

FOOD & NUTRITION

WHAT DID YOU EAT DURING THE DAY?
DID YOU REMEMBER TO SNACK?
WHO DID YOU ENJOY YOUR MEALS WITH?
DID YOU EAT LEISURELY OR WERE YOU IN A RUSH?

Sleep & rest

DID YOU SLEEP WELL?
WHAT TIME DID YOU GO TO BED?
DID YOU WAKE UP REFRESHED?
DID YOU HAVE TIME TO RELAX AND REST?



RELATIONSHIPS AND EMOTIONS

HOW WAS YOUR MOOD TODAY?
WHAT MADE YOU HAPPY OR SAD?

DID YOU TELL SOMEONE ABOUT YOUR EMOTIONS?
WHO DID YOU MEET TODAY?
WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH YOUR FAMILY?



EXERCISE

and moving together

DID YOU CLIMB, RUN, CRAWL, DANCE OR JUMP TODAY?
WHAT IS THE BEST KIND OF EXERCISE?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN A SOMERSAULT?
HOW DOES EXERCISE MAKE YOU FEEL?



PLAYING AND CREATIVITY

DID YOU DO SOMETHING CREATIVE? WHICH FUN THINGS DID YOU DO TODAY?
WHAT IS BEAUTIFUL IN YOUR EYES? WHAT KINDS OF STORIES DO YOU LIKE?

6 DAILY RHYTHM

Keeping a daily rhythm has a positive effect on mental health. Sufficient sleep, shared mealtimes, exercise, activities that make you happy and attending to important relationships create a sturdy foundation for mental health.

How do you promote leisurely family-time and good daily rhythm in your work at the family health clinic? Are children waiting unoccupied on a daily basis in day care? Do you rush things with the children or take it easy?

Good boring routines

Children need adults, to create a safe and predictable daily life for them. Well planned day-to-day life includes flexibility, which stems from interaction and responding to children's needs. However, life does not need to be ritualistic, even if it is based on clear routines.

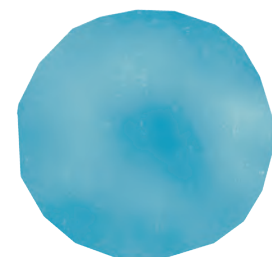
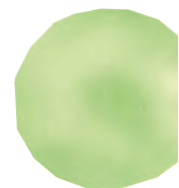
Having routines has many benefits that support the wellbeing of adults and children. Routines give adults a chance to plan their daily life. Organisation, anticipation and a sufficient number of adults in children's daily life lower stress levels, reduce squabbling and promote happiness at home and in day care.

Shared mealtimes provide an occasion for chatting and discussing the day's events. Regular sleep rhythm offers sufficient rest to a child's developing brain and body and makes it easier to fall asleep. An adequate amount of sleep also promotes children's mood and coping and supports their learning. Regular daily rhythm empowers adults and gives them time for themselves too.

Very busy routines and fragmented daily life add to children's grumpiness and restlessness. Sometimes it may be worth thinking about and planning ahead daily routines and rhythm, especially when life feels chaotic and exhausting. It is good to keep in mind that our daily routines are our children's childhood.

Relaxing as a family

A leisurely and cosy atmosphere nurture the mental wellbeing of children and adults creating a good basis for interaction and connection. Our daily routines offer many occasions for doing things together and provide children with versatile opportunities for learning. Returning a trolley to its place, carrying shopping bags together, putting toys away, doing crafts together and many



WHICH DAILY
CHORES COULD
CHILDREN
PARTICIPATE IN
AT DAY CARE?

WHAT DO YOU
THINK MAKES A
GOOD DAY FOR
CHILDREN?

HOW COULD YOU
SUPPORT PARENTS
TO REMEMBER
AND ATTEND TO
DAILY RHYTHM AND
ROUTINES AND TO
PROMOTE THEIR
COPING?

other daily activities offer opportunities for spending leisurely time with one another. This may call for tolerance and be time consuming, but when adults have the patience to do daily chores with children, children feel involved, experience happiness and learn new things.

Verbalising daily events

It is important to verbalise the day's events to children so that they learn to internalise daily rhythms. For example, when they are getting dressed, children can be told what is happening now and what will happen next. This kind of communication tends to come naturally to adults, and it strengthens the interaction between the adult and the child.

As children's skills improve with age, routines and predictability promote safety and give children the ability to cope in a new situation even on their own, without the presence of adults they know. Children often feel safer in a new situation, if it has been discussed with them in advance. For pre-school-aged children, routines are an important part of daily life, even though sometimes their tantrums are directed at the boundaries adults set. Predictability and a daily rhythm can be helpful in these situations.

