

Routine planner: managing expectations

Many of us have found our normal routines disrupted by the current situation. Across the world, people are under lockdown in their houses and 1.53 billion learners are out of school or university. That is 87 per cent of all learners currently enrolled in the whole world.

Our teachers and schools are working hard to try and supply students with learning, and parents are doing their best to help teach their children. Still, for many young people and their parents having to create new routines for themselves and their families is stressful.

This resource aims to empower young people and their parents to create a successful routine, both for themselves and the whole family. The resource is made up of one quick ten-minute starter activity and three longer activities that take half an hour or more, but you can take as long on it as learners would like.

These routines may change every day and that's fine. A positive thing about this time for those working or learning from home is that our routines are flexible and within our control. We can test new things and see what works best for us.

Learning objectives

Learners will:

- understand what to consider when making a routine
- gain knowledge and understanding of different time management techniques
- develop resilience and coping mechanisms
- create their own routines for both themselves and their families.

Starter activity: How are we feeling now?

Having to stay at home due to the Covid-19 outbreak has created a totally different world. The structured days that most of us are used to are no longer happening in the same way.

Think about the positives of being at home. Make a list of what you like about being at home – write these down in a list.

Now think about the things that you are finding more difficult. You can write another list alongside the other, comparing the good and bad things. You could be more creative and make a poster to show how you feel.

Activity: Where does my time go?

It can be hard to keep track of how you spend your time. Being able to manage your time is an important thing for all of us to learn how to do. Being able to reflect on how we spend our time will help us to develop resilience.

To figure out where your day goes, you can track your time usage. For a few days keep a note of everything that you do – roughly every hour. Be as accurate as you can, no one will see this except you. Calculate how long you spend each day on sleeping, eating, exercise etc. and create a Time circle (this is a circle with 24 segments to represent the number of hours in a day).

Draw one Time circle about “How I use my time now”.

Using different colours, patterns or symbols for each activity. Mark in each segment where your time goes in a day. Treat each segment as one hour.

Example

- > sleep: 10 hours
- > walk the dog: 2 hours
- > eating: 2 hours
- > socialising: 3 hours
- > watching videos/TV: 4 hours
- > reading: 2 hours
- > exercise: 1 hour

Which activities are left out or don't receive enough time? What activities take up too much time? Don't forget that a typical school day has breaks in it, along with activities that are not just schoolwork.

Now draw another Time circle about "How I want to use my time now". Divide the day with how you want to use your time so that your day is balanced between different activities, this is your goal to work towards. Setting achievable goals is important. Look at the activity below for how to do that.

Activity: Creating mini goals

A goal is something we want to achieve. Some goals are really big and can make achieving them seem a difficult task. Breaking a goal into smaller 'mini' goals to keep you focused and to help you complete goals.

Write one goal you want to achieve at the top of a piece of paper. Now, think about how you are going to achieve it.

- > Break the goal in to smaller tasks (add these as a list underneath your goal).
- > Break each of those smaller tasks into mini tasks (add these next to each task).
- > Think about how long it will take to achieve each mini goal – you need to be realistic about this (add the time to each mini task).
- > Give yourself a start time and set a target end time.

The important part is not how long you spend on achieving your goal – but to complete each mini goal. Remember to be flexible and change things if you need to.

Activity: Create your own routine planner

A good routine allows you to feel in control of what you are doing and does not push you so hard that it is impossible to complete. It should also have some spare time in it that can be used in case something happens that means you have to change your plans: just because you are at home, it does not mean that won't happen.

Think about how you want it to look, it is your planner. Do you want to have it hour by hour? Or do you want to have it morning/afternoon/evening? Some suggestions for content are:

- > Make one page a day.
- > Have space for weekly/daily goals.

- > Have space for a to-do list.
- > Add key activities in everyday e.g. exercise at 9am; meals; sleep.
- > Use colour code and symbols so you can see what your next activity is.
- > You could use a planner app for your phone or tablet, or create your own planner that you could use every day.

Think about what you have learnt and how you will use routines to develop stability and resilience. Remember that coping well and being kind to yourself are also important.