

DAILY ROUTINES



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and a related
Youtube video!

01. Importance of daily routines:

Familiar routines provide comfort and safety.

Routines help children feel confident and in control.

Routines can support learning self-help skills and responsibility.

02. What are daily routines?

Regular, predictable activities in natural environments, like at home or school.

03. Characteristics of daily routines:

Successful routines are reliable, consistent, and balanced. They should also be easy to follow.

04.

Skills to follow daily routines:

- Memory- remember steps
- Attention- stay on task
- Executive functioning- start and complete tasks
- Following instructions- understand verbal cues and multi-step directions

05.

What happens when routines change?

Children can get upset or anxious when routines change. This may cause meltdowns, shutdowns, trouble focusing, and difficulty understanding the changes.





WHAT TO DO WHEN ROUTINES CHANGE?



Before the change:

- **Foreshadow!** Talk about it early (if you know)
 - Review the changes on a visual schedule
 - Use social stories or books that explain the situation
 - Validate any anxiety
- 



During the change:

- Give clear, simple instructions
- Use timers to show how long the activity will be
- Offer sensory tools or a calming space for regulation and distraction



After the change:

- Validate any remaining distress
 - Talk with your child about the most fun part of the “adventure”
 - Adjust a visual schedule for the rest of the day if needed
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How to practice daily routines:

Pretend Play / Simulation



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Toys- use a doll or stuffed animal and have your child wash, dress, and feed it to practice the order of the routine.

Race- make it a competition and ask your child if they can finish the routine before you finish yours.

Role reversal- have your child walk you through their routine so they have a sense of control

Task Breakdown and Visual Schedules

Morning Routine Chart

- Brush Teeth 
- Get Dressed 
- Eat Breakfast 
- Pack Backpack 
- Put on Shoes 
- Hug Family 

Out the Door!

Visual schedules break tasks into smaller steps, support independence, and reduce meltdowns caused by verbal instructions.

You can make a simple visual routine at home using short directions or easy drawings for your child to follow and check off.

VISUAL SCHEDULE TEMPLATE

Routine

