



# YOUNG SAFETY NET E-ZINE

Activities

Advice

# rolling with routines!

Information

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## Keeping children & young people safe



# WHAT ARE 'ROUTINES'?

**ROUTINES ARE WHEN YOU DO CERTAIN THINGS AND YOU DO THEM FREQUENTLY.**

You'll find routines at things like school, where you have your lessons at the same time each week. Maybe you have a routine with a friend where you meet up every Wednesday afternoon. Some of you might have routines at home, like doing things in a certain order before bed or when you wake up in the morning.

## WHY IS IT GOOD TO HAVE ROUTINES?

Routines can help us feel calmer. Sometimes when we feel like there's lots of things out of our control then we can feel overwhelmed and this makes us upset and worried. Having a routine in place means that you can have some control over something and this often makes us feel better. This all goes back to **choice, control, time limit** - which we've talked about in other e-zine issues. A routine is there to give you **choice** in what you put into it, **control** over something you're finding difficult and **time** limits of how long the routine is and when you do it.

Sometimes when we've had very busy days and have got lots going on, we can forget to do things! "Having a routine helps to make sure that we do all the important stuff - like packing our school bag in the morning with the right things, or brushing our teeth before bed."



## THINGS TO REMEMBER...



### TRY IT AND SEE:

We've given you some ideas in this e-zine but everyone has different needs! The best thing to do is have a go at making a routine, trying it out and see if it works for you. You need to try it for a good couple of weeks or so to get used to it before deciding whether you need to change certain bits.

### THINGS CHANGE:

Don't get upset at yourself if you are doing a routine and you can't stick to it! Sometimes routines that worked before don't work at other times. Maybe because something unexpected comes up or you want to do something different one day. That's completely normal. If you have to change it - that's fine! The routines are there to help if you need it.



### TALK TO SOMEONE:



Asking trusted adults or friends to help you create routines, or even follow routines with you, is a great way to stay motivated. Not all routines will fit everyone, but it can help to give you an idea of what works for you. If you're after advice, asking people what they do might help as they can point you in the direction of something that they found useful.

# Banishing bed time blues

Talking to lots of children, young people and parents we've found that many of you are finding bed time difficult. There's problems with going to sleep, with worrying a lot before bed and finding waking up in the morning difficult too.

Read what our Young Reporters have to say about bed time....

## Bella

**When you feel worried about anything, does it affect your sleep?** B: It's harder to go to sleep because you have nothing else to think about.

**What time do you go to bed? What do you usually do in the hour before bed?** B: 9pm, I watch TV with my family, prepare for the next day and read.

**Is there anything that you do that you think helps with your sleep?** B: I read to take my mind off things.

## Jess

**When you feel worried about anything, does it affect your sleep?** J: Yes it's harder to get to sleep and wake up in the morning!

**What time do you go to bed? What do you usually do in the hour before bed?** J: I get ready about 8.30 and read with my mum for about half an hour. It takes me a long time to relax enough but we always read every night. I'm reading 'Geek Girl' at the moment.

**Is there anything that you do that you think helps with your sleep?** J: I take tablets to help me sleep because of my autism. I can't get to sleep otherwise. I could still be awake at midnight!

**Is there anything you don't do/avoid because you think it would make going to sleep more difficult?** J: I think sugary things can keep you awake and playing games too late.

## Tyler-Mae

**When you feel worried about anything, does it affect your sleep?** TM: Only if it's about scary things.

**What time do you go to bed? What do you usually do in the hour before bed?** TM: 8ish, I usually watch TV.

**Is there anything that you do that you think helps with your sleep?** TM: Reading a story.

**Is there anything you don't do/avoid because you think it would make going to sleep more difficult?** TM: We make sure there's no screen time before bed.

## Jacob

**When you feel worried about anything, does it affect your sleep?** J: It's harder to wake up because the problem is still there.

**What time do you go to bed? What do you usually do in the hour before bed?** J: I go to bed at 9pm and before that I watch TV with my family and get ready for the next day.

**Is there anything that you do that you think helps with your sleep?** J: I try and clear my mind by lying quietly and try not to think about stuff.

## Bedtime top tips....

■ Did you know that the 'blue light' that comes from screens makes it harder for the body to know that it's time to go to sleep? Try reading or doing this positive picture activity to help distract you from worrying instead of reaching for your phone or tablet.

■ Lots of our Young Reporters said reading really helped them: if you enjoy stories but find reading a struggle, maybe you could ask a parent if they'll read you a story before bed, or you could listen to an audiobook.

■ It's important to share your worries, but doing so right before bed can make it harder to go to sleep. Try sharing your worries with a trusted adult earlier in the day so you can talk about them and have enough time to relax and let the worry go. If those worries pop into your head at bedtime, notice them but just say night night, and blow them away into the night sky. Then you can focus on breathing yourself to sleep.

■ Life has been a bit topsy-turvy of late being at home, doing school work in your bedroom, all over the house... our school and home life has blurred together! Maybe this has meant your bedroom and your bed no longer feels like the safe comforting space it should be, maybe you've started to associate it with school work and stress, so now is the time to reclaim your space!



# POSITIVE PICTURE DAILY DIARY

A Positive Picture Daily Diary is where we draw four pictures of four happy things we have done with our day. This is a way of calming and winding down before bedtime. It is a way of creating a journal of all the happy things we have done that we can look back on in the future.



## Instructions:

- All you will need is an A4 sheet of paper, fold this into four and draw a line on the creases to create a grid.
- In each box, choose a topic to draw - maybe something you found funny, or something that made you feel good.
- Then draw your picture! You can keep all your pieces of paper somewhere special to look back on or complete them in their own notebook.

