

# Routines

Learning through our routines



\*Routines help  
keep us  
balanced

\*They can take  
the stress out of  
decision making

\*They're especially  
important during times  
of uncertainty

\*A routine makes  
it easier to make  
healthy choices

\*Routines can  
be fun

\*Routines help  
us to cope with  
change



# Mealtimes

## Get ready for meals

Let your children count and collect the right number of plates and utensils for on the table.

## Make mealtimes a special occasion

Sit with your children and make conversation. Talk to them and give them eye contact.

## Encourage Independence

Let your children serve themselves when possible and use the cutlery to feed themselves. This is a good time for them to practice their cutting skills.

## Clear away plates

You or older children can help younger children take their plates to the sink or load the dishwasher.

## Model positive eating habits

Get excited about healthy foods to help your children feel excited about them too. Allow them to taste and explore new foods.

## Stick to a meal routine

Try to stick to the same meal times each day, so blood sugars stay even. Low blood sugar can equal irritable children or adults.



# Staying clean



## Brushing teeth

Brush teeth twice a day – usually morning and night

## Brushing teeth – 2 Minute Rule

Use a 2 minute timer, watch a teeth brushing song or sing your own

## Bath/shower time – Water play

Children can practise pouring with a range of kitchen utensils, including sieves, plastic cups, bowls and recycled water bottles.

## Bath/shower time – Bubble play

Foam is lots of fun to blow, pop, touch and put on our faces. Look in a mirror at the bubbles on your head!

## Bath/shower time – Story

Read a story while your children soak in the bath, this will make it a relaxing experience for everyone before bedtime.

## Bath/story time – sing-a-long

Sing some nursery rhymes together. This will help your children to develop lots of skills.

# Bedtime

## Read a story

Lots of children enjoy a bedtime story before going to sleep. It helps them to relax. Try to make it part of your daily routine, even if you read at another time in the day.

## Re-tell a story or a poem

Children enjoy repetition, they might like you re-telling them a story or nursery rhyme before sleep.

## Snuggle up

Snuggling up together and having a chat is a nice, calm way to end the day before sleeping.

## Timing

Start your bedtime routine about an hour before your child goes to sleep. This will help to keep the routine calm and enjoyable.

## Turn off all screens at the start of the routine

Blue light inhibits the production of melatonin, the sleep hormone. Dim the lights throughout the house where possible and darken your child's room by closing the blinds and curtains.

## Stick with it

Introducing a new bedtime routine might worsen sleep patterns before they get better. Consistency is key and we advise sticking to the new routine for at least two weeks before you start to see some positive changes.





# Exercise

## How much?

Babies (Under 1) - 30 mins Tummy time every day

Toddlers (1-2yrs) - At least 3hrs a day of physical activity

Pre-schoolers (3-4yrs) - At least 3 hours a day of physical activity (to include one hour of moderate to vigorous activity)

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## Get creative!

Create your very own physical games at home. Be creative with things you already have at home. Can you make your own obstacle course with objects?

Get the chalks out and create an obstacle path on the pavement with all different shapes

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## Keep it fresh! .

Use new ideas and activities to keep your children interested. Mix up the vigorous and moderate exercises. Use the internet to search for ideas if you run out

## Why?

Being physically active every day is important for the healthy growth and development of babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers. It produces feel-good hormones, and can help to relieve stress

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## Vigorous and moderate exercise

A mixture of both types of exercise will help to strengthen children's muscles and bones, prevent excessive weight gain, and reduces the risk of diabetes, cancer, and other conditions.

Physical activity is also beneficial to the mental health of a child

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## All movements count - the more the better

messy play / tummy time / jumping / walking / dancing / swimming / climbing / skipping / hide & seek / throwing & catching / scooting / riding a bike / outdoor activities / yoga

