

## Daily Routines

**Item D1: Plan and maintain a predictable daily schedule (for example, provide a posted picture schedule and review it regularly with children).**

### *Why is this important?*

A predictable schedule provides a consistent flow to the day, which gives children a sense of security (A/R). Young children feel a sense of accomplishment when they remember part of a routine, such as putting their plate in the sink after snacktime or that outdoor play comes after indoor choice time (IN). Dependable schedules help children learn to control their impulses and tolerate frustration (SR) when they can predict and prepare themselves for what comes next.

Strategies to Promote Resilience	Tips for Enhancing Protective Factors		
	IN	SR	A/R
1. Create and post written and pictorial versions of the daily schedule.	Encourage children to help create the pictorial schedule with symbols or drawings of their own, and post photos of children engaged in the routines as visual reminders.	Ask families to review the daily schedule with their child to help prepare them for their preschool day. <i>"OK, Ashton, Mommy is leaving. Where do you want to play until your friends arrive?"</i>	Ask families to share their daily schedule with you. Use this information to make children's classroom routines more home-like. <i>"Sara, I know you don't nap at home but you look at books while resting. What books would you like to look at today during our rest time?"</i>
2. Include enough time in the schedule for children to complete routines.	Have a "creation station" with a variety of paper, crayons, markers, and other art supplies that children can use independently as they wait for others to finish a routine.	Invite children to finish what they are working on. <i>"Sam, if you'd like to continue working on your sculpture, you can do that while your friends move to story time."</i>	Stay close by and offer assistance to help keep a routine moving at a manageable pace. <i>"Laura, we have a few minutes left before your dad comes to pick you up. I notice that you are struggling with your bag. Would you like some help?"</i>

Sample pages from ~ Promoting Resilience in Preschools: A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals

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3. Plan and prepare materials and set up for routines in advance.	Include children in helping prepare for the next event. For example, ask children to sort, measure, count, or pass out things to classmates. <i>"Giana, will you please give each person at your table one box of raisins for snack?"</i>	Play games to engage children while they are waiting. For example, introduce a special handshake, ask a question everyone can answer like, "What is your favorite fruit?" or sing songs such as <i>"Where is Michael? Where is Michael? Here I am! Here I am!"</i>	Pair children together to prepare for a routine. <i>"Angelo and Gilbert, please work together to put out the napkins and cups."</i>
4. Involve children in planning changes to the daily schedule.	Invite children to replace one activity card with another on the daily schedule board during morning circle time. <i>"Miranda, please replace the picture on the schedule for music with this picture of Marcelo's family. They are coming to read a special story today."</i>	Use a signal to indicate a change in the regular schedule. For example, as you review the schedule at meeting time, ring a gentle bell and tell the children, <i>"When you hear this sound later today, it will mean it is time for Ms. Kim's group to come to the discovery center to make terrariums."</i>	Give personal reminders to individual children before the change will occur. <i>"Hailey, remember this morning when I told you we are walking to the pet store today instead of playing outdoors? This is the route we will take."</i>

**Tell me more . . .**

In effective early child care and education settings, the daily schedule is planned and relatively consistent from day to day. Teachers set up the environment so that children begin to think ahead, to plan their activities, and to think about and use strategies to solve social problems.<sup>1</sup> When children anticipate events and learn behavioral and social patterns in their early child care and education settings, it supports and enhances their development.<sup>2</sup>

When transitions and routines are planned in advance, teachers are better prepared to effectively guide the learning process,<sup>3</sup> thus allowing the day to run more smoothly and children to feel more secure and at ease.



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**Item D2: Adjust the schedule as needed to respond to children and circumstances (for example, allow more time to explore something in nature that the children discovered on a walk).**

**Why is this important?**

Change and unexpected events are part of our lives. Announcing that something new or different is happening gives children time to prepare for and get used to the change (A/R). When adults talk about change and allow for flexibility in the daily routine, they help model for children how to adapt successfully (IN). Children are less likely to resist change when they understand why it is necessary and when it is coming (SR).

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	IN	SR	A/R
1. Update your routines and transition techniques based on children's changing abilities and interests.	Observe and talk with children regularly about their interests and abilities. Use this information to adjust and add to your daily schedule to support their continued growth. <i>"The weather has been much warmer, and I notice everyone enjoys being outdoors. I have added another outdoor playtime to our schedule. Let's take a look."</i>	Offer alternative activities for children who no longer nap. <i>"Alex, you can do one of the table activities if you are done resting."</i>	Respond to children's personal schedule needs. For example, for a child who is potty training, allow for frequent trips to the bathroom, or for a child who comes to school sleepy, create a place for resting in the classroom.
2. Use unexpected events as opportunities to learn how to handle change.	When a schedule changes due to an unforeseen event, ask children to help you problem-solve how to change the schedule. <i>"It's raining outside and it is time to take our walk. What do you think we might do instead?"</i>	Model for children how you, as an adult, adjust to change or unexpected happenings, sharing related words and phrases such as <i>bounce back, go with the flow, change, and adapt</i> . <i>"On my way in today, my car got a flat tire! I knew I would need to adjust and go with the flow. I took some deep breaths and called a friend who helped me change my tire and get to school today!"</i>	Send home a short note, photograph, or email, or make a brief phone call to share a special moment in a child's day. <i>"Mrs. Halpern, Justina discovered a patch of buttercups and held one under each of our chins to see if it reflected yellow. We enjoyed learning from her!"</i>

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3. Weave family traditions and activities into daily routines.	Encourage children to share what they do during routines at home. <i>“Lin, I’ve heard you and your dad share a good morning poem every day. Could you and I say it together to the whole group?”</i>	Talk with children about ways to combine classroom and home routines. <i>“Julia, we do three things to get ready for rest time in the classroom. First, we find our cots, then we get our blankets from our cubbies, and then we lie down and get cozy. Your mom told me you also like to hold your bear. I think he is in your cubby.”</i>	Invite families to share foods they cook together, bedtime rituals, and more. Infuse these routines into the day. <i>“Antoine’s family sent in some food for us to prepare together today.”</i>
4. Conduct transitions in small groups.	Invite children to choose a game to play as they transition from one activity to the next. For example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have children form a line, then pass a ball overhead or under their legs to each other down the line.</li> <li>• play “telephone,” where you whisper a word to the first child who whispers it to the next one, and so on, until you see if the last word and first word match.</li> </ul>	Have a leader or “engine” and a “caboose” for each small group as children transition from one activity to the next. For children not at the front or back, provide special roles such as carrying materials, counting to make sure everyone is together, or reminding peers to use quiet voices if necessary.	Match up children with a “transition buddy.” Buddies might help each other finish cleaning up an interest area, zip their coats before heading outside, find a mitten lost on the playground, or hold hands during the walk back to the classroom.

**Tell me more . . .**

Children develop self-control when they practice adapting and adjusting to classroom routines and schedules.<sup>4</sup> Research shows that children learn more in classroom environments that include intentional instruction, sensitive and warm interactions with adults, responsive feedback, and child-directed activities.<sup>5</sup>



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