Setting up the Environment for Core Routines: Morning & Bedtime

Morning Routine

- Develop a wake up routine to get your child's body alert and ready for the day! This can look like jumping on a trampoline, swinging, dancing, or music.

- Allow your child to choose what clothing they want to wear. Give them a choice of which item they want to put on first.

- Set up a chair for your child to sit down while getting dressed, this will help support them so they don't lose their balance!

- Break dressing down into smaller steps for each item of clothing. Assist your child for the first steps and let them complete the last ones on their own. You can help by handing them the shirt oriented in the way in needs to go on or holding the sleeve out so they can thread their arm through. Over time, you can encourage your child to complete more steps as they become more confident!

- Use visuals to break down the steps of morning routines, such as dressing or tooth brushing. You can ask your Blue Bird Day therapists for tips on how to build visuals individualized to your kiddo!

Bedtime Routine

- Develop a structured and predictable bedtime routine. Use visuals to help structure this routine.

- End screen time at least two hours prior to going to sleep. The blue light emitted from these screens can impact your child's ability to fall asleep.

- Take a bath before bedtime (vs. a shower). The deep pressure and calming input from the water and bath tub can promote regulation needed to fall asleep.

- Turn on some calming background music and turn down the lights. Read a bedtime story.

- Try calming activities leading up to bedtime, these can include heavy work, squeezes, hugs, cuddles, lotion massage.

- Consider adapting the environment to include room darkening curtains, a white noise machine, lowering the temperature on the thermostat, using a weighted blanket or Lycra compression sheets. Ask your OT for more ideas tailored to your child's needs!

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