

The Healthy Mentality

A mental health newsletter courtesy
of North Central West Virginia Community Action

August 2018

Getting Into The Routine

Something happens during those summer months when school is out; we start staying outside longer, getting to bed a little later, and maybe hitting our snooze button one to many times in the morning. During those summer months, it is hard to stay on a routine. However, those bedtime and morning routines are very important for our little ones. According to the CDC, “Consistent routines and rules help create order and structure your day. Things go more smoothly when you and your child know what to expect.” So, now it is back to routine time. Here are some tips to help you get back or start on a morning and/or bedtime routine.



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-Use “First” and “Then” statements: “First” and “Then” statements are a way we can provide children with what is going to happen. For example, when informing you child about the bedtime routine, you might say, “**First** we will change into our pajamas. **Then** we will pick a book. **Then** we can lay in bed.”

-Use a visual schedule: A visual schedule is a schedule with pictures of what you are planning to do. For example, a short morning routine schedule could include a picture of your child getting dressed for school, eating breakfast and then getting in the car. As your child completes each activity or picture, your child can cover up the picture or move it to symbolize they completed the task. Always praise with something like, “Great job getting dressed” when a task is completed.

My Bedtime Schedule	
1 <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the bathroom.	6 <input type="checkbox"/> Get into bed.
2 <input type="checkbox"/> Wash hands.	7 <input type="checkbox"/> Read a story.
3 <input type="checkbox"/> Brush teeth.	8 <input type="checkbox"/> Good night hugs and kisses.
4 <input type="checkbox"/> Wash face.	9 <input type="checkbox"/> Turn off light.
5 <input type="checkbox"/> Put on pajamas.	10 <input type="checkbox"/> Go to sleep.

-Use choices: 2 or 3 choices can sometimes help a child have control over the routine and decrease challenging behaviors. A choice could be as small as which shirt to wear (“the red one or the blue one”) to how they want to walk to the car (“do you want to skip or hop”).

For more information on bedtime and morning routines, please see

- http://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/life_easier_bedtime%20and%20tipcard.pdf
- http://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_routines_morning.pdf
- http://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_routines_bedtime.pdf

Addiction: A very common word nowadays. But what does it mean? The following information is from “Easy-to-Read-Drug Facts” by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.



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What is Addiction?

When people who use drugs can't stop taking a drug even if they want to, it's called addiction. The urge is too strong to control, even if you know the drug is causing harm. When people start taking drugs, they don't plan to get addicted. They like how the drug makes them feel. They believe they can control how much and how often they take the drug. However, drugs change the brain. Those who use drugs start to need the drug just to feel normal. That is addiction, and it can quickly take over a person's life. Addiction can become more important than the need to eat or sleep. The urge to get and use the drug can fill every moment of a person's life. The addiction replaces all the things the person used to enjoy. A person who is addicted might do almost anything—lying, stealing, or hurting people—to keep taking the drug. This could get the person arrested.

Addiction is a brain disease.

- Drugs change how the brain works.
- These brain changes can last for a long time.
- They can cause problems like mood swings, memory loss, even trouble thinking and making decisions.

Addiction is a disease, just as diabetes and cancer are diseases. Addiction is not simply a weakness. People from all backgrounds, rich or poor, can get an addiction. Addiction can happen at any age, but it usually starts when a person is young.

For the complete “Easy-to-Read Drug Facts” handout please go to :

https://easyread.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/EasyToRead_WhatIsAddiction_FINAL_012017.pdf

Reading is FundaMENTAL:

Books can be a great way to connect with your child while learning valuable life skills. This month's suggestion is:

How Do Dinosaurs Go To School? By Jane Yolen and Mark Teague



How Do Dinosaurs Go To School? by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague is a fun book to read as you and your little one adjust to the beginning of the school year. This book provides a playful way to start talking about rules at school. While you read this with your child, talk about the things that Dinosaur is doing and ask, “What do you think Dinosaur should be doing?” Provide an opportunity for you child to discover how they might act at school. This book can also lead to a great classroom activity of making up the classroom rules that branch out from our ECPBIS expectations: Be Respectful and Be Safe.