

Family Management

Skill # 1

SET ROUTINES

Routines bring stability to your life. Use them to help make your home a safe and orderly place for you and your child. Routines also reduce the number of decisions you have to make.

Know what time you will do certain everyday things. Plan your meals, homework time, bedtime, and chores in advance. Don't be too strict in your routines, though. Sometimes you'll need to be flexible, especially if your job involves shift work.

Single parents usually have little time for household chores. Teach your children responsibility by giving them jobs to do around your home that are appropriate for their ages. Try to make chore time fun by making a game of it. When everyone pitches in to help, you can all enjoy more free time.

Skill # 2

PLAN AHEAD

What would you do today if your car broke down or your babysitter got sick? Don't wait for an emergency to happen before you plan for it.

Be prepared for the unexpected. Start by thinking ahead about problems that could possibly arise. Then make a back-up plan for each situation.

Stay ahead of the game by planning ahead at home, too. Ask your children to help keep you posted about school activities. Don't put off tasks that need to be done at home. Get rid of excess clutter, such as things you have not used in over a year. Learn to say no from time to time. Don't take on more than you can possibly handle. Spend your spare time only in activities that are important to your family. You will thank yourself later!

Skill # 3

THINK SAFETY

Being safe all the time is difficult but very important. Teach your child to "think safety." It will pay off with fewer injuries and accidents. Be a good example to your child by doing things the safe way.

Make your living space as safe as possible. Food can contain germs and bacteria if not stored correctly. Be careful to refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible after a meal. Wash your hands before and after handling food, especially raw meat. If you keep your home clean, you can control insects and household pests.

Talk to your children about using their instincts to know when a situation is dangerous. Keep the communication open with your children. That way they feel comfortable talking to you about anything.

ACTION PLAN

Focus on one of the above skills. How could you apply this skill in your life? Choose one small but important change you really want to make in the next few days. Think positive. See yourself carrying out your goal. **Write your action plan in the space below:**



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE: University of Kentucky & Kentucky State University

Community Connections for Children—Bluegrass Area Development District