



ROUTINES

Parenting Tips & Tricks

Children who have structure and routines feel safer and tend to become more resilient. Their brains are growing constantly and sudden changes or not knowing what to expect on a regular basis causes the “wiring in their brains” to work harder. As children and their brains mature, change becomes easier to handle, especially if they had more consistent schedules when younger.

Habits That Help:

- Waking up at the same time every morning
- Bath time routines (same time every day, make it fun with toys, bubbles, a favorite bath cloth or towel)
- Bedtime routines (same time every night, reading together, warm tea with honey)
- If possible (we know it can be hard) provide meals at regular times each day or bring snacks to provide at those times when being home isn't possible
- Chores like helping with the dishes, setting the table, making the bed help even very young children feel like they contribute to the family; start early to involve them

How You Can Help:

- ***In a perfect world schedules are easy, yet these aren't perfect times so be flexible...***
- Offer choices when possible... if schedules need to change ask your child/ren for suggestions – asking their input reduces conflict
- Start small... creating routines doesn't need to happen overnight if they haven't been the norm in your home so set up one at a time (ex: waking up at a certain time in the morning, getting dressed, and eating breakfast), then you can add to the routines
- Make routines fun... add incentives like fun “wake up music” or a new book at bedtime
- Reassure your child/ren... let them know that change can be hard and schedules aren't always easy to keep, you're all doing the best you can
- Reward success... hugs are a great way to say “awesome job!”

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