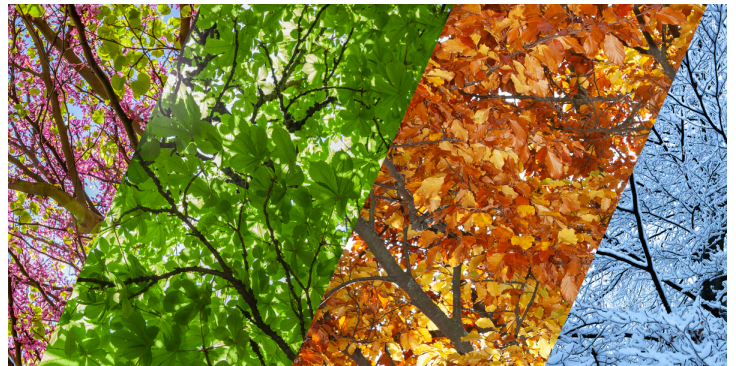


## THE IMPORTANCE OF *routines* FOR KIDS

Payton Aasved, M.Ed., LPC | The Village Family Service Center

Life is full of surprises, and finding comfort in the unknown can be challenging. Routines give children something they can count on, a sense of stability that supports their growth and helps them thrive. Environments that foster structure, consistency, and predictability support children's overall well-being and create a strong foundation for healthy growth and development. Whether it's structured mealtimes, consistent sleep schedules, or predictable morning routines, they all help children feel more confident as they navigate each day because they know what to expect.

Just as importantly, routines allow children to develop the skills necessary to regulate their emotions and respond to challenges with confidence. Frequent unpredictability within an environment may feel chaotic or overwhelming, making it more difficult for children to identify, express, and manage intense emotions. Consistent routines create a reliable framework that helps them prepare for transitions, understand expectations, and feel more in control of their experiences. This increased sense of stability can reduce stress and anxiety while creating opportunities for children to strengthen coping skills and build resilience.



Creating a consistent schedule also helps prepare children for success across multiple areas of their lives, including home and school environments. When there is a clear understanding of daily expectations and responsibilities, kids are better able to complete tasks, stay organized, and develop confidence in their abilities. Structure not only reduces uncertainty but also teaches children important skills related to time management, accountability, and independence that can support them throughout their development.

Here are some simple ways to create a consistent routine:

- Keep wake-up, mealtimes, and bedtimes as consistent as possible.
- Create simple morning and evening routines children can easily follow.
- Give advance notice before transitions to help children prepare for what's next.
- Use visual schedules or checklists for younger children.
- Stay flexible when needed, but return to familiar routines as soon as possible.

Every bedtime story and family dinner is more than just a routine; it's a part of the day children know they can count on. These small, consistent moments create lasting memories that children will carry with them for a lifetime while also supporting healthy development.

