

# Finding Your Rhythm Again

# Reestablishing Routines in the New Year

## FAMILY FEATURES

**T**he holiday season is special, fun and often a bit chaotic, filled with family gatherings and joyful celebrations. Once the decorations come down and chaos subsides in the new year, many families face a familiar challenge: getting children back into their regular routines.

After weeks of excitement, travel and inconsistent schedules, the transition back to structure can feel daunting. However, with a thoughtful approach, parents can help their children ease back into their daily rhythms, and in the process, restore calm for the entire family. Dr. Lauren Loquasto, senior vice president and chief academic officer at The Goddard School, provides this insight and guidance for parents.

### Understand Why Routines Matter

Children thrive on predictability. Routines provide a sense of security, reduce stress and support emotional regulation. Children feel safe, even proud, when they know what comes next. Routines also help them develop independence and self-control. After the holidays, reestablishing these patterns is essential for a smooth return to school and everyday life.

### Start with Sleep

For young children, sleep is the foundation of a successful routine. Consistent sleep supports focus, tolerance and cooperation. For optimal brain repair and growth, preschoolers typically need 10-13 hours of sleep per night, but seasonal festivities can disrupt sleep schedules, frequently leaving children overly tired.

Begin by gradually adjusting bedtime by moving it earlier in 15-minute increments each night until you resume your regular schedule. Pair this with calming pre-bedtime rituals like reading or quiet play to signal it's time to wind down. *Continues on next page*



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