DAY 17

Routine



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When it comes to routine, things get kind of personal. Only you know how your family can function, what timeframes you're working to, and who is available when and for what.

I'm going to keep the activities short and simple for this. And no long explanations. Everything you'll need to know is in the 21 Days to a Happier Family book chapter. Below are a few thought-starters to get your creative juices flowing for how routine could work.

One quick tip: I don't recommend rewarding (or giving stars) to kids when they follow a routine. It's a life skill, and not something that should require some form of external manipulation or reward/punishment. Instead, some general and basic accountability should be all it takes... and I've found that many families report that their children really enjoy participating in the routines they create.



Take a few minutes and work out what two or three things you can do to anchor your morning and ensure you hit your 'time targets'. Perhaps you need the children moving at 7am? Or breakfast at 7am? If you're a family with a faith background, perhaps devotion time kicks in at 6.30?

Pick two or three things that must happen on time every time to keep the day on track. Make those your priority and see how things go.

HINT: We've found that having some music played at a specific time is a great signal to the children that a transition is about to occur. Pick one song that can be THE signal for brekky, or for wake-up. Play it every morning ON TIME and watch how it trains the children to respond.



Just as you did before, pick a couple of things to anchor your afternoon and evening. Hit those 'time targets' and watch how much smoother your night is.

Additionally, sit down with your children and discuss what their bedtime routine might look like if it were awesome. Perhaps after dinner there might be ten minutes of cleanup, followed by bath/shower, pj's, story, tickles, hugs, song, (prayer for religious folk), and lights out. Modify it according to your needs, and plan backwards from sleep time to help create the calm, predictable routine your children can look forward to.



Everyone has a different opinion. I'm simply going to share what we do in our home.

We have lots of children, so chores are divided into five groups of twoto-three chores. The children do each 'group' of chores for a week, and then they move to the next group for the following week.

Below is our chore-chart. Each day, the children come in from school, complete their assigned chores (sometimes with help from parents if it's too big or challenging), and write their name to show the chore is completed. We check up to ensure the chore is done to our satisfaction... and the children actually ENJOY this process!

Would a chore-chart or something similar work for your family? How can you create a routine that suits your specific needs? Feel free to adapt our routine or create your own on the reverse side.

- dnoib	Monday	Tuesday	Tuesday Wednesday Thursday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Front Room							
Washing							
Rubbish bins							
Group 2							
Toy room							
Toilets							
Toilet paper							
Group 3							
Vac. upstairs							
Dining room							
Polish shoes							
Group 4							
Vac. d.stairs							
Bag area							
Lounge							
Group 5							
Empty cars							
Bathroom							
Dishes							

									Monday
									Tuesday
									Wednesday
									Thursday
									Friday
									Saturday
									Sunday

Take home message

The take home message: Routines create predictability, and establish times for specific key activities to anchor our mornings and evenings. An effective, positive routine can help to provide a useful framework to guide us through the busiest times without overloading us with decision—making fatigue, stress and demands.