

Creating Daily Routines



WHAT ARE ROUTINES?

A routine is a set of activities that happen in a certain order. Daily routines occur in the same way and at the same time. You may have routines to get ready for your day such as showering and getting dressed. You might also have routines for going to work and making meals.

Adding a baby to your family shakes things up. You may need to adjust your morning, afternoon, or evening schedule. Making changes can be hard so go easy on yourself as you develop new routines as a parent.



WHY ARE ROUTINES HELPFUL?

Routines are comforting for both adults and babies. They can help us feel more relaxed. Babies have no control over their lives. Routines help your child predict what will happen next. Routines comfort them and provide a sense of trust and security. This sense of safety will help them explore, grow, and develop.

Routines reassure babies that you will take care of their needs. Develop daily routines for bathing, feeding, and going to sleep. The routine for bath time might be undressing baby and wrapping them in a towel. You may sing a song as you put them in the tub and apply lotion when you take them out. By the time your baby is six months old, they will probably recognize some routines.

POINTERS TO REMEMBER

- Routines should feel helpful and make you feel calmer. If a routine isn't working, try a different one.
- There will be days when your routine gets off track or falls apart. That's life. There will also be days when you choose not to follow your routines. It may be a holiday or when you have an appointment. Talk to your baby or toddler about upcoming changes. Then soothe them if they get upset. You might say, "You're going to the doctor today, so your nap will be later." Return to your regular routine as soon as possible.
- Changes in routine can be upsetting. For example, if you always put your baby to bed, they may have a hard time falling asleep without you. Be patient when this happens.

