay calm.



Ask for help.

- Who or what can help you adjust?



Make a plan.



Explain the change to your child.

- Tell them what will change and what will stay the same. "Mommy is sick today. I will help you get dressed and then Grandma will play with you." It is normal for your child to get upset about the change. Do your best to be patient. 🙏



Do your best to follow the routine, your child will start to learn it, and you can spend a little less time repeating your directions.

If there are other adults in the home who can help you keep up with the routine and remind your child what comes next, **consider asking them for support.**

On the following pages you will find some example routine charts and blank templates to get you started!

SAMPLE ROUTINE CHARTS

My Evening Routine! ParentCorps

CHILD NAME: Emilie

What	When	Who
Bath time	6:00pm.	mom
Dinner	6:30pm	family
Reading	7:30pm.	Emilie
Brush teeth	8:15pm	Emilie
Bed time.	8:30pm.	Emilie

MY DAILY SCHEDULE

ACTIVITY	CHECK WHEN COMPLETE
WAKE UP	<input type="checkbox"/>
EAT BREAKFAST	<input type="checkbox"/>
GET DRESSED AND BRUSH TEETH	<input type="checkbox"/>
PLAYTIME OR ERRANDS	<input type="checkbox"/>
EAT LUNCH	<input type="checkbox"/>
STORY TIME AND NAP	<input type="checkbox"/>
PLAYTIME	<input type="checkbox"/>
EAT DINNER	<input type="checkbox"/>
TAKE A BATH AND BRUSH TEETH	<input type="checkbox"/>
STORY TIME AND IN BED	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: cdc.gov

WHAT	WHEN
BREAKFAST & CLEAN-UP	8:30-8:55
DRAWING/ART & CLEAN-UP	8:55-9:00
DANCE/EXERCISE	9:00-9:25
READING & CLEAN-UP	9:25-9:30
FREE PLAY & CLEAN-UP	9:30-9:45
SNACK TIME & Clean UP	9:45-10:05
	10:05-10:10
	10:10-10:40
	10:40-10:45
	10:45-11:00
	11:00-11:05

's Routine!

What	When	Who

's Rutina!

Qué	Cuándo	Quién

常规

什么事情 What	何時 When	何人\ Who