



# Early Intervention Clearinghouse

<http://eiclearinghouse.org>

Winter 2016 • Volume 28, Issue 4



## IN THIS ISSUE

Routines Provide a Sense of Security	1
.....	
Routines in Early Intervention	2
.....	
Clearinghouse Resources for Everyday Routines	3
.....	

## Routines Provide a Sense of Security

Think about how you begin your day. Are there certain things that happen for you to feel awake and ready to tackle your day? Coffee, a shower, quiet time? Our morning routine can set the tone for the rest of the day. What about your children? Do they have certain “rituals” during their day?

From the beginning, we probably create routines with a newborn. We may feed her in a certain chair every time. We may sing the same songs at bedtime or use the same loving voice when we change his diaper. It is during these early routines that we develop close relationships with our children. They know that they can count on us to meet their basic needs. It also allows us to truly be in tune with our child’s responses.

Routines help young children know what they can expect next. This helps them feel secure and gives them stability. They can also feel more relaxed and calm. It is important to understand the difference between a routine and a schedule.

A schedule is a general timetable of how you would like for your day to happen. For example: 9 a.m. playgroup, 11:30 a.m. lunch, 12:30 p.m. nap, 3 p.m. grocery store, 5:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. bedtime for kids, and then quiet time for parents.

Please see **ROUTINES**, Page 2

# ROUTINES

Continued from Page One

A routine can be described as the usual sequence for a set of activities, but it is not usually attached to times on the clock. For example, in the morning you get up, get dressed, and eat breakfast and before going to bed you take a bath, brush your teeth, and read a book before going to sleep.

Routines are usually repeated every time, but schedules can change from day to day, especially on the weekend.

As children grow and develop, they can take on some of their own tasks within a routine, such as washing their hands or feeding themselves. They may also begin to resist certain tasks because they don't want to stop what they're doing. Think of a wiggly child who doesn't want to stop playing to get his diaper changed.

Routines can also help in day-to-day family life and reduce household stress. If a young child's routine includes putting toys away after she plays with them, she may be more willing to help clean up tomorrow, and the next day, and the next. This does not happen automatically. It takes consistency and repetition from caregivers.

Establishing a routine can happen naturally. Think about what usually happens in the morning and what changes you would like to make for the morning to run more smoothly.

Once the routine feels like it is working, stick to it. Evening routines also can prepare you for the next day, such as laying out clothes. Weekends provide a different schedule, but with similar routines, children can manage change.

Visit our website for more information on everyday routines and early intervention.

<http://eicclearinghouse.org>

# Routines in Early Intervention

Early intervention (EI) services are provided by a team, including parents. Once the individualized family service plan (IFSP) is in place, EI providers begin services to address the identified outcomes. EI visits usually last only an hour, so most of the intervention is done by parents and other caregivers without the providers present. Parents might often wonder how they can continue and support the work of the EI providers after the visit ends. At the end of a visit, families can request a visit report that outlines the activities that were done during the visit. This report may also include ways that the activities can be practiced during the family's daily routines.

There are several questions parents can ask providers to help get started:

- 1) When can I work on this outcome/skill during my day?
- 2) What can I do to support my child?
- 3) What materials will I need, if any?

It might also be helpful for the team to record this information so it can be referenced between visits. One way to do this would be to list all of the routines that the family would use and then outline the strategies that can be addressed during each routine. The chart below outlines possible strategies that can be incorporated into different routines.

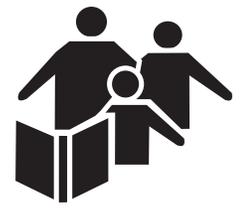
	Meals	Diaper Changes	Laundry
Language	Work on signs: more, eat, drink, please	Identify body parts: nose, ears, eyes, etc.	Identify items: socks, shirt, pants
Fine motor	Pincer grasp to pick up finger foods, hold cups; practice using utensils	Play with toys; practice using zippers and large buttons	Let child try to put on socks or other clothes
Gross motor	Practice pull to stand, climbing into high chair (with close supervision)	Rolling, transition to sitting, stretching	Push basket, pull to stand by overturned basket, toss socks into basket
Social/emotional	Peek-a-boo with wash cloth or cloth napkin	Talk about what you're doing and what you'll do next	Talk about the clothes as you fold them
Sensory	Opportunities to play with food; finger paint with applesauce or pudding	Talk about the cool wipes or the texture of the clothes	Talk about the texture of the clothes: soft, scratchy, smooth, rough

Adapted from "Embedding Strategies into Family Routines: One PT's Perspective (Part 2)" Available at <http://veipd.org/earlyintervention/>

This process is called embedding strategies into daily routines. By asking yourself the above questions, you will soon be able to find strategies and activities that are appropriate for your child and family. With enough practice and planning, this may even become a natural part of your daily routine!

