

Creating and Maintaining Family Routines

Routines create a sense of predictability and stability for family members during difficult times. For this reason, creating and maintaining routines together as a family can contribute to building the resilience and wellbeing of your family.

Creating family routines

The following section lists some suggested steps to creating a routine for your family:

- **Step 1:** work together as a family to identify where there is a busy time of the day, were you could work together to develop a routine;
- **Step 2:** list the steps to completing the activity;
- **Step 3:** work out who does what;
- **Step 4:** identify how much time to allow each person to ;
- **Step 5:** when developing the routine try to build on what family members are good at;
- **Step 6:** consider any rules that need to be talked about such as expected behaviour; and
- **Step 7:** try to talk with other family members when developing the routine and try to make it fun.

A good point for your family to start could be to create a routine for a family activity. This could be an activity that you already do as a family or include an activity that you would like to work together with other family members to introduce.

Once you have agreed on you're the required routine, have a go at completing the following **"My Family Routine 1 Worksheet"**.

My Family Routine Worksheet 1

Time	What happens	Family member responsible
E.g. When dinner is nearly ready	E.g. Set dining table	E.g. Annabelle

Now look at developing a routine for an *unpredictable family event*.
For example: If a child has to go to hospital.

My Family Routine Worksheet 2

Time	What happens	Family member responsible
E.g. If Mum calls to say Annabelle is in hospital	E.g. Ring Grandma	E.g. Max

Maintaining family routines

Congratulations on taking the first step to creating routines for your family. Once you have introduced the routine in your family, it is really important that you work together as a family to maintain the routine.

There are a number of family routines that are always important to maintain within your family, they include:

- ensuring that special events (such as birthdays) are celebrated even when interrupted. For example, a family dinner in the cafeteria of the hospital with cake (or equivalent) if someone's birthday occurs while a child is in hospital;
- ensuring that a child in hospital is kept connected with school. Talk with the hospital social worker or nurse and your child's teacher, principal or school counsellor about the best way to do this; and
- arranging a 'plan B' for getting any child to their special activities. For example, ask a friend to do the pickup and drop off for after school sport if you're caught up in another task.

Work together as a family to ensure that even during difficult times the family works together to ensure that these routines are always maintained.

For more information on creating and maintaining routines within your family please visit www.everymind.org.au/familyresilience

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