

Establish a Daily Learning Routine for Your Child

Habits are powerful. That's why a daily learning routine is so important. Establishing a routine means making a habit of when and where your child does Waterford UPSTART.

With Waterford UPSTART, the expectation is that your child will use the program five days a week, and your usage during the first month of the program is important. When you start off strong during the first month of the program, you'll create a learning habit for your child. That habit makes it easier to keep going throughout the year. Your child will be better prepared to start school next year if they're consistent with the program this year.

Some families like to use Waterford UPSTART right after breakfast. Others find the best time is during a younger sibling's nap or other scheduled quiet time. Your preschooler may want to do Waterford UPSTART while their older siblings are doing homework, too. The key is to find something that works for your family, and stick with it!



WHY CREATE A DAILY ROUTINE?

Waterford UPSTART is fun and engaging! Children often begin something new with a great deal of enthusiasm, but motivation can fade over time. A daily routine is the best way to help your child stay engaged in learning so that their experience with Waterford UPSTART is both fun and beneficial.

A daily routine helps to:

- Establish a comfortable pattern for your child, so they know what to expect
- Build your child's ability to transition from playtime to learning time
- Increase the retention of important concepts and skills your child is learning
- Set a strong foundation for your child's later learning.

When you create a daily learning routine for using Waterford UPSTART, you:

- Create positive learning habits that will serve your child throughout their lifetime

- Give your child the sense of satisfaction that comes from seeing something through to the end

SUGGESTIONS FOR DAILY LEARNING ROUTINES

Below are some questions to ask yourself as you work on a daily routine. There are also some suggestions to help support your child on their learning path.

Be Aware of What Works for Your Child

As you work to establish a routine, it is important to observe your child's behavior as they work on the computer. Think about the following:

- Has your child had a meal or snack?
- Is your child well-rested?
- Have you talked with your child about what time they would prefer to use the program?

Create a Good Learning Environment

A quiet, comfortable, and safe learning environment is important to help your child get used to a daily learning routine. Consider the following questions:

- Is the room quiet and free from distractions, such as television or other children playing?
- Would it be helpful for your child to have headphones to block out background noise?
- Is your child comfortable? Are they sitting too close or too far away from the computer? Are their feet resting on the floor (or on some other solid surface)?
- Would it help to personalize your child's workspace with favorite stuffed animals or fun pictures and drawings?

Show Interest

When you express interest in your child's learning, it helps them feel special and shows them that learning is important. Talking to your child about what they are learning can help you gauge how well they understand the material. It can also give you insight into whether the level of difficulty is appropriate. Children are most motivated and excited by learning when the material is challenging but not overwhelming.

Be Consistent

Consistency is key! Establishing a daily learning routine can be hard at first. However, as you work hard and stick with it, your child will become accustomed to the routine, and the routine will become easier with time.



MOTIVATIONAL TIPS

Stay Involved

Take some time each day to ask your child what they learned. Ask them to show you what they learned. Play games to practice the skill or concept. Children become excited when they can use their new skills in everyday life.

Make a Reward Card

Decorate a 3" x 5" index card or use your computer to create cute graphics on paper. Label the card or paper "Waterford UPSTART Learning Time." As your child completes their session each day, punch a hole along the edge (or add a sticker). Continue until the holes or stickers go all the way around the outside, and at that point invite your child to choose a reward from a bag, box, or jar where you have collected special items. Rewards can be small toys or handwritten coupons for things such as a movie, book, treat, special time with a parent, or even an extra half hour of playtime before bed.

Learn Together

Explain that you are going to enjoy learning time together! Find a comfortable spot near your child, and do some work or read a book while your child is using Waterford UPSTART.

Offer Praise

Support your child's effort by using words such as "You're really working hard," "I can tell you're thinking carefully," and "I think your brain is growing!" Avoid telling your child the answers. Your child will build greater confidence by working through the activities on their own (with your encouragement and support).

Stick to It

Encourage your child to keep it up when it gets tough. Your child's brain is like a muscle. When we exercise and stretch our muscles, they get stronger. The same is true for your child's brain. When a Waterford UPSTART activity feels difficult for your child, you can remind them that they are getting smarter by exercising and stretching their brain!