

Ideas & Tips for 3 to 5 years

Eat Well

- > Make meal time family time: turn off all screens and talk together
- > Talk to your healthcare provider if you have questions about nut or other food allergies

To manage serving sizes:

- > Use smaller plates, bowls, and cups when serving food and drinks

To help your child drink well:

- > Offer water and low-fat plain milk first
- > If you serve juice, make sure it is 100% fruit juice, and serve it *with* their meal instead of between meal times
- > Limit juice (even 100%) to ½ cup each day

Play Together

To limit screen time:

- > Set up screen time guidelines for the entire family
- > Try other ways to soothe your child when they are upset, like hugging them or reading a book together. Using screens for calming may make it harder for children to learn how to calm themselves
- > If you choose screen time, limit it to 1 hour, and watch kid-friendly shows together to help your child understand what they see

To encourage active play:

- > Make family time active time! Go for a walk or play a game outside together
- > Provide child-safe toys like balls, blocks, or crayons
- > Make sure all playtime is safe and supervised

Sleep More

To help your child learn to sleep well on their own:

- > Try not to go to their room every time they call out

If your child is afraid of the dark:

- > Talk to them about their fears
- > Agree that their fears feel real, and let them know that you are there to keep them safe
- > Give them a nightlight for their room

Resources

Somerville Hub

somervillehub.org

American Academy of Pediatrics

healthychildren.org

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

mass.gov/eohhs/consumer/basic-needs/food/wic

Somerville Non-Emergency 311 Service Center
Dial 311



Remember: Not all children are the same!

The information here should not take the place of advice from your doctor or health care provider. Ask them for additional information about your child.



SHAPE UP UNDER 5

Promoting healthy growth of all children in Somerville from birth through 5 years, with consistent messaging for caregivers and families, by organizations that support the wellbeing of young children.

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Small Steps to Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds

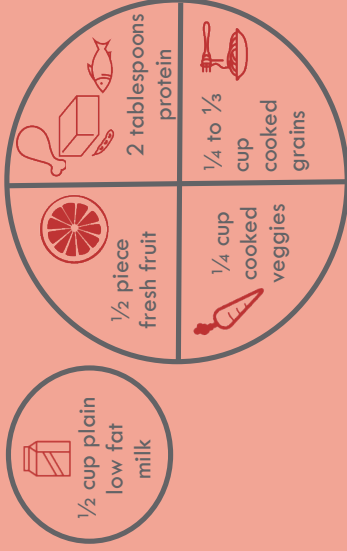
3 to 5 years



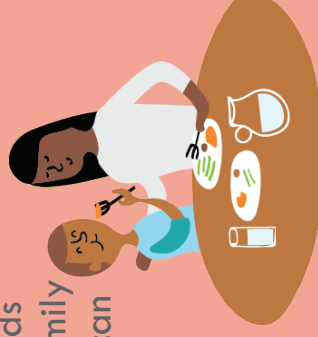
Eat Well
Play Together
Sleep More

SMALL MEALS FOR SMALL HANDS

1 meal =



- ✓ Start with breakfast every day
- ✓ **Snack smart.** Choose fruits & vegetables as often as you can
- ✓ Eat the same foods together as a family as often as you can



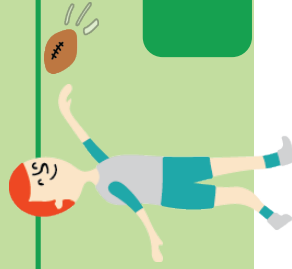
Your child is sweet enough!

They don't need soda or other sugary drinks

Play Together

Practice new moves:

- ★ Hopping & standing on one foot
- ★ Going up & down stairs
- ★ Kicking & catching a ball
- ★ Skipping & swinging



- ✓ **Fit in play throughout the day.** Make daily tasks like grocery shopping active and fun
- ✓ **Limit screen time to 1 hour each day** (TV, computer, tablet, smartphone, and video games)
- ✓ Be a role model by turning off screens when you are together

Habits form quickly at this age!

Aim for at least 60 minutes of active play each day

Get ready for bed by:

- ★ Reading books
- ★ Telling stories
- ★ Listening to soft music
- ★ Giving a warm bath

Using screens before bed can make it harder to settle down

- ✓ Your child needs **10-13 hours** of sleep each day, including naps
- ✓ Make sleeping areas slightly cool, quiet, and free of screens



Routines are helpful for your child!

Make bedtime and wake-up time the same 7 days a week

Sleep More