TURNING PAGES,
BUILDING FUTURES

LEARNING WHERE LIFE HAPPENS

Learning Doesn't Have to Happen at a Table

9 simple ways to build skills into the routines you already have

Ready to jump in? Page 3 is an Everyday Learning Planner. Pick one routine, one small goal, and try it.

Start Here

You don't need special materials, a new curriculum, or more table time to create meaningful learning opportunities. Learning is already happening throughout your family's day—in play, getting dressed, meals, errands, conversations, movement, and everyday routines. **Pick one or two moments from this list to try this week.**

The big idea: Learning doesn't have to happen at a table.

Children learn through play, getting dressed, errands, conversations, movement, and all the little moments in between. You don't have to create more opportunities to teach—you can notice the ones already there and give your child a reason to use them.

Try This: Pick One Routine, Make One Small Change

Snack time

Try: Pause before opening the package and wait. Watch for how your child communicates that they want the snack. It might be looking at you, reaching, making a sound or gesture, or using a word. When they communicate, respond by giving them the snack.

Getting dressed

Try: Comment about the weather while offering a choice of two appropriate shirts. “It’s warm out today, so we should choose a short-sleeve shirt. Which one do you want to wear?” Choice-making is a skill and each choice made gives your child some control over their day.

Bath time

Try: Talk about body parts while you wash them. Let your child choose a body part to wash by themself. This builds language while giving your child a chance to practice independence with a familiar self-care routine.

Meals

Try: Give your child just a little bit at a time while allowing them to see there is more. This allows for many chances to practice asking for what they want and to make choices.

Errands and car rides

Try: Take pictures of common shopping-list items and let your child help find them, one at a time, in the aisle. Add an item they especially enjoy to the list so they have something to look forward to finding, too.

Laundry

Try: Ask your child to help you match socks or sort colors into piles. This will help children notice similarities and differences, build concepts and categories, and make sense of the world around them.

Play

Try: Join whatever your child is already doing instead of starting your own game. Follow their lead, imitating what they are doing. Then add one small new step: the car drives to the “gas station” (the couch).

Cleanup

Try: Give a warning a few minutes before it’s time to clean up. When it’s time, sing a clean-up song while helping your child clean up. Encourage them to put a few items away to start. Gradually increase the amount they are cleaning up.

Bedtime

Try: Offer a choice of two books, pause on a favorite page, and let your child turn it or finish the line. Point out, or have your child find, pictures. Repetition isn't boring to children—it is one way they practice, remember, and master new skills.

What to look for

You don't need to collect formal data to notice whether something is helping. Over a week or two, watch for:

- ☐ More attempts to communicate - words, signs, sounds, gestures
- ☐ More independent participation in the routine
- ☐ Needing fewer reminders or less help
- ☐ More time participating before shifting to another activity
- ☐ More shared enjoyment - the moments your child wants to repeat

You don't need to see all five. One small change is information—and a place to build from.

If it doesn't work...

If it doesn't work the first time, that's information—not a verdict on your child. Try:

- Make the activity easier - try one smaller step
- Wait a beat longer before helping, so your child has room to try
- Build the moment around something your child already loves
- Try it during a calmer, happier routine first (bath beats bedtime for most families)
- Give it some time. New routines take practice to feel familiar.
- Consider whether the ask is the right size for your child right now

Remember: *You don't have to create more opportunities to teach. Start by noticing the opportunities that are already there.*

Want more practical ideas?

Explore more PAGE resources for communication, learning, participation, independence, and everyday routines. Explore PAGE Resources → Or, if you'd like occasional practical ideas delivered by email, **join the PAGE list at pageaba.com.**

Need help figuring out what to try?

If you've tried a few strategies, made adjustments, and still aren't sure what to change, PAGE can help you find practical ways to build communication, participation, learning, and independence into everyday life. **Learn more or schedule a consultation at pageaba.com.**

LEARNING WHERE LIFE HAPPENS

My Everyday Learning Planner

Pick ONE routine you already do. What could your child practice there?

1. The Routine

- ☐ Snack
- ☐ Bath
- ☐ Errands
- ☐ Laundry
- ☐ Cleanup
- ☐ Getting dressed
- ☐ Meals
- ☐ Car ride
- ☐ Play
- ☐ Bedtime

2. What could my child practice?

- ☐ Communicating
- ☐ Making a choice
- ☐ Following a direction
- ☐ Matching or sorting
- ☐ Taking turns
- ☐ Moving independently
- ☐ Helping with a routine
- ☐ Self-care

3. One small change I'll try

Instead of:	**I'll try:**

4. What I noticed

- ☐ More communication
- ☐ More independence
- ☐ Less help needed
- ☐ More participation
- ☐ More enjoyment
- ☐ Something unexpected

What happened?