



Creating Routines

Use of routines to guide daily activities (bed or nap times, meal times, getting ready for the day, what children should do when they arrive home from school, etc.) helps promote a sense of safety and security. Routine charts can be a helpful way to do this. Making these charts into a visual guide for children to follow helps them be more independent in following routines. By involving children in the process of creating routine charts, caregivers help them feel capable and important. For example, ask them to brainstorm everything they need to do to get ready in the morning, and then ask them to put the list in the order in which it should be done. Add to the list anything they may have forgotten, and help them arrange it in the right order if necessary.

Adding photos of children doing each step can be a fun activity to do together, and helps cue children who can't read. Allowing the routine charts to be the boss can also cut down on the need for nagging. Instead a caregiver can ask, "What's next on your routine chart?"

Thinking for themselves about what comes next helps strengthen children's belief in how capable they are and promotes problem solving skills. More ideas for creating routine charts can be found in "Tips and Ideas for Making Visuals" in this toolkit's *Transitions* section.

