

Co-Regulating Routines Planner

PURPOSE

This tool is meant to guide educators to create consistent and predictable routines that are co-regulating and create a sense of safety, while upholding norms and supporting student skill development and autonomy.

DIRECTIONS:

Use this tool to plan routines that are co-regulating – modeling and matching the level of engagement and energy required for students to meet their goals, while providing adequate scaffolds and supports.

Identifying Priority Routines

Students will encounter many tasks and times of day that would benefit from a consistent and predictable routine that provides co-regulatory support. First, use the checklists below to indicate the MOST important routines for students to master first, to start to build a sense of safety and support.

Classroom Routines Checklist

Routines for Movement and Transitions

- ☐ Entering the classroom in the morning
- ☐ Preparing for dismissal in the afternoon
- ☐ Entering the classroom from the hallway
- ☐ Getting out of your seat
- ☐ Bathroom use
- ☐ Getting water
- ☐ Getting a tissue
- ☐ Throwing away trash
- ☐ Safety drills
- ☐ Accessing supplies
- ☐ Handing in homework
- ☐ Accessing missed work following absence
- ☐

Routines for Organizing Materials

- ☐ Sharpening pencils
- ☐ Using and storing materials (pencils, pens, paper)
- ☐ Handling technology or special supplies
- ☐ Organizing desk or locker contents
- ☐ Students without pens, pencils, technology
- ☐ Storing coats, bags, and lunches
- ☐

Routines for Leveraging Social Skills

- ☐ How to contribute your ideas in class (raising hand, taking turns)
- ☐ Showing agreement or disagreement
- ☐ Asking questions
- ☐ Signaling the teacher for help
- ☐ Getting the teacher's attention
- ☐ Problem-solving conflicts in class
- ☐ Problem-solving outside of class (in the cafeteria, in the gym, etc.)
- ☐ Sharing "air time"
- ☐

Routines Within Work Time

- ☐ Transitioning in and out of subjects
- ☐ Transitioning in and out of group work
- ☐ Work to "do now"
- ☐ Transitioning to the mini-lesson
- ☐ Transitioning to independent work
- ☐ Handing in classwork
- ☐ Unfinished work
- ☐ "Fast finishers"
- ☐ Exit tickets
- ☐

Classroom Routines Checklist (Virtual)

Procedures for Synchronous Virtual Learning:

- ☐ Entering the virtual classroom (norms for video, sound, chat, etc.; “Do Now” or predictable routine)
- ☐ Routine for checking in or community building
- ☐ Announcements
- ☐ Creating a work space at home (materials needed, norms for personal belongings/toys, cell phones, etc.)
- ☐ Virtual “hand raising” (participation, questions)
- ☐ Using the chat features
- ☐ Roles in small group work (note-taker, time keeper, presenter, etc.)
- ☐ Submitting work from a synchronous lesson/activity
- ☐ What to do if experiencing technical issues
- ☐ What to do if you finish early
- ☐

Procedures for Asynchronous Virtual Learning:

- ☐ Accessing assignments (log-ins, websites, platform vs. email communication, etc.)
- ☐ Announcements
- ☐ Communicating with the teacher (how, when, and for what purposes)
- ☐ Communicating with classmates (how, when, and for what purposes)
- ☐ Creating an independent work space at home
- ☐ Keeping track of assignments and due dates
- ☐

Norms and Procedures for Leveraging Social Skills:

- ☐ How to contribute your ideas in class (raising hand, taking turns, small group vs. whole group participation)
- ☐ Showing agreement or disagreement
- ☐ Asking questions
- ☐ Signaling the teacher for help
- ☐ Getting the teacher’s attention
- ☐ Problem-solving conflicts in class
- ☐ Helping a small group get back on task
- ☐ Sharing “air time”
- ☐

Other:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Planning Routines

Planning co-regulating routines means they should model and match the level of engagement and energy required for students to meet their goals, while providing adequate scaffolds and supports. Use the template below to plan to create co-regulating routines.

Routine:	Steps:	Skill Supports:	Reinforce:
Name the time or activity, and the WHY.	In as few words as possible, list each thing students should do. Directions should be specific, framed in the positive, and minimally restrictive.	Add supports for skill development as needed.	Consider how to keep the routine going.
Example: <i>Lining up after recess</i>	1. When you hear the 1 st whistle, pause play and find teacher with your eyes. 2. When you hear the 2 nd whistle, bring toys/materials to the recess bins. 3. Line up at the doors (use whisper voice if needed so you can hear teacher directions). 4. When all students are lined up, teacher picks 3 leaders to guide the line and carry recess bins.	<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Function Supports (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Supports (e.g., strategies for communication, conflict) <input type="checkbox"/> Stress/Emotional Supports (e.g., strategies for naming, managing) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Name the WHY Always connect routines back to co-created norms and expectations, incorporate student voice, and be positively framed. Model and Practice Give students the chance to see and walk through the routine several times, celebrating successes and making adjustments as needed
		<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Function Supports (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer) <input type="checkbox"/> Social Supports (e.g., strategies for communication, conflict) <input type="checkbox"/> Stress/Emotional Supports (e.g., strategies for naming, managing) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Ask students to set a goal Example: "Our goal is to get 10 days of working together to line up in 2 minutes, and we will celebrate with 10 minutes of extra recess." Point out the use of skills in the moment Example: "I see when Javier and Emilee got to the line at the same time, Emilee pointed to let him go first – showing quick problem-solving."
		<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Function Supports (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer) <input type="checkbox"/> Social Supports (e.g., strategies for communication, conflict) <input type="checkbox"/> Stress/Emotional Supports (e.g., strategies for naming, managing) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Give increasing autonomy Gradually give fewer reminders, allow students to take on more independence like leading the routine or removing some structure once skills are built.

