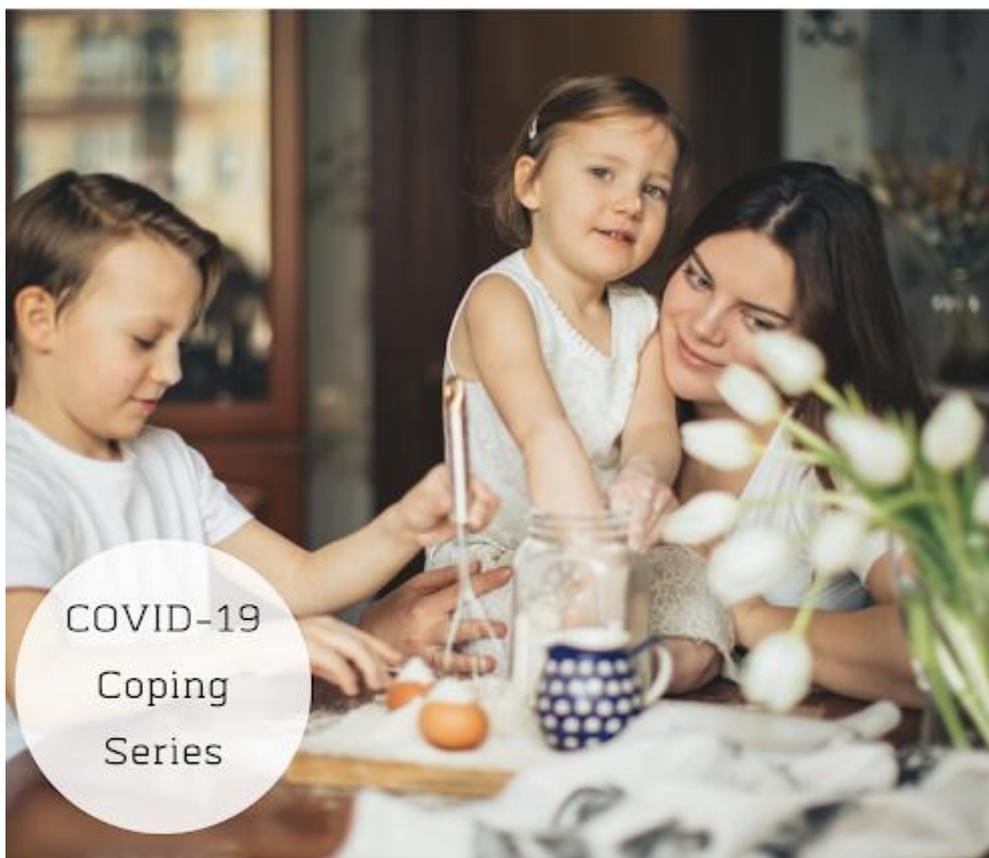


KEEPING A ROUTINE WHEN THE KIDS ARE HOME: COVID-19 COPING SERIES

Keeping a
ROUTINE
when the kids are home.



kidlutions.com

Why Routines Matter: Safety Above All

The number one thing our brains crave is safety: Safety above all.

And when the world around us seems chaotic, when the guidance and rules on what we should do to stay healthy change by the hour and when much of our normal day-to-day life has come to a screeching halt, a routine can provide the structure we need to give us some sense of normalcy. With that in mind, daily routines can be downright imperative.

DAILY ROUTINE

Daily routines are imperative.