# Daily Routines Are Learning Times

Engage My Brain, Body, and Voice to Help Me Grow



You can help promote healthy development for a child with developmental delays by involving them through conversation and simple actions during regular activities throughout the day. It's easy as talking to your child about your everyday routines.

## Wake Up

- Help me learn my body parts, clothing names, sequence (first my sock, then my shoe, etc.)



## Mealtime

- Describe texture, taste, colors, opposites (hot/cold, soft/hard)
- Encourage me to feed myself with a spoon, cup, or my fingers

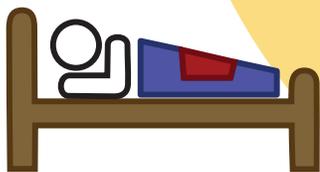


## Bedtime

- Read to me. Let me read to you
- Talk about our day together
- Sing a lullaby, share music



Zzz



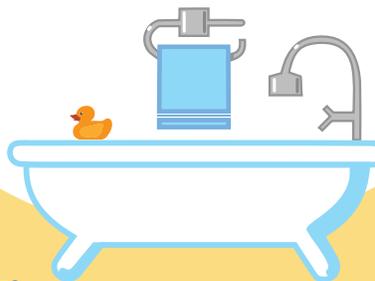
## Chore Time

- Let me help! I can match socks, empty laundry baskets, hold a dustpan or broom, wipe a table, etc.



## Bath Time

- I can follow directions: pour water, grasp toys, scrub myself, name objects
- Hide my rubber duck under a washcloth and ask me to find it



 For more information, visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse at <http://eiclearinghouse.org>

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention.

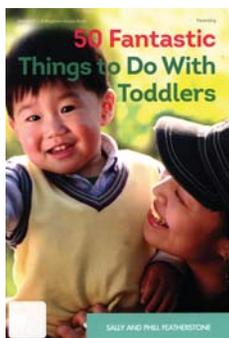


# Clearinghouse Resources for Everyday Routines

## Books

*Early Intervention Every Day!* Merle J. Crawford. Paul H. Brookes, 2014. (Call # HV 888.5 .C73 2013)

Targeting 80 skills in six key developmental domains for children birth to age 3, this reader-friendly guide gives families and professionals dozens of ready-to-use ideas for embedding learning opportunities in everyday routines.



*50 Fantastic Things to Do With Toddlers.* Sally and Phill Featherstone.

Gryphon House, 2013. (Call # HQ 774.5 .F433 2013)

*50 Fantastic Things to Do With Babies.*

Sally and Phill Featherstone. Gryphon House, 2013. (Call # HQ 774 .F43 2013)

Using objects easily found in most homes, this collection of purposeful play experiences will help

babies and toddlers develop key skills at their own pace and make unhurried important discoveries.

*Let's Play and Learn Together: Fill Your Baby's Day With Creative Activities That Are Fun and Enhance Development.* Roni Leiderman and Wendy S. Masi. Fair Winds Press, 2012. (Call # HQ 774 .L3945 2012)

This book shows parents how they can use daily caregiving routines such as feeding, diapering, dressing, bathing, and bedtime as opportunities for play, positive emotional attachment, and learning.

*The Activity Kit for Babies and Toddlers at Risk.* Deborah Fein, Molly Helt, Lynn Brennan, and Marianne Barton. Guilford Press, 2016. (Call # HV 888.5 .F3271 2016)

Your child's daily routines are transformed into learning opportunities that promote crucial abilities, such as how to imitate others or use simple hand gestures to convey wants and needs.

## Videos

*Any Place, Any Time, Anywhere! Everyday Learning in Family Activities.* 26-minute DVD. Winterberry Press, 2009. (Call # LB 1060 .A637 2009)

This video offers parents, caregivers and professionals an eye-opening look at the extraordinary world of children's learning that occurs every day as part of family life.

*Rules, Rituals, Routines.* 17-minute DVD. Learning Seed, 2007. (Call # HQ 769 .R935 2007)

This video illustrates how developing a set of well-thought-out rules, rituals, and routines will make parents' lives easier and their children happier and better behaved.

## ILLINOIS EARLY INTERVENTION CLEARINGHOUSE

The Illinois Early Intervention (EI) Clearinghouse identifies and collects research-based and best-practice early intervention information to share with families and providers in Illinois.



Books



Media

Parenting, child development, special needs, autism, and more

for parents  
for children  
for teachers  
for providers

DVDs  
CDs  
eBooks  
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Opinions expressed in *Early Intervention* are the responsibility of the author and are not necessarily those of the Illinois Department of Human Services or the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Early Intervention (ISSN 1058-8396) is published quarterly.