



Ready4K

# Routines ROCK!



*Tips for Building a  
Just-Right Routine*

Creating daily routines is powerful. Routines help kids know what to expect and what is expected of them. This helps kids feel more comfortable, secure, and confident. Routines also build independence and responsibility.

Creating the right get ready for school routine can make everyone's lives easier. What's the right routine for your family?

The right routine is:

- Simple
- Easy to follow
- Repeatable



Here are some tips and guiding questions you might use as you discover your families' get ready for school routine.

# What's Our Evening Routine?

*How much sleep does my child need?*

When kids are well-rested, they have an easier time coping with the demands of school. If possible,



**set a bedtime** on school nights that will allow for your child to get enough sleep.

**Choose a wake-up time** that gives your child enough time to get ready without having to rush.

Children ages 3-5 need anywhere from 10-13 hours of sleep per night. Older children ages 6-13 need about 9-11 hours of sleep per night. Young kids might need a parent to wake them up, while older kids can start to set their own alarm.

## *What can I get ready in advance?*

Anything that you or your child can get ready the night before can lead to a less hectic morning.



- Try **packing up backpacks and bags** with everything that is needed for the next day. This gives everyone a chance to double check that papers are signed and homework is done.



- Getting dressed in the morning can be easier if kids **pick out clothes** and set them out the night before. For younger kids, invite them to choose the clothes they're going to wear and place them in a bag. Call it the "tomorrow bag" and place it by their bed. If your child is ready for more responsibility, put them in charge of **checking the weather** and giving the family a weather report.

# *What do I need to remember for tomorrow?*

Being a parent or caregiver means your day is full and your life is busy. Often as the day winds down, your brain might ramp up and start thinking about all you need to do tomorrow.

**Making a reminder list** of anything you need to remember to do the following day can make for a calm evening. It'll also make for a less hectic morning.



# What's Our Morning Routine?

## *What's first?*

The first part of any morning routine is to **rise, shine, and hop out of bed!**

If your child uses an alarm clock, put it in a place in which they have to get out of bed to turn it off. Help younger kids feel awake by challenging them to walk to the bathroom like their favorite animal.

Doing a silly stretch together can help, too.



## What does my child need to do to get ready?

In every family, there is a list of things kids need to do to **get ready for school**.

What's on the list depends on the family!

Typically, a morning get-ready routine might include things like:



using the bathroom



getting dressed



making the bed



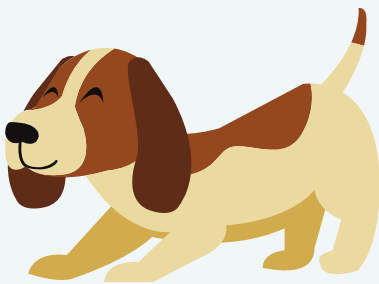
brushing teeth



putting on shoes & socks



packing a backpack



Some kids might need to do morning chores like feeding or walking a pet or taking out the garbage. Once you figure out what your child needs to do for their get-ready routine, write it down. Post it in a place where they can see it. For kids who are learning to read, add pictures to help them keep track of the routine.

## *How do we say good-bye?*

Whether your child walks to school, takes a bus, or is driven, the transition from home to school can be challenging.

**Create a good-bye ritual** to support your child. Pausing for a moment to give your child extra love and attention during goodbyes can make things easier. You can try something like a silly handshake and a hug or extra kisses and whispering “I love you.”

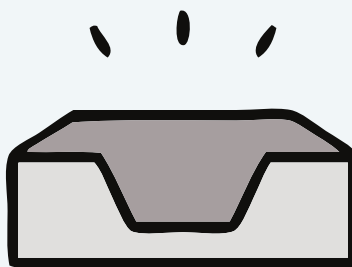




# What's Our After-School Routine?

*What does my child need to do when they get home?*

Depending on the day, your child might come directly home from school or head to an afterschool program instead. No matter what time your child comes home, building the habit of **unpacking backpacks and organizing papers** right away can help the evening go more smoothly. Give your child a special spot to put their work and any papers they have brought home. It can be something as simple as a decorated cardboard box.



Kids are expected to do a lot during the school day. All of the learning, listening, working together, and following directions requires plenty of energy and focus from kids. Setting aside 10-20 minutes for your child to **have some unwind time** can help them recharge. It'll help them get ready to take on more structured things like homework or chores.



## *Families, love this resource?*

Ask your school to [connect with Ready4K](#) so that you can receive tips three times a week.

## *Educators, want to give your families more?*

All Head Start programs and many schools and community organizations qualify for the [Ready4K equity grant](#).

Empower parents and caregivers with easy, evidence-based family engagement by text.