A Picture of me and my pet...



Something nice I did for someone...



Something that made me smile



I was excited on my birthday!



Me and my best friend!

Here are some suggestions for your box headings:

- Something nice I did for someone
- Something nice I did for myself
- Something that made me laugh
- Something that made me smile
- Something that made me excited
- Something nice I had to eat
- Something I am excited for
- Something good that happened at school
- Something good that happened at home
- Something I learnt today
- Something nice someone did for me
- A drawing of me and my pet
- A drawing of me and my family
- A drawing of me and my friends

# Stressed out before school!

Lots of us have found the return to school pretty tough; having a 'before school' routine can be really helpful in easing us into the day.... Here's what our young reporters said...



**Jacob** ★★

**What is your 'before school' routine/what do you do to get ready?**

J: I pack my bag, have breakfast and brush my teeth.

**What would make your life easier when getting ready for school?**

J: I could be more organised!

**Jess** ★★

**What is your 'before school' routine/what do you do to get ready?**

J: Get up, have breakfast then get ready; brush my teeth and hair. If I have time I watch a couple of videos before I go.

**What makes your life easier when getting ready for school?**

J: Having time to watch something before I go so I don't feel rushed.

**tyler mae** ★★

**What is your 'before school' routine/what do you do to get ready?**

TM: I get up at 6.30-7ish and watch TV, have breakfast and get ready.

**What makes your life easier when getting ready for school?**

TM: TV helps because it distracts me.

## Top tips for making a 'before school' routine:

- ★ **If you're feeling rushed in the morning**, is there something you could do the night before instead? It's important to have all the things you need for school, so pack your bag the evening before. That way all you need to do is remember your lunch! Try not to pack your bag too close to bedtime because this might make you think about school when you don't want to.
- ★ **If you feel worried or anxious about school**, try adding something you like doing into your before school routine. This will help distract you and put you in a positive mood.
- ★ **Make sure you leave enough time to brush those teeth for long enough!** Hands up, who's guilty of just giving them a super quick mini scrub?! You need to be brushing your teeth for 2 whole minutes! Put on a song to help pass the time and make it more fun.
- ★ **Sometimes when we feel worried or when we're in a rush**, it's tempting to skip breakfast. Breakfast is a really important meal and gives you the boost you need to concentrate until lunchtime, so make sure you set aside some time to sit down and have something before you leave the house.

# Worry box or worry monster

Earlier, we mentioned going through worries with a trusted adult. Just before bed isn't a good time - it can make it harder to sleep and right before school might be difficult if your trusted adult is someone at home, because it might make you feel extra worried before school.

Choose a time earlier in the day and after school to open up your worry box in your mind and allow yourself a short amount of time to sort through the worries.

This means talk with a trusted adult about them, think about them, sort them into a list of important to least important. Are some of them no longer worries? Feel free to bin them - that's one less to worry about! Then after your agreed amount of time close the box and know that you have dealt with your worries for today.

It might be helpful to have a real life worry box that you can post your worries into so that they can be talked and sorted through at the best time... or how about a worry monster?!

## Make your worry monster....

1. Recycle a small container

2. Use coloured paper to stick around the container to create a monster body/head.

3. Cut out arms/legs/funny hair to stick to your monster.

4. Use googly eyes and pens to bring your monster to life!

5. You're ready to use the Worry Monster! Write down worries on strips of paper and feed them to the worry monster whenever you need to.



**WIN!!!**  
**A Safety**  
**Net goody**  
**bag**

If you've made a worry monster and would like to share your creation - please email a picture to [ruth.davey@safety-net.org.uk](mailto:ruth.davey@safety-net.org.uk) to win a Safety Net goody bag!

# EXTRA HELP

If you are feeling worried during this time, know that you have the right to speak to someone about it. Your worry is not too big or too small to talk about.

**Childline** has a section of their website called Ask Sam, where you can send anonymous letters asking for specific advice. There is already a good amount of information on the Ask Sam page, to help with any questions you might have about creating routines to help with school, sleep, or everyday life. This can be found at [www.childline.org/get-support/ask-sam](http://www.childline.org/get-support/ask-sam).

**Think Ninja** has techniques for beating stress, dealing with negative thoughts, coping with difficult feelings, and how to relax and improve sleep. Aimed for 10-18 year olds. Download from the Apple store or Google Play Store.

**Smiling Mind** is a free app designed to teach mindfulness for all ages. There are great sections on a 'mindful return to school' and creating healthy sleep routines. It uses guided meditations to talk you through coping methods that can be practiced when you feel overwhelmed. The app can be downloaded on the Apple Store or Google Play Store.

**MyLife Meditation** by Stop. Breathe. Think is a meditation app that helps you unlock your inner quiet place. It recommends you activities depending on how you are feeling when you use the app, including guided meditations and mindfulness activities. The app's goal is to provide you with the tools to develop positive mind habits, that fit into your schedule and environment. It can be downloaded for free from the Apple Store or Play Store.

**WE WANT YOU!** Would you like to be involved with our e-zine? To share your experiences or create photo content? You can become one of our Young Reporters and receive a **Little Young Reporters pack** in the post! To volunteer, please email [ruth.davey@safety-net.org.uk](mailto:ruth.davey@safety-net.org.uk)

★ This issue of our Young Safety Net E-zine wouldn't have been possible without contributions from Jess, Bella, Jacob and Tyler-Mae who have shared their experiences of bed time and school routines.

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