

## 7 Benefits of Using Routines with your Kids

### 1. Routines eliminate power struggles

Routines eliminate power struggles because you are not “bossing” the child around. This activity (brushing teeth, napping, turning off the TV to come to dinner) is just what we do at this time of day. The parent stops being the “bad guy”, and “nagging” is greatly reduced.

### 2. Routines help kids cooperate

Routines help kids cooperate by reducing stress and anxiety for everyone. We all know what comes next, we get fair warning for transitions, and no one feels pushed around, or like parents are being arbitrary.

### 3. Routines help kids learn to take charge of their own activities.

Over time, kids learn to brush their teeth, pack their backpacks, etc., without constant reminders. Kids love being in charge of themselves. This feeling increases their sense of mastery and competence. Kids who feel more independent and in charge of themselves, have less need to rebel and be oppositional.

### 4. Kids learn the concept of "looking forward" to things they enjoy...

...which is an important part of making a happy accommodation with the demands of a schedule. He may want to go to the playground now, but he can learn that we always go to the playground in the afternoon, and he can look forward to it then.

### 5. Regular routines help kids get on a schedule

Regular routines help kids get on a schedule, so that they fall asleep more easily at night.

### 6. Routines help parents build in those precious connection moments.

We all know that we need to connect with our children every day, but when our focus is on moving kids through the schedule to get them to bed, we miss out on opportunities to connect. If we build little connection rituals into our routine, they become habit. Try a snuggle with each child when you first see them in the morning, or a "recognition" ritual when you're first reunited.

Rituals like these slow you down and connect you on a visceral level with your child, and if you do them as just "part of the routine" they build security as well as connection and cooperation.

### 7. Schedules help parents maintain consistency in expectations.

If everything is a fight, parents end up settling: more TV, skip brushing teeth for tonight, etc. With a routine, parents are more likely to stick to healthy expectations for everyone in the family, because that's just the way we do things in our household. The result: a family with healthy habits, where everything runs more smoothly!

*Source: Aha!parenting.com*

## 5 Easy Steps to Daily Family Schedule

### Step 1 - Analyze Your Day

Do a simple, but consistent time study. The easiest way to do this is to print a daily calendar. Note what each family member is doing at each time of the day. Look for the problem times, and think about how the schedule can be structured to eliminate problems related to behavior, stress, fatigue, hunger, and disorganization.

### Step 2 - Brainstorm What You Want

Are you hoping for less confusion in the morning, homework completed by dinner, children in bed by a certain hour, family play time, relaxation, a clean house?

This is the time to think about what you want in your family life. Focus on a balance of activity and rest for your family. Take an honest look at both parents' and children's needs.

### Step 3 - Write It Down

Get a poster board and a marker, and write down your schedule for all to see. Post it in the kitchen, and tell the kids that you will now be following it.

You're likely to get some opposition, so parents need to stand firm.

### Step 4 - Follow the Schedule for a Week

Check the schedule often, and let it guide your days for at least one week. Instruct the children to check the schedule and follow it. If you must remind them, do so; but your goal is for the children to learn to take responsibility for their part of the schedule.

### Step 5 - Tweak the Schedule

After the first week, take a look at what is working and how the schedule needs changing. Make changes in the schedule, and write it on a new poster. Continue to follow your daily family schedule until it is second nature. In a few weeks, you'll marvel at how this simple tool has changed your family life for the better.

Of course, there will be times when the schedule simply won't work. Emergencies, special events, traffic, and even weather can put a monkey wrench into the best-laid plans. But even if you get home late, go out early, or need to

buy take-out instead of cooking dinner together, try to get back to the schedule as quickly as possible. A traffic backup at the grocery store shouldn't stop your family from getting to bed on time!

Source: [verywellfamily.com](https://www.verywellfamily.com)<sup>1</sup>