

Language & Learning

Learning From My Family

Accomplishing Daily Routines

Routines are activities we do everyday. We do them almost the same way every time. They have actions and language that only change a little. Routines are predictable, and that makes routines a wonderful time for you to include your baby in the family. Some of the first language your baby understands and uses will probably be part of a family routine.

What are some of the routines in your family? Every family is different. For a family on a farm, taking care of animals may be an early morning routine. If the baby rides in a backpack or sits in an infant seat on the porch, some of that routine becomes familiar. A city family may spend the same time getting ready to leave for a job, for school, or for day care. The language and actions are different, but the morning still has a routine.

Here are a few routines that many parents and their babies have:

- Eating
- Changing diapers
- Dressing
- Going for a ride
- Going for a walk
- Going to bed

Let's look at an example from one family, and then you can think about your routine for the same activity.

Feeding:

Baby: (cries a "hunger cry")

Parent: (picks up the baby and prepares to feed) "You are hungry."

Baby: (stops crying or smiles at sight of food)

Parent: (begins to feed baby) "Now you feel better. That tastes good."

What is the routine at your house when it is time to eat?

Baby:

Parent:

Baby:

Parent:

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As your baby gets a little older, of course the routine gets more complex. Solid food will encourage more language. Your baby may begin to ask for more, or gesture in rejection. You may play games: “Here comes the airplane” or “Just one more. Open.” The food may spill, or spatter. “Uh, oh. Messy!”

Think of some other routines. Watch your baby and listen to yourself as you carry them out. What is the most natural language to go with each action? How do you give your baby access to that language? Do you make sure that the hearing aids or cochlear implant are on and working and that the television is turned off until the routine is over, or that brothers and sisters take their conversation into another room, or better yet — join you in the routine? Practice writing down routines that your family enjoys.

Routine:	Natural Language:	Providing Access:
Going for a walk (ride in the stroller or baby trailer)	~ Go outside. ~ Let’s walk. ~ Ride in the (stroller, trailer). ~ Put on your (helmet, jacket, shoes). ~ Look at the (bird cars, flower, etc.).	~ Use your chosen communication mode. ~ Show your baby the stroller, helmet or other object. ~ Point at the object you are talking about.