



Parenting Special Children

Edward Gustavson, MD
Developmental Pediatrician

1. Simplify

- a. Cut down on clutter. Have a child's room as simple as possible.
- b. Do not have television in the child's bedroom.
- c. Give only 1 direction at a time.
(Do NOT say: Go to the kitchen and look on the second rack of the Refrigerator, behind the milk, and bring me the butter.)

2. Create Routine

- a. Mealtime and snacks
 1. Try to have meals and snacks at the same time every day.
 2. Eat at table, not in front of tv or videos.
 3. Simple conversation at table with no noise from radio, tv or videos.
 4. Wholesome snacks need protein
 5. If the child doesn't have enough fiber, use Metamucil or Miralax in yogurt or applesauce.
- b. Bedtime
 1. Stick close to same bedtime every day
 2. As bedtime approaches dim lights and lower voices and noises.
 3. Create bedtime ritual (for example: bath, story, kiss, tuck-in, etc.)

3. Read to Your Child

- a. Read in a conversational voice, quietly, but with expression
- b. If a child doesn't like books, try stories with rhyme (such as Dr. Seuss books)