

Children: why routines are good for them

Some children like and need routine more than others. In general, though, routines have the following benefits for children:

Safety and belonging

An organised and predictable home environment helps children and teenagers feel safe, secure and looked after, particularly in stressful times or during difficult stages of development, like puberty.

Also, routines built around having fun or spending time together strengthen family relationships. For example, reading a story together before bed or going for a special snack after soccer practice can become a special time for you and your child to share.

Skills and responsibility

Having chores to do in family routines helps children and teenagers develop a sense of responsibility and some basic skills like the ability to manage time. These are skills children can use for life.

And when children can do their parts of the routine with less help or supervision from you, it also helps them become more independent.

Healthy habits

Routines can be a way of teaching younger children healthy habits, like brushing their teeth, taking medicine regularly, getting some exercise, or washing their hands after using the toilet.

This means that routines can be good for children's health. For example, children who wash their hands more regularly might be less likely to get colds and other common illnesses. Also, routines can reduce stress, and lower stress is good for children's immune systems.

Daily routines help set our body clocks too. For example, bedtime routines help children's bodies 'know' when it's time to sleep. This can be a big help when children reach adolescence and their body clocks start to change.

It can be easy to over-schedule family life. Routines have lots of benefits, but it's also good for children and parents to have free time to play, relax or be creative.

Parents: why routines are good for you

Routines take some effort to create. But once you've set them up, they have lots of benefits:

- Routines help you get through your daily tasks and free up time for other things.
- Regular and consistent routines can help you feel like you're doing a good job as a parent.
- When life is busy, routines can help you feel more organised and in control, which lowers stress.
- Routines often free you from having to resolve disputes and make decisions. For example, if Sunday night is pizza night, no-one needs to argue about what's for dinner.

Reference - Extracts from

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups/family-life/routines-rituals-relationships/family-routines>