



# Jaguars Toolkit

## For a Healthy Living at Home

In a matter of days our families went from well-known educational, work and social routines to home bounding. The new scenario has possibly brought increased levels of tension at homes but could as well offer a great opportunity to enhance the interaction between parents and children, involve children in family activities, and improve the children's self-sufficiency skills. To reduce the risk of negative mental health outcomes for the family members, especially children and teenagers during these times, parents can lead healthy routines at home by consistently promoting the family to adhere to three strategies

## The Toolkit

**Play &  
Exercise**

**Eat  
Balanced**

**Sleep &  
Rest**



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# Play & Exercise

## 30 min

Once a day for 30 minutes, practice one type of physical activity; schedule a time preferably in the morning, and set up a timer to help yourself stick to the 30-minute routine. A complete workout may be accomplished indoors, or in your backyard, the pool area, the balcony, the terrace, or the garage. Family members can do it in separate schedules or together.

## Games

Playtime is also a great way to keep active and share a fun time together without adhering to specific schedules. Family members can take turns individually or in teams through the week to lead a specific game or sport that promotes healthy competition. Children and teenagers love to compete in games with parents and siblings!

## Chores & Rewards

Additional sources of physical activity may come from family members completing a household chore individually or through teamwork; how about a gardening project? Reward points may be awarded for timely-completed chores and be redeemed for extra-time in daily favorite activities or accumulated towards special privileges...



Physical activity teaches your brain that your behavior matters; exercise fuels the brain's stress buffers, and it enhances cognitive processes like thinking, memory, attention span, and the ability to ignore distractions and multi-task, all necessary for learning and mental performance.



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# Eat Balanced

## This or That?

Healthy eating is especially important for keeping your immune system in top condition. When planning your grocery shopping consider that healthiest meals emphasize *whole grains, vegetables, and fruits*. Create daily meals which include greatest amounts of those, and smaller meat portions. *Nutrient-rich* foods also include produce, seafood and legumes.

## Yummy!

Limit the amount of fast foods, sugar and soft drinks; replace with snacks that include nuts, seeds and seasonal fruits. Remember to maintain high levels of hydration throughout the day!



Involve your children (age-appropriately) in cooking meals, serving, and clean up; it makes them more aware of healthy-eating habits and teaches them self-sufficiency skills. And... as they help out in planning and preparation of recipes they will be practicing math, reading and science! They may discover a hidden talent for cooking that brings out their best in a very different way. Bon Appétit!



# Sleep & Rest

Restorative sleep has great power; it not only serves to *decompress* the body and the mind after a full day routine -considered as the *plumbing system of the brain*- but it is critical for cognitive functioning as it directly impacts attention, working memory, energy level, mental and physical reaction times, executive functioning and emotional regulation.

## Zzzz...

As per the American Academy of Pediatrics, the following age-appropriate guidelines for sleep are recommended to promote optimal health in children and adolescents:

- Children 3 to 5 years of age should sleep 10 to 13 hours per 24 hours (including naps)
- Children 6 to 12 years of age should sleep 9 to 12 hours per 24 hours
- Teenagers 13 to 18 years of age should sleep 8 to 10 hours per 24 hours

## Breaks

Establish short mental breaks through the day after sustained mental effort or extended exposure to screens; stand, walk, or stretch for 5 to 10 minutes before initiating a new task or coming back to an ongoing task. Change of sensory stimulation and short periods of rest are healthy strategies for the mind and the body.

## Schedules

Establish healthy sleep schedules at home for every family member:

- ✓ Wake up in the mornings and go to sleep in the evenings at the *same time every day*
- ✓ Be exposed to natural light (day/night)
- ✓ Avoid late-day caffeine
- ✓ Limit/eliminate afternoon naps
- ✓ Skip out on screen time and exciting activities previous to going to bed
- ✓ Take body-temperature baths before sleep-time
- ✓ Set environmental conditions conducive to sleeping (noises, light, room temperature)