



# FAMILIES

TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

# TOGETHER



FAMILY

CHILDREN

## Our Family is Adaptable! Flexibility to Change

Flexibility and learning to adapt to change are core elements of resilience. During times of stress, our families can lose structure and routines can be disrupted. If this happens, it is important to establish new or adjusted routines while providing stability. When we do this, we help to make children's lives predictable, stable, safe and secure and encourage them to embrace a growth mindset.

### Flexibility with Changes in Routines

There are several ways to help our children embrace changes to their daily routines:

- **Talk about changes.** Talk about what will change and how it will change. For example, many children are now learning from home, and those who are going to school may be learning in new ways. It is important to talk to our children about why these changes are necessary and how we can adapt to them.
- **Involve children in decisions about the change.** It is important to encourage our children to help think of new things we can do to adapt to the change.
- **Try to keep other routines as consistent as possible.** When changes happen, remember that children still need consistency in their lives. Focus on maintaining routines that are still within our control.
- **Demonstrate that change can be a positive thing.** Talk about change in a positive way. When we face change with positivity, our children will too.

The above information was adapted from [Helping Children Deal with Change](#).

Changes in routines can be more difficult for some children. For example, children with autism may view change as a disruption to their lives. To learn about how to help children with autism adjust to change, the Indiana Resource Center for Autism offers support through [COVID-19 visuals and social narratives](#) and [transitioning back to school during COVID](#).

### Adapting to Change Activity

Invite your child to learn about change as they play the *Freeze Game*.

- Play music as your child dances. When you stop the music, ask your child to freeze in place. Continue playing the game for several minutes as your child learns to freeze when the music stops.
- Then, change the rules a bit. Tell your child that the rules are changing and now they will do different motions each time they hear the music play. You may wish to say a different motion for your child to do, or find music online that contains directions for each new movement. [This example encourages children to hop and swim.](#)
- Games such as the *Freeze Game* can help your child to better understand that things sometimes change and we need to change how we do things! [Learn more about teaching children how to adapt to change.](#)

To learn more about the science behind the importance of adapting to change, you may wish to read the below research:

- [‘Give us a break!’: using a solution focused programme to help young people cope with loss and negative change](#)