Routines

What are Routines?
A routine is a pattern for an activity that is followed the same way each time the activity is done.

Why are Routines Important?
Routines:
• Are helpful for emotional regulation during times of transition between activities or when things are different.
• Provide predictability about what will happen next, helping build safety and security.
• Help children feel safe to explore their world and express themselves.
• Reduce power struggles while teaching positive, responsible behavior.
• Support social skills.
• Help teach self-control.
• Encourage memory and the development of early organizational skills.
• Strengthen the connections between brain cells.
What Can Be Done?

• Maintain routines as much as possible in all situations. For example, keep bedtime routines when spending the night away from home.

• Offer positive words when children follow routines or get through a change calmly.

• Have only two or three consistent caregivers for children.

• Use routines for bedtime, nap time and meal times.

• Spend some quiet time with children each day. Consider reading, crafts, quiet play, or baking together.

• Create predictability by being consistent. Explain to children what the rules and consequences are, and then follow through.

Routines work well for discipline too.

• Correction works best when it is:
  • Predictable.
  • Consistent.
  • Developmentally appropriate (considering the child's age, stage of development and individual needs).
  • Solution focused.

• Never discipline children in anger.

MORE INFORMATION

Teaching Your Child To Become Independent with Daily Routines
From the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning.

Creating Routines