
More Helpful Hints

Remember to say, "I love you," as your child leaves for the day.

Talk over plans for the day, for example school schedule, field trips, transportation home and after-school activities.

Some children may benefit from the use of a timer for certain expectations, (e.g., getting dressed, eating, etc.) to stay on schedule.

Young children may need a way to mark time in the morning, (alarm, timer, picture of clock showing time to leave, phone call, end of a TV show) to signal when it is time to leave home.

When mornings seem to always be rushed and hectic, it may help to rethink decisions about the morning routine or add an extra 15 minutes to your schedule.

If your child seems fearful or anxious about going to school, dawdles to avoid going, experiences physical ailments without a medical cause, or refuses to go, she may be having problems with "school phobia" or "school anxiety". This may be sign of difficulty separating from parents, a response to personal stress or stress in the family or a number of other possibilities. Although a fairly common problem, it often requires some outside assistance and work with the school to overcome. If this seems to be the case for your child, please visit with your child's teacher, school counselor or school social worker.

General

What, if any, chores will my child be expected to do in the morning and when?

Some children are early risers, or have more energy in the mornings, and find this is the easiest time to accomplish chores.

What about use of television in the morning?

For some children, television is a way to put off getting ready to start the day or can slow down preparation time. For others it can be used to help children plan their time.

What time will my child need to be "out the door"?

Allow an extra five minutes or so when planning.

What will happen if my child is not ready at the agreed time or misses the bus?

Consequences should be planned and agreed upon ahead of time to avoid last minute confrontations.

Resources

Coping With Kids by Linda Albert

How to Help Children With Common Problems by Charles E. Schaefer and Howard L. Milman

Love and Logic www.loveandlogic.com

Parenting With Love and Logic by Foster Cline and Jim Fay

Positive Discipline by Jane Nelson

Raising Self Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World by H. Stephen Glenn and Jane Nelson

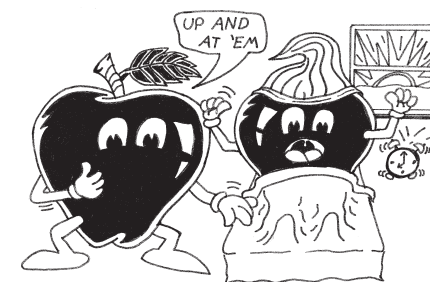
School staff are happy to assist you in reinforcing children's morning responsibilities. Feel free to talk with your child's teacher, counselor, school social worker or other school personnel.

A resource provided by LPS School Social Workers... because families matter.

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GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START



Mornings can be a difficult time for families. Sometimes getting everyone out the door, on time, to a number of different places can seem next to impossible. Parents can feel exhausted before they even start their day. However, getting children off to a good start in the morning is important. It helps them to be more cooperative, happy and successful during the day.

Morning means a time of change from the calm of sleep to facing the world and all it requires of us. This is true for children as well as adults. Some of us are heavier sleepers and need more time to wake up. Some children have more difficulty than others when it's time to switch gears from one activity to another. Children benefit from knowing what is expected of them. Routine can be very helpful for families as they begin each day. This means morning tasks should be done daily in the same order and on the same time schedule. Consistency is the key.

There are many decisions to be made when planning a morning routine. Decisions can be made by parents alone, or with children. Children often benefit from being included in decision making about expectations affecting them and are more likely to cooperate if allowed to do so. Following are some hints to help get the day off to a good start.

MORNING DECISIONS

Waking Up

☛ **What time will my child be expected to get up?**

Having your child get up at about the same time every day works best.

☛ **How much time does my child need to awaken?**

We all have our own time table. Some children need more time than others to wake up. A scheduled snooze time or “second call” may be necessary for some children. If this is the case, plan for the extra time needed by starting that much earlier.

☛ **How will my child be awakened?**

Young children may need their parents to call them in the morning. Older children may respond negatively to parents calling them and can be responsible for setting alarms and getting up on their own.

Food and School Supplies

We have learned that children who eat breakfast do better in school. Nutritionists also stress the importance of breakfast for a healthy diet.

☛ **Will my child eat breakfast at home, day care or school?**

Some schools offer a breakfast program for a small fee. Those who qualify, have the option of breakfast for a reduced fee or free. If your child eats at home, you may wish to provide two or three healthy choices she can get for herself.

☛ **If my child eats at home, what will be expected of him before breakfast?**

Some children need to eat soon after they awaken, while others do better if they dress before eating. Decide if any morning chores are to be done before or after eating.

☛ **Will my child take lunch or eat hot lunch at school?**

If your child can choose either hot or cold lunch, it may be helpful to look at the school menus at the beginning of each week to allow for planning. Children can be expected to pack their own lunches, when given acceptable choices of what to take. Lunches can be made the night before to save time in the morning. Lunch money should always be put in the same place where your child can see it when leaving for school. Lunch tickets for a reduced fee or free are available for those who are financially eligible.

☛ **How can I help my child to be responsible for returning books, homework and papers to school?**

Having a special place where these things are put the night before can be helpful. Items should be easily seen as children leave for school. Parents can model responsible behavior by completing any forms or papers requested by the school and seeing that they are also placed in this special place the night before.

Grooming

Children who appear dirty or have an unpleasant odor are often avoided, teased or ridiculed by schoolmates. Your child needs your help to develop a routine for good grooming.

☛ **Will my child bathe/shower in the morning or evening?**

A morning bath/shower will be especially important if your child wets the bed.

☛ **How often is my child expected to bathe/shower?**

You can help your child understand circumstances that make it important to wash more often, like outdoor play, hot weather, adolescence, etc.

☛ **How will my child's hair be cared for?**

Young children need help with shampooing their hair and combing or brushing. Set expectations about how often hair needs to be washed, who will do the washing and the combing or brushing and when it will be done. Parents often allow children to choose to have long hair only if they can care for it themselves, or cooperate with the parent in caring for it.

Clothing/Dressing

☛ **Who will choose what my child wears to school?**

As difficult as it is at times, power struggles will be avoided if your child chooses what to wear. Give your child choices that you are comfortable with and that are appropriate for the weather. Some parents organize school/play/dress clothing separately, allowing free choice within limits. Other parents like to give a choice of two or three outfits to the child.

☛ **When will school clothes for the day be decided on?**

Some families find it helpful for parent/child to choose clothes the night before.
