

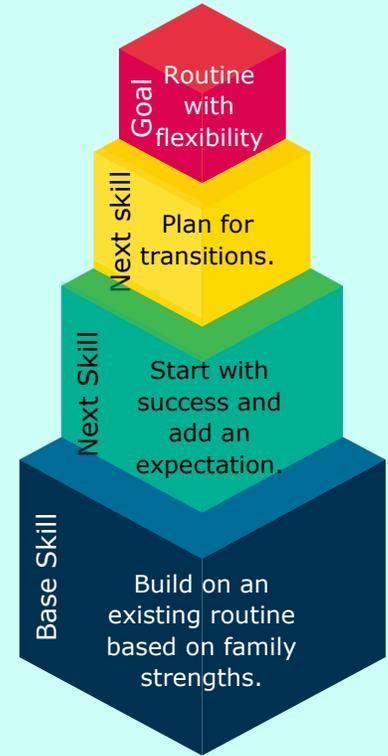


A STEP AHEAD

Routines for Your Family

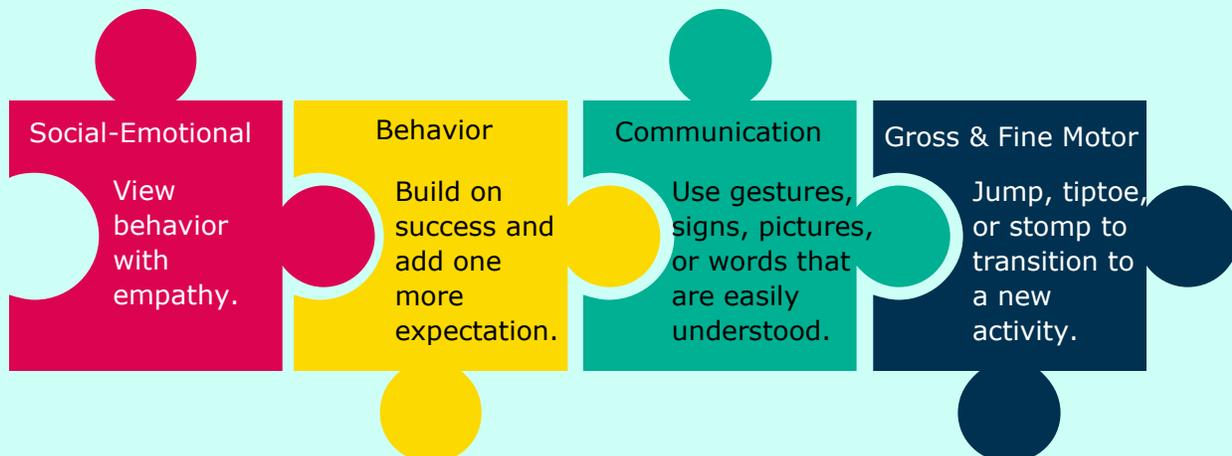
“Order is one of the needs of life which, when satisfied, produces real happiness.”

~Maria Montessori



Implementing New Routines:

- Give yourself credit for the routines you have implemented successfully. Chances are, even if you say “we don’t have a routine”, you are already using routines every day! Mealtimes, grocery shopping, bedtime, bath time, and other ‘ordinary’ moments are all routines.
- Approach children with a strengths-based approach. Use what the child does well and incorporate that into your new routine.
- Do what works for your family. You know your routine best! Your provider can also help you brainstorm ways to tailor interventions and ideas to outcomes.
- Start small if you would like to make a big change. For example, if you would like to change bedtime from 11pm to 8pm, slowly move the time back each night and wake up a little earlier each morning. This can help ensure that the changes you implement are sustainable and lead to long-term change and progress toward your goals.
- Ask your provider for guidance and support.



One-on-one attention during daily routines provides opportunities to build self-regulation in infants and toddlers.

- Babies become more self-regulated and organized when a consistent caregiver provides consistent daily care in the context of a routine.
- Toddlers develop confidence and self-control as they internalize your nurturing behaviors during routines.

Troubleshooting tips:

- Use routines to prevent power struggles. The ability to predict what's happening next gives children a sense of control.
- Give choices within a routine to give children control within limits.
- Think of a routine as a general outline and be flexible with yourself and your family.

References:

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/223-creating-routines-for-love-and-learning>

<https://illinoisearlylearning.org/blogs/disabilities/structure-routine/>

Making Routines Successful:

Prepare or Modify the Environment:

- Clear away tempting toys that might be distracting on the way to bed.
- Have picture cards out and available ahead of time if using them.
- Adapt sensory stimuli (lights, sounds, etc.) according to needs. For example, turn lights down an hour before bed.

Prepare your child for transitions

- Special rituals can help with transitioning from one activity to the next. For example, marching to the door at daycare then giving a hug and a kiss.
- Use a consistent auditory cue. For example, use a timer to signal that it is time to come inside after playing outside. Children will begin to associate this sound with coming inside and transition more easily once they understand what will happen next.
- Include alerting, organizing, and calming sensory activities throughout the day (see link below).

Resources:

Using Verbal Routines: <https://www.learnwithadrienne.com/blog/slide>

Rituals and Routines: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1808-rituals-and-routines-supporting-infants-and-toddlers-and-their-families>

Alerting, Organizing, and Calming Sensory Activities: <https://www.spdstar.org/sites/default/files/file-attachments/Sensory%20Balanced%20Schedules.pdf>