

# AUGUST

VOLUME 2



## REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

For children, exercise means playing and being physically active.

It is known that exercise improves blood flow to the brain. Evidence suggests that children who are more active are better able to focus their attention, are quicker to perform simple tasks, and have better working memories and problem solving skills than less-active children.

Kids and teens should get 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily.

It is suggested that parents limit the amount of time doing sedentary activities, and for them to reinforce activities like: dance classes, riding bikes or soccer practices, depending on the interests of each child.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT HEALTHY HABITS

Childhood and adolescence have been found to be the ages in which people start developing most of their habits, and determine a high percentage of what these children will tend to do as they grow up. Supporting and providing the possibility of healthy choices gives your child the foundation to acquire healthy lifelong habits.

### HEALTHY EATING

People usually think that healthy eating is about consuming a lot of fruit and vegetables, and eliminating fries and soda from your diet.

Healthy eating is not only what you eat or drink, but also how much you eat, how balanced your diet is, how frequent does your body receive energy, how many meals you eat a day, what you do while eating, among others.

Some healthy eating tips could be:

- Include vegetables, fruits, proteins, and carbohydrates in your daily meal planning, make sure you consume the nutrients, vitamins, minerals, fat, and water you need
- Do not skip breakfast, it is the most important meal of the day
- Drink plenty of water: kids require between 7 and 14 cups a day depending the age
- Concentrate, paying attention to the process of eating helps control overeating
- Eat something every 3 – 4 hours to keep your body stimulated and active
- Prefer natural foods over processed products
- Eat as a family, away from a screen

Good nutrition improves your immune system, your mood and your energy level, helping reduce the risk of chronic conditions; it helps concentration and is related with higher academic achievement.



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*Strong evidence has been found that students who make good health-related decisions tend to show a better performance in school.*

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## SCREEN TIME: WHAT TO CONSIDER?

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) determined back in 2016 that screen time should be considered solely the time children spend using digital media for entertainment purposes.

The AAP suggests that infants 18 months and younger should not be exposed to screen time at all, since this can interfere with their brain development as well as their bonding process with their parents.

Between 2 and 5 years old, consider a maximum of 1 hour per day using digital media, stating the importance of creative unplugged playtime. Starting from 6 years old, the AAP assign the responsibility of deciding how much screen time is appropriate for a child to his/her parents but emphasizes the importance of limiting the use of screens or monitors, encouraging the fact that children should prioritize productive time and healthy activities and that parents should be their mentors in learning how to safely and responsibly use digital media.

## SLEEPING HABITS

Even though sleeping is important for all human beings, it is particularly essential for children since it affects both their physical and mental development.

Between 1 and 3 years old, toddlers need around 12 or 14 hours of sleep per 24 hours, which until 18 months can be divided in different naptimes.

Children between 3 and 5 years old require 11 to 13 hours of sleep each night, and as they grow they only need 10 or 12 hours when they are 5 to 12 years old.

Some things that might help having a healthy and restful sleep could be:

- Kids should not have naps before bedtime since they might delay sleep at night.
- Maintain a consistent and relaxing bedtime routine.
- Prefer cool, dark, and quiet rooms (no TV) for an environment conducive to sleeping.
- Make sure they don't go to bed hungry or wanting to go to the toilet.
- Avoid heavy meals 1 or 2 hours before going to bed.
- Avoid caffeinated products during late evening/afternoon.
- Set a 1 hour quiet time before going to sleep (no TV or computer gaming).
- Bedrooms need to be associated with a sense of safety and positive feelings to prevent nightmares and night fears.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS

- Be the best example, acquire healthier habits yourself.
- Explain the importance and benefits of healthy habits.
- Make healthy eating fun! Provide healthy snacks.
- Reinforce active and creative playtime.
- Keep tech devices out of bedrooms.
- Have phones off at the dinner table.
- Encourage face-to-face interactions.
- Help your kids get both enough and good quality sleep time.



## Contact Us

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*“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence,  
then is not an act, but a habit.”*  
-Aristotle

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