



Positive routines for young children- Parent guide

1. Positive routines work because they support child success and are enjoyable
 - Model and walk through steps of new routine
2. Children learn new routines quickly when you are calm, positive, or playful. Children take comfort from little rituals they create within a routine.
 - Overlook protests and remark on what your child is doing right
"Thank you for hanging up the towel."
3. Children learn from consistency, positive cues, praise – repeat, repeat, repeat
 - Rhymes, songs, vigorous rhythmic play refuel you and your child and invite cooperation
4. Plan together for times that need a routine to balance you and your child's needs
 - Parent self-care and work demands – routine for independent play while parent is not available. Use simple words: "Mom is working/busy now. You can sit over there." Create a quiet play spot and remember – do not engage until you are ready!
 - Parent-child connections and daily chores - Make time to connect 3-4 times for 10-15 minutes every day. "Filling" your child's emotional piggy bank" enables your child to make "withdrawals" during challenging moments. Think of it like putting fuel in your car before you go on a drive. When chores have to get done, give your small child a small task, like putting spoons and forks at the table, or carrying a sturdy dish into the kitchen. Children love to help and having a role signals 'Everyone plays a part in family work.'
5. Create action plan to design positive routines
 - Step 1: Review what works in other routines
 - Step 2: Apply those successes as you design a new routine
 - If your child enjoys a song or rhyme during one routine, make up a similar song or rhyme for the new routine
 - Step 3: Modify how you respond to misbehavior –
 - Stay calm, overlook protests as much as possible but limit harmful/destructive behaviors with firm reminder – "I need to keep you safe. No hitting."
6. Read books together about getting angry, family chores, other important topics. A story helps your child talk and think about growing up and issues you encounter together. Focus on feelings, avoid replaying child's behaviors but emphasize misbehavior in the story.
 - *Berenstain Bears and the Trouble with Chores* or *Berenstain Bears Get the Gimmies* by Jan and Stan Berenstain
 - *Train Your Dragon to be Responsible* or *Train Your Dragon to Follow Rules* – by Steve Herman, part of the *Train Your Dragon* series.