Reflecting on Routines

As a routine is introduced and practiced (or if a well-established routine has become challenging), debrief with students and reflect on your own to make improvements.

Routine: _____

Student Debrief:

<p>ASK: How did you feel during this routine? What went well? What might need more practice? Is there anything we should change?</p> <p>The debrief should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Honor student voice <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate successes <input type="checkbox"/> Normalize making adjustments/revisions 	<p>Notes:</p>

Educator Reflection:

On the continuum of a co-regulating routine, where do you think this routine currently falls? **Mark it with an X below.**

Not enough structure or support	Co-regulating	Too much structure or control
<i>Chaotic, unpredictable, and even physically unsafe</i>	<i>Predictable, consistent, safe, with opportunities for student independence and growth</i>	<i>Limiting and restrictive, no autonomy, lacks opportunities for skill development</i>

<p>Additional Support How many/which students need additional support during this routine? What type of support might they need? Are there any common trends? Any antecedents or context that makes success more or less likely? Does more than 30% of the class need significant support? If so, how can this procedure be revised to be more supportive?</p>	<p>Notes:</p>
<p>Increasing Autonomy If more than 90% of the class is "ready," how can this procedure release more autonomy to the students and push their development?</p>	<p>Notes:</p>

At-Home Routines Planner: Caregiver Letter

PURPOSE

This sample Caregiver Letter and At-Home Routines Planner provides an example for one way to communicate about and support caregivers in creating co-regulating routines at home.

DIRECTIONS:

Read the following sample caregiver letter and accompanying At-Home Routines Planner tool. Then, borrow and adapt what might be useful in sharing these strategies with your students' caregivers.

Dear Caregiver(s),

At school, we have been creating **classroom routines** to make our days run smoothly and safely. Just as importantly, we are using routines as a way for students to take on more independence and build skills.

Research shows us that students' skills become the strongest when they are practiced and supported consistently throughout their day. We would love to hear more about how your child builds their skills through routines at home, and share with you some of the ways we are creating supportive and skill-building routines at school:

Using routines to feel safe and focused

Having predictable and consistent routines – for getting ready for school, lining up with the class, doing homework, etc. – means that there is **less extra “mental work” a child needs to do** during that time. This frees up brain power to think about the task at hand and resist getting distracted, as well as reducing stress. To help create these routines, we often leverage step-by-step directions in the form of schedules or checklists, using words and pictures to help remind students what to do. *(See the next page for an example routines planning template.)*

Making skills visible by naming and modeling them

Explicitly talking about basic skills – such as staying focused or managing stress and emotions – when you use them helps students to see what they look like in action. This models what is called “**metacognition,**” or **thinking about thinking**. Point out, “I am going to really have to concentrate on this until it's done, so I'm going to focus and put away things that might distract me” or “This is a lot of things to keep track of! I'm going to organize my thinking by making a list or writing down some steps for myself.” Pointing out to a student when *they* are using skills reinforces that same adaptive behavior for the future.

When using skills is difficult, we go back to basics

Ever feel like you just can't focus when you're tired or stressed? Research shows that there are a number of things that can get in the way of allowing us to use our basic skills we need to be successful at school, **including lack of sleep, nutrition or exercise, or stress, loneliness or sadness**. If, for example, a student is having a hard time staying focused and completing their work, we might encourage them to take a movement break, close their eyes for a moment, or ask if something is bothering them.

Please reach out to me if you have ideas you would like to share about routines and/or supports that work for your child, or if you have questions or would like support. Together, we can help your child to develop important skills that will last a lifetime.

Thank you for all that you do!

Sincerely,

Your Child's Teacher

At-Home Routines Planner

DIRECTIONS:

Consider which activities or parts of the day can be **most challenging** for your child – these can be shorter routines (like how to pack up their backpack in the morning) or longer routines (like what happens between school and dinner time). It might be helpful to allow your child to feel like they “own” their routines by having them help you to complete the steps and select the supports; they could even create their own personal checklist to use daily or decorate a schedule to hang on the wall.

Routine:	Steps:	Skill Supports:	Reinforce:
Name the time or activity:	In as few words as possible, list each thing your child should do. Directions should be specific, framed in the positive, and minimally restrictive.	Add supports for skill development as needed.	Consider how to keep the routine going.
Example: Getting ready to leave for school	1. At 7:30am, get backpack and put it on the kitchen chair. 2. Get lunch from the refrigerator and put it in backpack. 3. Check homework and reading log are signed and in backpack. 4. Put on shoes and coat. 5. Put on backpack.	<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Function Supports (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer) <input type="checkbox"/> Social Supports (e.g., strategies for communication, conflict) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stress/Emotional Supports (e.g., strategies for naming, managing) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Set alarm for 7:30</u>	Walk through routines ahead of time Example: “You are going to be in charge of getting ready for school! Let’s practice all the steps so you can be independent.” Ask your child to set a goal Example: “My goal is to do the routine every day this week with only one reminder every day.”
		<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Function Supports (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer) <input type="checkbox"/> Social Supports (e.g., strategies for communication, conflict) <input type="checkbox"/> Stress/Emotional Supports (e.g., strategies for naming, managing) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Point out the use of skills in the moment Example: “I see you are really focusing on getting everything you need for school and not getting distracted by your video game – nice job!” Reward with increasing independence
		<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Function Supports (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer) <input type="checkbox"/> Social Supports (e.g., strategies for communication, conflict) <input type="checkbox"/> Stress/Emotional Supports (e.g., strategies for naming, managing) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Example: Gradually give fewer reminders, allow your child to take on more independence like being in charge of deciding breakfast or getting to help a sibling (or you!).