

You are the Experts of your Family!

Opportunities for children to negotiate will help teach them skills to make responsible choices.

Be Flexible

Creating a consistent daily routine is important, but sometimes it is necessary to allow for some flexibility. Allowing children some choice in routines will make them more likely to follow through.

Flexibility helps families achieve balance when unexpected changes happen. Offer choices and alternatives to help children build skills for decision making.

Children adjust to routines differently. Some children may benefit from some extra support and direction.

Support and Encourage

You can help motivate your children to make healthy choices by recognizing their accomplishments. At every age your child likes to hear that you have noticed everyday efforts and successes.

Sincere encouragement of children's efforts helps them grow in their confidence, which increases their skills and abilities.

Quality time can be spontaneous, like listening to stories or being silly while doing dishes or cooking.

Make it Quality Time

Building routines can be enjoyable when you schedule time for family fun. Quality family time helps build relationships and trust. This could include reading a book before bed, or after-dinner walks.

Spending *quality* time together can be more important than spending *lots* of time together. Loving experiences with parents influences how children develop other relationships.

Building Routines:

- Routines can be supported by all family members. Working together as a team helps daily tasks get done faster!
- Negotiation can help children learn responsibility. Make a plan with your child for following through with daily tasks, like getting homework and chores done. This teaches planning skills and can help children learn to be accountable to their commitments.
- As children learn about being organized and responsible, set goals together. This can help with getting used to new routines and encourages children to think about their choices.

Some Examples of Family Routines:

- Regular family meal times
- Technology-free bedtime wind-down
- Weekly house chores and responsibilities
- Quiet family time
- Active family time
- Morning preparations
- Weekend adventures and special family time
- Extracurricular involvement/physical activity
- Cultural, religious, or family traditions

“Children who receive quality time are less likely to act out and far more likely to lead a happy and balanced life. Why? Because they know how deeply they are valued.”

Family Resource Facilitation Program

Routines can be a family effort, such as cooking meals together.

Celebrate family traditions and discuss their significance.

Family traditions promote a sense of belonging.

Model responsibility by keeping your commitments.

Establishing Routine Habits in Families:

- Routines help children understand expectations. This supports the development of healthy behaviours.
- When family chores follow a regular schedule, they do not come as a surprise and children will be more willing to help.
- Children look forward to quality family time. They appreciate a balance of work and fun as much as you do!
- Predictable routines help create a sense of stability and security by helping children know what to expect. When children feel safe, they are less likely to act out in ways that challenge parents.

Additional Tips:

- As a parent or other caring adult, you have valuable skills to share with children. Children watch you to learn how to manage responsibilities and stay organized.
- Keep a family calendar and review each week's family tasks and activities to keep routines organized and consistent.
- Bring the fun into routines! Look online for information and suggestions on activities for children K-12. You can start by Google-ing: “fun family education- activity center.”
- When schedules are predictable and consistent, children will feel secure and comfortable.
- Routines benefit adults as well. For example, regular routines can help you feel more organized, help you complete your daily tasks efficiently, and ease the stress of decision making.