

5 Ways to Grow Healthy





1

Switch from Sugary Drinks to Water

Goal: Switch from sugary drinks (like soda, sports, and fruit drinks) to water.

Did You Know?

The following count as sugary drinks:

- Powder drink mixes
- Sweetened iced tea
- Sports drinks
- Juice drinks and fruit drinks
- Energy drinks
- Soda

Children who have too much sugar are at risk for:

- Unhealthy weight gain
- Type-2 diabetes

Tips:

- **Encourage your child to drink water when thirsty.**
- **Serve your child water with meals and snacks.**
- **You can mix in a small amount of 100% juice with water, just make sure your child does not drink more than half a cup of juice a day.**
- **Add fresh fruit like lemon, lime, strawberries or oranges to water.**



2

Reduce Screen Time

Goal: Watch no more than 2 hours of screen time per day.

Did You Know?

Screen time includes any time spent watching TV, using the computer, playing video games, texting or using a smartphone. Anything with a screen counts.

When kids get too much screen time, they tend not to do as well in school and to have unhealthy weight gain.

Tips:

Make their room a screen free zone.

- **If there's a TV in your child's bedroom, remove it. It will help cut down on screen time.**
- **At bedtime, remove other types of screens from your child's bedroom, like hand-held video games and cell phones. This will help keep your child's room quiet so they can fall asleep and stay asleep.**
- **Be prepared to hear complaints, but stick with your decision! It may take awhile, but your child will find new ways to keep busy and have fun.**



3

Increase Physical Activity and Active Play

Goal: Get at least 1 hour of physical activity (including active play) per day.

Did You Know?

Children who are physically active:

- Do better in school
- Sleep better at night
- Have a healthier weight
- Grow strong bones and muscles

Tips:

- You can break up your child's activity into smaller periods of 10-20 minutes throughout the day.
- Get your child's heart (and yours!) pumping by dancing, riding bikes, jogging, hopscotch or jumping rope.
- Go on walks together – if you live near a park, make it a special afternoon trip and pack some healthy snacks to share.



4

Eat Fruits and Veggies

Goal: Replace sugary, salty, fried, and fast food with fruits and vegetables.

Did You Know?

Many people try to avoid eating potato chips, candy and other sweets. But you should also avoid processed foods, like:

- Sugary breakfast cereal
- Processed meats like hot dogs and cold cuts
- White bread
- Many pre-packaged foods

These foods have lots of calories from fat and sugar, and not many nutrients.

Tips:

- Include fruits and colorful vegetables at every meal and snack time.
- Let your kids pick out the fruits and vegetables at the store and help in the kitchen. Kids that are involved in making meals are more likely to try new foods.
- Look for kid friendly recipes. For ideas go to: www.mass.gov/MassInMotion/chopchop
- Find out when the farmer's market is open near you – in any season!



5

Get To Sleep, Stay Asleep

Goal: Sleep at least **11** hours per day (2-5 years old). Sleep at least **10** hours per day (6-12 years old).

Did You Know?

- Children who don't get enough sleep have a harder time paying attention at school. They are also more likely to have unhealthy weight gain.
- Sleeping in a quiet room lets their bodies and brains get the rest they need.
- Getting plenty of sleep helps kids do better in school.
- A regular bedtime routine helps kids get to sleep.

Tips:

- **Set a regular bedtime to help kids get the sleep they need.**
- **Create a relaxing and consistent bedtime routine.**
- **Make sure your child's bedroom is cool, quiet and dark.**
- **Make sure it's like that every night for the whole night.**
- **Remove any televisions from your child's bedroom.**
- **Help your child sleep through the night by turning off cell phones, computers and hand-held video games.**

Follow these 5 steps to grow healthy:

- 1** Switch from sugary drinks to water
- 2** Reduce screen time
- 3** Increase physical activity and active play
- 4** Eat fruits and veggies
- 5** Get to sleep, stay asleep