The importance of shared mealtimes is much more than just nutrition. Mealtimes and eating together are some of our earliest forms of emotional control and safety. (Röning 2014)

Routines and the predictability of the day give children a chance to succeed and make adults happy. When children know what is expected of them and how they should behave, it is easier for them to meet expectations. This gives adults a chance to give children positive feedback.

Children's mental health is supported by

- nutrition and shared mealtimes
- playing and creativity
- sufficient sleep and rest
- relationships and emotions
- exercise and doing things together
- regular daily rhythm

Cooperation with parents

You can discuss with parents how to create daily rhythm that works for their family and supports the wellbeing of the mind. Use the Hand of Mental Health poster to discuss daily routines that strengthen mental wellbeing and to show how routines can be used to promote families' coping and wellbeing. You can use the poster and the tools connected to it in parents' evenings at the day care centre and when meeting parents at the child health clinics. Don't forget to discuss parents' own wellbeing and need for rest.



*Mark the Mealtime is busy in the kitchen,
with friends enjoying his well-cooked chicken.*

*Henry the Heartfelt is full of feeling,
when girls visit his heart is gleaming.*

*Susan the Sporty loves jumping and running,
and a game of tig sends her heart pumping.*

*Sam the Sleepy is snoring away,
he could be sleeping in a sack of hay.*

*Pamela the Painter is painting flowers,
and spreading beauty to all the others.*

*The rhythm of the day takes us on a ride,
towards rest and a relaxed mind.*



Frank the Fingers' day

Examine the Hand of Mental Health poster with the kids. The children can come up with stories and names for the fingers. One of the fingers could be called Frank the Fingers. What kind of a day has Frank the Fingers had? Does Frank remember to eat breakfast and spend enough time outdoors? You can continue the story with the kids. After the story, the group plays active games that are part of Frank the Fingers' daily life. You should have a fairly big space for the game, where there is room for Frank the Fingers' dining area with play food; Frank the Fingers' sleeping quarters; Frank the Fingers' atelier for producing his art; paper and pens, and Frank the Fingers' group of friends; a picture of a safe adult, and Frank the Fingers' trainers. The children get to move around the room freely, until an adult shouts out "sleep" or "exercise", and then they are supposed to run to the sleeping quarters or the trainers.



Daily choices

Attach a green smiley face on the wall and on the other side of the room, a red sad face. The adult tells the children different statements, and the children move from the centre of the room towards the smiley or sad face according to how they feel about them. The statements reflect different adult opinions on daily choices. "It is important to have breakfast." "You can play on the computer all day long." "There is no need to exercise daily." "It is nice to wake up fully rested in the morning."



Let's look at art: Weaver

This artwork is by Venny Soldan-Brofeldt. It is called *Weaver*. The artwork was painted around 1884 with oil paints on canvas. The size of the painting is 40 x 32 cm.

Venny painted the artwork *Weaver* when she was studying at an art school in Saint Petersburg. In addition to red and blue, the artwork contains other muted colours. One of the muted colours in the painting is brown. A muted colour is a colour which contains some other hue in addition to a primary colour. Do you know which colours are called primary colours? Which colours can you find in the weaver's room?

The painting has many very precisely painted details. Can you see the different detailed things in the painting? When you look really closely, you can almost see each thin thread in the balls of yarn on the floor.

The window behind the weaver is bright with light, and you can just see water and a sailing boat through the window. What else can you see through the window? Can you say which time of the year it could be? Do you think it is spring, summer, autumn or winter? What makes you think that?

The weaver is wearing woollen socks – do you think the room might be cool? Why is the woman weaving rugs? Did you notice that there is one intact rug and one with holes on the floor? Maybe the woman is weaving a rug for herself to replace the worn one, or weaving could be her job, and she makes rugs to sell them. The weaver looks focused and hard-working. She looks like a skilled weaver, and she seems to like what she is doing. What kind of a sound and rhythm does weaving make? What do you like doing and what are you good at?

- What is the mood like in the painting?
- What is the woman doing in the painting?
- What colours would you choose if you were making a rug for yourself?
- What does the woman look like?
- What is the weaver thinking about?
- What was the woman doing before she started weaving, and what will she do when she stops doing it?
- Have you done some handicrafts all by yourself? What did you make?
- How does it feel to create something by hand?



Let's make community art!

Discuss with your group what makes them happy and which chores they enjoy doing. Collect things from the children's and adults' homes and the day care centre that are connected to those daily chores and activities that bring happiness and joy. These could include shoe laces, dish cloths or grit used for gritting. Collect the things into one artwork that depicts daily pleasures of day-to-day life and includes the children's stories of their daily joys.



