Family Routines

In an uncertain world where ‘normal life’ has changed so much, routines can provide a structure that is comforting for a child. When we are at home all the time; it’s easy to drift away from our regular routines. Here are some simple ideas to keep you on track and help manage your time at home.

## Involve children

Involving children in creating a daily routine shows them that their ideas matter and makes the routines more likely to work. Have a clear start time each day and try to stick to it. It can be challenging to keep children engaged in learning all day, so make sure you include a mixture of activities and opportunities to have fun, be active and rest as well as learn.

## Identify chores

Identify some daily chores that your child could do on their own. This will not only free up your time, but it can also give children a sense of achievement. Even very young children can help at home and it will help develop their independence and self-reliance.

Include the whole family in meal planning for the week. Allow everyone to pick a favorite meal and create a shopping list together. Shopping once a week, will cut down costs and help you stick to a budget. Encourage children to help with preparing, cooking and cleaning up after meals.

## Plan mealtimes

## Limit news times

Limit the doom and gloom, so try to stick to one news update per day. For children, try to use child friendly news sources like BBC’s Newsround –they ensure that the tone is age appropriate and consult experts on its psychological impact.

## Plan your worry time

It may sound odd but giving yourself a set time to think about your worries can help you develop control over their frequency and timing and think more clearly how to solve them. Encourage your children to talk about any worries they may have too, no matter big or small. This technique means you contain your worry to designated times, thereby freeing your mind to get on with important, interesting or fun activities.

## Manage bedtimes

Keep bedtimes consistent and gradually unwind each evening towards it. Avoid over stimulating activities in the evening, so that children can relax from their day and settle into sleep. Remember teenagers require more sleep, so allowing them to sleep in may even be beneficial!