Rhythm and Predictability

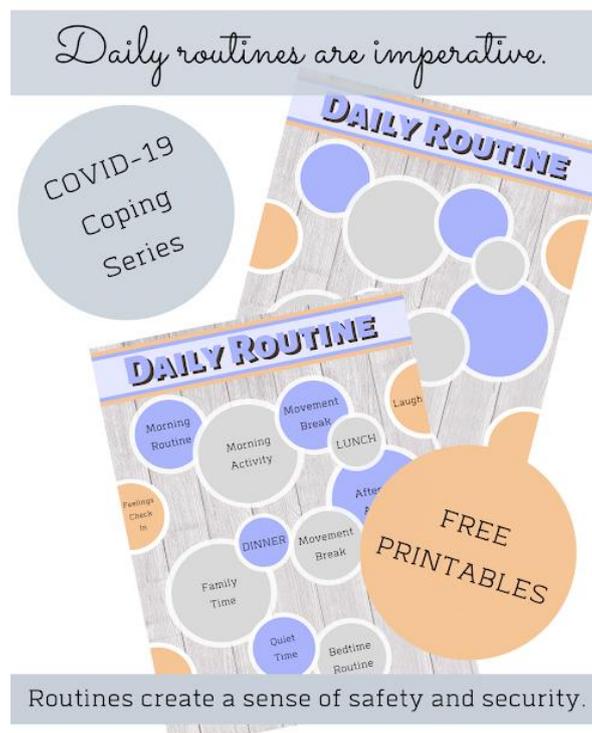
Routines give us something to rely on, an anchor through the storm and a stronghold for the day ahead. Routines can show us what we have accomplished and what comes next. It provides a rhythm and a sense of predictability to our day that gives us a sense of security. We need that now more than ever.

In young children in particular, their planning skills are still developing and providing a routine helps build that skill, as well as assists them in learning the concept of "before-after".

Keep It Simple

Your routine need not be elaborate. Simplicity is key, so just start somewhere.

We've developed a printable as an example of a simple routine, as well as a blank one you can customize for yourself.



Get your free routine [printable](#) [HERE](#).

You can download and use our example as a guide to build your own routine. Add what makes sense to you and customize to suit your family's needs.

Let's take a look at our example of a simple routine, below.

Daily Routine: Our Example

Our example routine includes the typical morning routine, activities, family time and a bedtime routine. You'll also see we've added movement breaks. Oh, yes! We've just added those in to remind you that movement is important. Add as many movement breaks as you care to. The more the better!



