



Daily Routines for Children With Sensory Processing Difficulties



- Keep routines/possessions in the home organized and structured. Try to include the child as much as possible in the routines.
- Be consistent with daily rules and consequences.
 - Discuss house rules, determine appropriate behavior/routines in advance.
- Keep a large calendar or schedule posted, use photos or words. Highlight the daily and weekly routine. Review the following day schedule each evening before bed.
- Make errands and transitions concrete and use pictures when possible. For children who need predictability/routines, make a photo book of places you go. When a daily schedule is disrupted, show the child the change ahead of time.
 - For appointments that are difficult try providing sensory inputs. For example, before going to the dentist try chewy foods or vibration to the mouth.
- Create specific routines for difficult times of the day (e.g. bedtime, bath time, morning self-care before school). Break the routine into small steps and post a checklist (pictures or words) for your child to follow.
- **Bedtime:** Turn off electronics in the bedroom. Try to keep your child's room dark; use heavier blankets or soft material; rock slowly and/or massage before bed. If brushing teeth is a problem, try an electric toothbrush.
- **Bath time:** Scrub with a washcloth or bath brush. Try a variety of soaps and lotions. Play on the wall with shaving cream or soap. Rub skin after a bath (deep pressure massage).
- **Mealtime:** Encourage your child to drink from a straw and provide lots of very chewy and resistive foods if tolerated. If your child has difficulty sitting through meals try having the child stand or use a weighted lap pad.
- **Meal preparation or baking:** Let your child help with mixing ingredients, rolling dough, flattening, and/or tenderize meat.
- **In the Yard:** Sensory exploration in the yard can include digging in a garden or sandbox, swimming in a pool or playing in a pool filled with beans or popcorn kernels; playing on a swing set or jungle gym.