Scheduling

Be Strategic

Children tend to do better with short durations of work.

Arrange your schedule for success:
- List everything you would like for your child to get done in the day.
- Divide those tasks into easy/fun tasks and harder/less preferred tasks.
- Alternate easy and hard tasks when creating your schedule.

Build Momentum

Schedule several easier tasks in a row before a hard task.

Follow a hard task with your child’s most preferred task.

Step 1: Make a Task List

- Eat breakfast
- Practice spelling words
- Read for 10 mins
- Play outside
- Clean up dishes
- Do an art project
- Take out trash
- Get dressed
- Play a game

Step 2: Sort into Easy and Hard

**Easy**
- Eat breakfast
- Play outside
- Do an art project
- Play a game
- Get dressed

**Hard**
- Practice spelling words
- Read for 10 mins
- Take out trash
- Clean up dishes

Step 3: Organize to Build Momentum

- Get dressed (easy)
- Eat breakfast (easy)
- Clean up dishes (hard)
- Play a game (easy)
- Read for 10 mins (hard)
- Practice spelling words (hard)
- Do an art project (easy)
- Take out trash (hard)
- Play outside (easy)

Build Reinforcement Into Your Schedule

Make your schedule activity based, not time based:
- By working through your schedule this way, preferred items and activities can be accessed by completing tasks and are not based upon time.
- Organizing your schedule this way will motivate your child to finish tasks they don’t like so that they can get to ones that are more fun.

Use Visual Cues

- Write out the schedule for the day and, as you move from one task to the next, mark it off and review what is coming next.
- “First you are going to do your worksheet, then you will get to play a board game.”

Other Scheduling Tips

- A schedule is ending.
- To ease transitions between preferred and less preferred activities, give warnings that the activity is ending.
- Don’t just give 1 warning. Give at least 3.
- Don’t give up after the first day, make adjustments.
- Make minor adjustments to your schedule can make a major difference in reducing stress.
- It will take some practice and some trial and error.
- Schedules are rarely perfect the first day.
- Remember you and your children are learning something new.

Use Clear Signals

- When working from home, use signs or signals around the house to show when you are available.
- The green sign is for when you are not working and while you might not be able to play, you are able to talk, answer questions, and you are available if needed.
- The yellow sign is for when you are working and prefer not to be interrupted but, if they need something, you can make an exception.
- The red sign is for times when you might be on the phone or a video conference and cannot be interrupted.
- Provide a way for others to leave notes or otherwise tell you what they need, and make sure these notes will go in a place where you can see them.
- Before using this system, explain what a true emergency is to your children, and that they can interrupt you when the red sign is up if someone is hurt or bleeding.
- If your child does interrupt you when the red sign is up, remind them of the rules and redirect them to leave you a note.
- Try not to leave the red sign up for long periods of time.