



Family Routines

Family routines and activities are important for children and parents. Children love doing things the same way over and over again because it makes them feel safe and secure. In our busy and chaotic lives, sometimes we all forget to find time to spend together. Here are a few tips and ideas:

- Try to eat together as a family whenever possible and pay attention to each other when you do. Discuss events of the day, make plans for fun future times together, and reconnect
- Have special family food nights (pizza night) or let your child help out with meal preparation and cooking
- Put your child to sleep with a regular bedtime routine. Sing a lullaby, give back massages, or read stories. Even if you can't be there to put your child to bed, he or she will benefit from the predictability and regularity of the bedtime routine with someone who knows it (a babysitter, grandma, etc.)
- Kids love when they know something is going to happen—and then it happens. They feel like fortune-tellers
- Reading to your child regularly is a fantastic way to spend time together and also supports their early reading and language skills
- Think up ways to involve your child more regularly in daily chores. Can they put the laundry in the hamper for you? Can they help you prepare dinner? Kids want more time with you, and also benefit from feeling like they contribute to the family
- Discuss your family traditions. Kids enjoy knowing their family has a certain way of doing things (like Sunday dinner at grandma's or birthday pancake breakfasts)

When it comes to kids, even things that may seem small to you (like your child waving goodbye to you at the elevator each morning as you leave for work) probably mean a lot to them.