

How to Create a Daily Schedule FOR YOUR CHILD

Children with autism, sensory processing difficulties or other special needs do well with structure. Creating a daily schedule can help increase your child's independence and participation. It tells your child what is happening next, which can make transitions easier. It also provides information about what your child needs to get done in a day. You can create a schedule in a word document, on a piece of paper, on a whiteboard or whatever medium works best for your child.

BREAK THE DAY INTO MANAGEABLE CHUNKS

Break your child's day into chunks, ranging from a half-hour to an hour. Provide enough details so your child can easily understand what is expected. Aim for 4-12 steps. Some children might need more details for their schedules. To make it manageable, you can create a schedule for the morning, afternoon and evening. The schedule might look like this: eat breakfast, clean up dishes, go upstairs, put a shirt on, etc.

BE SURE TO SCHEDULE BREAKS

Build some breaks into your child's schedule, but also add extra breaks, if needed. If you notice your child seems tired, take a break. Encourage your child to move his or her body by dancing, going outside or playing catch. Using hand-eye coordination organizes your child's brain and helps him or her focus. Just remember if your child takes a break during a task, he or she needs to finish it after the break. This keeps your child from escaping from activities they don't enjoy.

PROVIDE INCENTIVES

Make sure to include some incentives your child will find rewarding, like earning a sticker, getting a piece of candy or listening to his or her favorite song or video. This will encourage your child's participation throughout the day.

CHECK ITEMS OFF

Have your child check things off the list, as tasks are completed. This gives your child a sense of accomplishment. It also lets your child know what he or she has left to do that day.



Here is an example of a daily schedule you can use as a starting place for your child.

DAILY SCHEDULE EXAMPLE



DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00-9:00 AM	Wake Up	Get dressed, brush teeth, eat breakfast
9:00-11:00 AM	Academic Time	Online learning, reading, writing, puzzles
11:00 AM-12:00 PM	Outdoor Time	Outdoor play
12:00-1:00 PM	Eat Lunch	
1:30-2:15 PM	Fraser OT Telehealth Appointment	
2:30-3:30 PM	Quiet Time	Nap, yoga, reading, puzzles
3:30-4:00 PM	Eat a snack	
4:00-5:00 PM	Outdoor Time	Go for a walk or outdoor play
5:00-6:00 PM	Chores	Take out garbage, clean up toys, set table
6:00-7:00 PM	Eat dinner	
7:00-8:00 PM	Free Time	Read, yoga, TV show
8:00-9:00 PM	Get ready for bed	Take a bath, put on pajamas, brush teeth



DAILY SCHEDULE

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