



The TOOLBOX

TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS



ROUTINES AND FAMILY ORGANIZATION: A WINNING COMBINATION!

TOOL: Prevention | Intervention

TARGET AUDIENCE: Families

TOOL INTENDED FOR: Parents

DESIGN

Caroline Boudreau
Evelyne Touchette
Nancy Gaudreau



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TOOL: Prevention | Intervention

TOOL INTENDED FOR: Parents

– Details: All caregivers (e.g. parents) and children.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

– Families.

NEEDS AND BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS

NEEDS:

– Routines meet children's safety and rhythmicity needs.

BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS:

- Expression of “externalized” behavioural difficulties.
- Expression of “internalized” behavioural difficulties.

SPECIFIC GOALS

GOAL 1: To meet the children's safety and rhythmicity needs during the day.

GOAL 2: To reduce “externalized” behavioural difficulties during the day.

GOAL 3: To reduce “internalized” behavioural difficulties during the day.

DESIGN

CAROLINE BOUDREAU (Master's Student in Psychoeducation) – Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

EVELYNE TOUCHETTE (Psychoeducation Professor) – Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Researcher for the Centre de recherche universitaire sur les jeunes et les familles (CRUJeF), Researcher for the Groupe de recherche en inadéquation psychosociale (GRIP) and member of the Comité québécois pour les jeunes en difficulté de comportement (CQJDC)

NANCY GAUDREAU (Education Professor) – Université Laval and member of the Comité québécois pour les jeunes en difficulté de comportement (CQJDC)

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Is your family life lacking reference points? Is your child more unruly? Does your child feel sad and doesn't feel like doing anything?

When stress is more prevalent in everyday life, it's quite normal to lose your bearings and, consequently, the family organization becomes more chaotic. This vicious cycle can lead to a lack of consistency in children's routines. It's therefore normal for children to feel disorganized. This disorganization, in turn, may express itself in various forms, particularly through the occurrence of behavioural difficulties during the day. They are defined as reactional behaviours adopted by children in a transient way when confronted with environmental stimuli. Behavioural difficulties fall into two categories. The first category refers to the expression of **"externalized" behavioural difficulties**, which, for example, result in the children's refusal to comply with instructions, aggressive behaviour (bullying, destruction) and lying. The second category refers to **"internalized" behavioural difficulties**, such as abnormal signs of passivity, sadness, dependence and fatigue, and the use of withdrawal and avoidance strategies by children.

ESTABLISHING A ROUTINE IS A GOOD WAY TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN FEEL SAFE

Establishing a routine for children is a protective factor, since it gives them a sense of security. The routine provides reference points that reassure children regarding the organization of their day, which then becomes predictable. In addition, it allows them to develop their autonomy and acquire good habits. Establishing a daily routine is of particular importance when the family organization is occasionally disrupted (telework, daycare availability, the stress of adapting to a new way of life, etc.). In addition, a predictable, active, balanced and consistent schedule will promote you and your children's well-being.

To reduce children's "externalized" and "internalized" behavioural difficulties and improve relationships in the entire family, the following are some helpful tips to consider when establishing your daily routine:

FOLLOWING SOME SIMPLE TIPS CAN HELP ESTABLISH A ROUTINE AND IMPROVE FAMILY ORGANIZATION:

1. First agree with your partner (if applicable) on how the day will be organized (routine content, who does what, sharing tasks and time with the children, etc.).
2. Make sure your routine is tailored to your family's needs; they may be different from your neighbour's. For example, you may prefer that your children not go outside after dinner, while other families may do 15 minutes of outdoor activities before starting the bedtime routine (bathing, brushing teeth, stories, etc.). You are in the best position to determine the order of the activities in your routine.

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3. The predictability of a routine also refers to the time and consistency day after day. Stick to the same time every day for bedtime, waking up and mealtimes. When you are satisfied with the content of your daily routine, be sure to maintain the same schedule every day.
4. The aspects included in the routine should be tailored to the children's age. To determine whether you should include a nap in your children's daytime routine, check out the "ABCs of Sleep" tool.
5. Variety is also an important aspect for an effective and optimal routine. Allow time for both physical/active activities and quieter or relaxing activities.
6. Also limit your children's screen time. The Canadian Paediatric Society recommends these criteria: no screens for children under two years old; one hour per day for children between two and four years old; and less than two hours per day for children five years old and over. In a context where sources of stress are increasing within the family organization, while resources to help them are not always available, flexibility and leniency seem unavoidable. It's recommended that families agree on screen use rules and ensure that children understand these rules in order to avoid arguments and conflict. Parents can determine the length of screen time and permitted use on weekdays and weekends.
7. To be able to play alone and independently at certain times of the day, your children need time when they have your full attention. **It's advisable to put down your phone and not look at it during this special time. It's a significant distraction that doesn't allow you to be 100% with your children.** Give them quality time when you won't do anything else but play with them. Allow about two 20-minute periods during the day (one in the morning and one in the afternoon). They need that time in order to be more self-reliant afterwards. Our expectations should vary depending on the children's age.
8. Once you have established the routine, take the time to explain it to your children in order to encourage their cooperation. Simple, clear guidelines should be prioritized in order to do so. You could create a schedule for the day using pictograms displayed on their bedroom door or on the refrigerator (see printable tools). With older children, discuss expectations, determine the routine and share tasks during quiet time (e.g. dinnertime). In order to be accessible to all family members, a task-sharing chart can be displayed in the kitchen.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Establishing a routine (printable tools)

<https://communoutils.com/routine/>

<https://agirtot.org/media/489669/routinematin-affiche.pdf>

<https://agirtot.org/media/489659/matin-ade couper.pdf>

<https://agirtot.org/media/489662/routinerepas-affiche.pdf>

<https://agirtot.org/media/489661/repas-ade couper.pdf>

<https://agirtot.org/media/489664/routine-dodo-affiche.pdf>

<https://agirtot.org/media/489663/dodo-ade couper.pdf>

<https://agirtot.org/media/490095/afficheroutine-1.pdf>

<https://agirtot.org/media/490096/ade couper-1.pdf>

Calm activities

<https://coloriage.info/>

Short meditation sessions

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqSk7Cu0HAF54zStfBWR2jGkGLco4dFTN>

<http://www.hellokids.com/>

Physical activities (1-16 years old)

<https://activeforlife.com/activities/>

<http://wixx.ca/>

Screen time routines

<https://theconversation.com/temps-decran-des-enfants-cessons-de-culpabiliser-138892>

