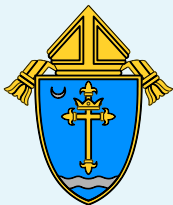




Create a Nighttime Routine:

- Adjust bed times gradually: Try introducing a bedtime that gradually moves by 15 minutes earlier each night until the goal bedtime is reached.
- Repeating the same process nightly will cue the brain and body that it's time to sleep, after a few days.
- Calming activities like reading a book, writing in a journal, or taking a bath can help your child wind down for bedtime.
- Take tech out of the bedroom: Not only can text messages wake your child up, but phones, tablets, TVs and computers may cause restless sleep and disrupt sleep cycles. Make a rule that all devices need to be turned off one hour before bed.



SAINT LOUIS
COUNSELING

Published by:
Saint Louis Counseling
School Partnership
Program
9200 Watson Rd.
Suite G101
St. Louis, MO 63126-1528
314-544-3800 phone
314-843-0552 fax
www.cfsstl.org

School Tools

September, 2018

Routine. Routine. Routine.



Summer— Loose schedules, laid back mornings and extended bedtimes—there's no doubt that a successful start to the school year involves a routine adjustment. Yes, that's right—*Routine. Routine. Routine.* Although discussing routines or even putting one into place can sound daunting—routines are simply procedures that are regularly followed. To have a routine, is to have clear expectations, consistency, and predictability. These are the cornerstones of creating more calm at home and in class.

When a child knows what to expect, their world makes more sense which in turn reduces stress and anxiety. When children know what's next, they're more capable of tackling the task at hand. When there is a consistent routine in place, it can foster independence, self confidence, and enhance a child's sense of self. A back-to-school routine provides children with the security and stability they need to thrive both at school and at home. Let's help our children by making life a little more predictable! Once you get into a groove, your family will be back in the school-year rhythm, and the easy going days of summer will be cherished memories...until next year.

SLEEP

Sleep is fundamental for healthy brain development. During the wee hours of the night so much is actually happening within the brain—we are processing the day and learning from it. A child's brain is constantly developing and creating new connections. One of the most basic things you can do to improve your child's behavior, health and well-being is to help them get the sleep they need!

The National
Sleep Foundation
suggests:

Ages 3-5
10 to 13 hours of sleep

Ages 6-13
9 to 11 hours of sleep

Ages 14+
8 to 10 hours of sleep

Daily Routine Tips

- Make **lunches** ahead of time! Meal prep at the beginning of the week, or make them the night before.
- **Pack** homework, supplies, text books, signed documents, etc. into backpacks before bed.
- Pick a cheery morning alarm or **wake up routine**; a favorite song, or a simple hug and "good morning".
- Make sure your child eats **breakfast**—even if they are not hungry—food is fuel and improves learning.
- Say **goodbye** to your child with a simple hug or wave and a positive phrase to start their day: "you've got this", "do your best today", "I hope your day is as awesome as you!"
- Plan **next day outfits** to avoid morning battles; try laying out outfits you agree on the night before.
- Delegate **chores** without the power struggle by instituting an "everyone does their part" project, and addressing a specific area of the house or task.
- Write after-school activities, chores and homework times on a **calendar** that is posted in an obvious place.
- Make **homework** decisions together—let them decide if they'd like to play outside when they get home from school and do homework after, or get homework out of the way first so their evening is free.
- Establish a specific **quiet place** for homework without distractions
- Be as available as possible to **monitor** homework progress and answer questions.
- Establish a "**no tech time**" to practice being in the present moment with family.
- As often as possible, try to **eat dinner together** as a family—connect, share, enjoy each other.