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Hello STXSA Parents!

We hope you enjoy this issue of STXSA's *Parent Corner*, our monthly newsletter with an article written specifically for our beloved Suzuki parents to help nurture and support you, the parent, as your child's first and most important teacher.

Happy Reading!

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## Parent Corner Routines

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My toddler loves having routines. She anticipates the events in her routines from the time she gets up to the time she goes to bed. What is more, she will remind me if I forget a part of her routine. Why do most children thrive with an effective routine? Routines eliminate the stress of the unknown and offers predictability and structure—for both adults and children!

### **The Difference Between Routines and Schedules**

It should be noted that a routine is NOT the same as a schedule.

*For example, my daughter's schedule is to be ready for bedtime by 10:30.*

**Routines** are the steps needed to complete each part of the schedule.<sup>2</sup>

*My daughter's bedtime routines include eating a snack, listening to music, doing a couple of puzzles, changing into pajamas, brushing teeth, and reading a couple of books with me in her room.*

Having effective routines help children navigate their schedules.

### **How to Create Effective Routines**

The goal of routines is to provide structure. Effective routines provide predictability, which in turn gives a sense of organization and control. It can build healthy habits, support development of skills, and encourage responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

There are several steps to take while creating routines.

- Identify important daily activities and decide the order they should happen.
- Identify key times of the day when the activities should occur and make a routine.
- Be sure the routine works for the whole family.<sup>3</sup>

When I was a classroom teacher, routines were a MAJOR part of our classroom. I found the following to help in creating routines:

- **Don't get bogged down in details.** While working on implementing routines, focus on setting major areas of a routine first. When those parts of the routine become more familiar to your child, add more details to the routine.

*For example, when starting out with lunch routines, the major areas of my daughter's routines included washing hands with me and sitting in her high chair. As she grew older, her routines included details such as making choices about what she wants to eat, washing hands, sitting in her chair, and choosing a book to listen to while eating.*

- **Be consistent.** It takes time to build a routine. If you are constantly changing the routine, your child does not have time to internalize it. Give the routine time to see if it will work out or not for you and your child. If it is

- **Enforce consequences.** The consequences of the routines, both positive and negative, need to be consistent as well.
- **Give Choices!** Routines should not dictate every single action that your child must do. Instead, allow opportunities for your child to make their own decisions, within their routines.

*For example, my daughter has playtime after breakfast. What toys she decides to play with is up to her.*

## Routines and Music

Having effective routines can actually create an environment in which a child feels safe to explore, grow in, and enjoy their music! The following are just a few ideas on how to create routines that support your child and his or her music.

- Make sure your child's routine includes ample opportunities to work on their music.
- Establish a routine in which your child can review what they would like to address in their next lesson. (i.e., questions that they had while practicing, upcoming orchestra assignments, etc.)
- Ask your child's music teacher for a set routine within music lessons for your child.
- Create routines for arriving and departure from lessons, orchestra, or events. (i.e, unpack, rosin bow, tune, clean instrument, etc.)

For more information on routines and how to implement them, please see our Check it Out section below!

1. Raisingchildren.net.au. (2023). *Family routines: how and why they work*. <https://raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups/family-life/routines-rituals-relationships/family-routines#:~:text=Routines%20help%20children%20feel%20safe,well%20planned%2C%20regular%20and%20predictable.>

2. Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. (2022 June 10). *The Importance of Schedules and Routines*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/importance-schedules-routines#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20difference%20between,each%20part%20of%20the%20schedule.>

3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019, November 5). *Creating Structure and Rules*. <https://www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/toddlersandpreschoolers/structure/quicktips.html>

Do you have ideas for topics for future issues of Parent Corner? We would love to hear them! E-mail your ideas to [info@stxsa.org](mailto:info@stxsa.org) with the subject line "Parent Corner."

Send us your Parent Corner idea!

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**CHECK IT OUT!**

[Head Start: The Importance of Schedules and Routines.](#)

[RaisingChildren.net.au Family Routines: how and why they work](#)

[CDC: Creating Structure and Rules](#)

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