

# Benefits of Family Routines

Routines offer children and adults alike a sense of security and comfort. The fear of the unknown is something most of us experience. Having a routine provides structure to the day, allowing us to know what is expected of us in the time to come. Here are some ways that family routines help children and parents alike.

**Consistent expectations.** Setting regular routines such as regular bedtimes, mealtimes, and screen times, allow parents to teach healthy habits. Routines can help take the emotion out of arguments that arise around these times by allowing the parent simply to say, “That’s just what we do in our house.”

**Allow connection time.** While routines often help us manage the day-to-day tasks of parenting, it also provides time to connect with our child. The bedtime routine is a time that does not always have to be storytime or songs, but can and should evolve into a time to connect and snuggle with one another. Even as the child grows older, bedtimes are a great time to talk about meaningful topics and share your hearts with one another. Routines build security and connection.

**Reduce power struggles.** Providing routines allows a child to predict what is coming next which often helps them transition from one activity to another. For instance, if a child knows that brushing teeth comes before storytime, they are less likely to complain about brushing their teeth. But if fussing about brushing teeth arises, a routine allows the caregiver to say, “You know we have to brush our teeth before storytime.”

**Gives children power.** Certain routines allow children to take charge of their own activities. A morning routine may simply be to wake up, get dressed, eat breakfast, pack your backpack, brush teeth, and go to school. Several tasks are required to complete this routine, but the only two that have to happen at the same time every day are waking up and going to school. Children should be given free range on what order they should complete the other tasks. Perhaps getting dressed happens before breakfast, or packing your bookbag happens after brushing teeth. Feeling in charge increases a sense of mastery and competence in children.

**Reduces stress.** Routines help us all know what to expect, and reduce the possibility of forgetting important steps or tasks throughout our day. Routines such as regular bedtimes can help our sleep health and ultimately our mental health.

## Source:

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## Resources:

- American Academy of Pediatrics. (2007). The Importance of family routines. Retrieved from <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/Pages/The-Importance-of-Family-Routines.aspx>
- Markham, L. (2020). Why kids need routines. Aha Parenting. Retrieved from <https://www.ahaparenting.com/parenting-tools/family-life/structure-routines>