

13 Healthy Habits & Strategies to Help Kids Stay Regulated

Small daily habits can make a big difference in how kids feel, think, and behave!

Calmer Kids
Brighter
Tomorrows

1 MAINTAIN A ROUTINE



Keep a consistent daily schedule, including regular wake up and bedtime hours, meal times, and activities. Predictability helps children feel secure and reduces anxiety.

2 INCORPORATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



Encourage daily movement like bike riding, swimming, or playing outside. Exercise helps reduce stress and improves mood and focus.

3 LIMIT SCREEN TIME



Set clear limits on screen time and encourage other activities like outdoor play, reading, or family games. Too much screen time can affect mood and behavior.

4 SET UP A QUIET TIME



Establish a daily quiet time for reading, drawing, or other calm activities. This helps children learn to self soothe and take breaks from overstimulation.

5 PRACTICE MINDFULNESS & RELAXATION



Teach simple mindfulness or relaxation skills such as deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation. These can help children manage stress and anxiety.

6 UNSTRUCTURED FREE PLAY



Allow time for unstructured play where children can explore and create their own games. This promotes creativity, independence, and problem solving.

7 ENCOURAGE HEALTHY EATING



Meeting daily nutritional needs, including fruits, vegetables, and protein, gives them the fuel to regulate more effectively.

8 PREPARE FOR TRANSITIONS GRADUALLY



With any transition, gradually shift routines and preview what is coming next. Preparation can lower stress and make change easier.

9 ENCOURAGE SOCIAL CONNECTION & FAMILY TIME



Social interaction helps children develop important social skills and stay connected with others. Strong family connections provide emotional support and stability.

10 USE SENSORY SUPPORTS



Headphones, fidgets, swings, chew tools, or cozy spaces can help some children stay organized and calm.

11 BUILD CONNECTION FIRST



A few minutes of warmth, play, or one to one attention can go a long way when a child is struggling.

12 USE VISUALS & CLEAR EXPECTATIONS



Visual schedules, checklists, and simple steps help children know what is happening and what is expected.

13 LEAVE ROOM FOR REST & RECOVERY



After busy days, children often need quiet downtime to recharge before they can cope well again.

Dysregulation is a signal, not a choice.

Support first. Skills second.

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