A ROUTINE THAT WORKS
AN ORGANIZED DAY FOR YOUR ADHD CHILD

All children - especially those with ADHD - thrive on routines that make them feel safe, secure, and happy. Consider this sample schedule and then customize it to your child's needs.

Sample Morning Routine

7:00 a.m. Tickle your child out of bed. (A little happy energy can get her up and moving quickly.)

7:05 a.m. Get ready: Post a list and have your child stick to it.

Wash face.

Comb hair.

Get dressed. (Lay out clothes the night before.) Check to see how your child is doing, but let her follow the list and do for herself.

7:20 a.m. Breakfast time: Offer two healthy but appealing choices, max. You want her to spend her time eating, not pining over Lucky Charms.

7:45 a.m. Brush your teeth—together. Being with her can speed things up and insure good hygiene.

7:55 a.m. Zip, tie, and layer up. Keeping shoes and gloves by the front door spares you last-minute hide-and-seek.

8:00 a.m. Out you go.

Sample Homework Routine

3:00 p.m. Have a snack and unwind from school.

3:30 p.m. Settle your child at his regular homework spot; be sure all tools are available (pencils, paper, calculator, reference books).

3:35 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Your child does homework; you stay around to answer questions and monitor breaks (stretch, bathroom, drink).

4:25 p.m. Check his work, and calmly go over anything he should edit (but don't do it for him). Offer specific praise for good work.

Sample Dinner Routine

6:00 p.m. Parent(s) starts food prep. Organize preparation so that you can avoid delaying mealtime.

6:15 p.m. Kids set the table. Give them specific tasks to instill a sense of responsibility.

6:30 p.m. Kids pour the beverages.

6:45 p.m. Parent(s) brings the food out to the table.

7:00 p.m. Dinner is served. For mealtime talk, try this: Go around the table—once or more—and have each person share one good thing about his or her day.

7:30 p.m. Kids clear the table. Parent(s) loads the dishwasher.

Sample Bedtime Routine

8:00 p.m. Let him relax in the tub. You can read to him or he can read to himself. Beyond cleanliness, a bath can help a child mellow out at day's end.

8:20 p.m. Three-part routine: dry off, brush teeth, and pee. You don't want to hear, "Mom, I have to go to the bathroom!" five minutes after you say good-night.

8:30 p.m. Get into PJs and clean up toys to set a nighttime—not a playtime—scenario.

8:40 p.m. Read together.

8:55 p.m. Your child gets into bed. Do your night-time routine: Talk a little about the day, compliment your child on the things he did well, say your ritual goodnight: "I love you all the way to the moon and back again. Don't let the bedbugs bite."

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