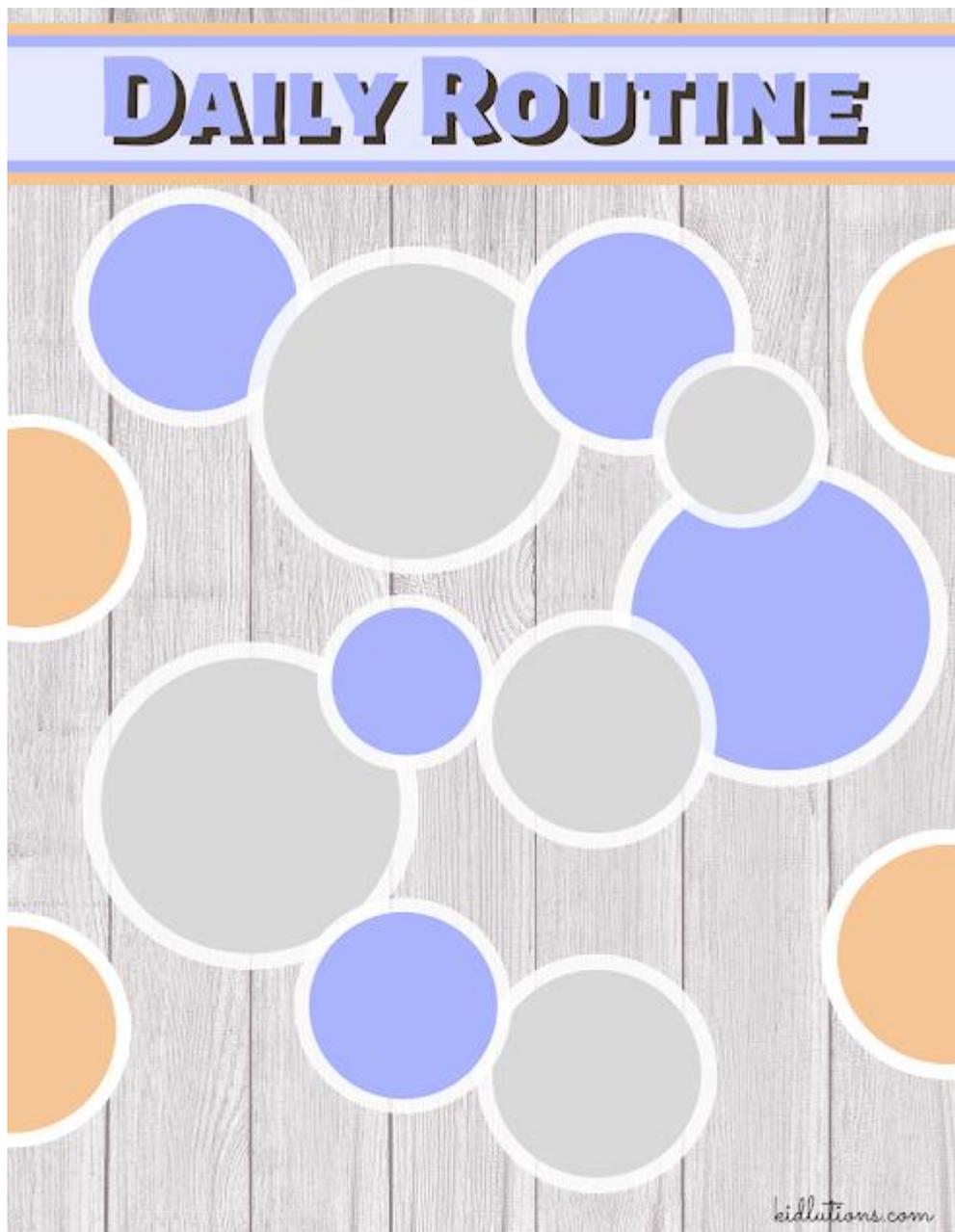
Grab your printables [HERE](#).

You'll also see the peach colored bubbles along the left and right edges. We've added those in as non-negotiable, daily doses of goodness we all need. Well, okay, they aren't necessarily life sustaining...or are they? Hmmm.

We know for a fact that all of those things enhance and improve our lives, help us cope better and some of them improve our immunity...an important issue we'll talk about in a future post.

You can add your own non-negotiables in the peach bubbles. If kids are "bored" and they are old enough to have a smart phone, they can be charged with finding a "joke of the day", locating relaxation exercises for the family, finding a new recipe to try for dinner, organizing a cupboard, etc.

Why not make a boredom list that includes do-able jobs for kids that they can accomplish in 15 minutes? More on boredom to follow in a future post!



Grab your printables [HERE](#).

Possibilities for Use

Once you print out your daily routine printable, you can proceed in a number of ways. You can fill it out with the activities and schedule you would like your children to follow, or better yet, sit down with your children and fill it out together. (Hint: Kids are more likely to take ownership and follow-through with schedules they helped develop!) A hybrid approach would be to fill in things you absolutely want your kids doing during the day, while leaving some of the bubbles open for their contributions.

If a routine is new for your family, stick with it. Help your kids follow-through with the agreed upon schedule by keeping it in an easily accessible spot. Be patient and provide loving guidance as your family leans into following their routine.

A Routine Bonus

While preparing this post, it occurred to me that creating and following a routine affords a few bonuses and solutions to a few other trouble spots our readers mentioned as frequent concerns due to have the kids home full time: boredom and sibling rivalry.

A routine offers structure, along with suggested activities. Don't be shy about adding suggested fun activities, or starting a separate list of fun things to do. A routine can potentially also help reduce sibling rivalry, as endless hours don't just seem to go on forever. There is a plan in place, a guide of what to do next.

In closing, remember that old saying by Benjamin Franklin, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."