



Oral Health Education

for Pregnant Women, Children Birth through Age Five, and Their Families

A Resource for Home Visitors



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Introduction

Welcome to Cavity Free Kids!



Cavity Free Kids is oral health education for pregnant women, young children, and their families. Cavity Free Kids is designed for home visiting, Head Start, Early Head Start, child care, preschool, and other early learning programs, as well as for families to use at home.

Why Oral Health?

Oral health is a part of overall health. When children are not healthy, it affects their ability to develop, learn, and thrive.

Poor oral health can lead to:

- **Pain:** Tooth decay can cause intense pain. Because young children may not be able to describe pain or learn to live with it, they may act out or seem uncooperative.
- **Attention problems:** Children with infected and painful teeth may have a hard time sitting still and paying attention at school.
- **Delayed social development:** Children with tooth decay may feel anxious or depressed and may withdraw from normal activities. When missing teeth lead to speech problems, children may appear shy and avoid social interaction.
- **Sleep deprivation:** Children with tooth pain may have trouble getting a good night's sleep.
- **Poor nutrition:** Tooth decay may make chewing and swallowing difficult and uncomfortable. Children with tooth decay often do not get the nutrition they need to grow.
- **Missed school days:** Children with tooth decay miss school, disrupting their educational and social experiences.

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The good news: Tooth decay is almost entirely preventable.

Cavity Free Kids is designed to help you address oral health with families and help them prevent tooth decay. Cavity Free Kids includes a rich collection of home visiting resources that actively engage pregnant women, young children, and their families in fun-filled, interactive activities that help families practice good oral health habits at home.



Why Cavity Free Kids?

Cavity Free Kids helps you make oral health education a part of home visits and promotes healthy oral health habits at home.

- **Cavity Free Kids uses evidence-based dental science.** References can be found on the Cavity Free Kids website at www.cavityfreekids.org.
- **Cavity Free Kids aligns with Head Start Learning Domains, Washington's Early Learning and Development Guidelines, and the National Education Domains and can be used in a variety of early learning settings.** Cavity Free Kids is designed for use in home visiting programs, Head Start and Early Head Start, preschools, child care centers, family home child care settings, and other early learning environments, like library story times and play-and-learn groups.
- **Cavity Free Kids messages are appropriate for pregnant women, children ages 0-5, and their families.** It can be adapted to the ages and developmental stages of the children and families you serve.
- **Cavity Free Kids is easy to use.** Cavity Free Kids is designed to complement your work with families and your personal style. You can easily and creatively address oral health with families while meeting your program requirements and the needs and interests of families in your program.



What's Inside Cavity Free Kids: A Resource for Home Visitors

Basics of Oral Health

Cavity Free Kids is organized around five basics of oral health:

1. Baby Teeth Are Important
2. Water for Thirst
3. Tooth Healthy Foods
4. Brush, Floss, Swish
5. Going to the Dentist

Big Bites

Each **Basic of Oral Health** includes Big Bites, important information for you to share with families during visits.

Home Visit Guides

Each **Basic of Oral Health** includes a home visit guide to use with clients. The guide is organized by the child's age:

- Pregnancy
- Birth—6 Months
- 6—36 Months
- 3—5 Years

The visit guide includes:

- **Goals, planning, and preparation** information.
- **Conversation starters** to engage families.
- **Activities** for engaging families and children.
- **Reflective or closing questions** to help families plan to incorporate oral health habits into their daily routines.
- **Parent practice handouts** to help families set goals and incorporate oral health concepts into their daily routines.
- **Additional activities** for parents and children to do during or after a home visit.

Cavity Free Kids makes it easy to talk about oral health with the families I work with. The resources can be incorporated into the conversations I'm already having with parents and the activities are fun for parents and children to do together.

Mindy, Home Visitor

Family Engagement Tools

This section includes more tools to promote oral health with families. The tools include:

- **Frequently Asked Questions** to help you answer common questions that families ask.
- **Conversation Starters** to help you start oral health conversations with families.
- The **Let's Talk Teeth** template to help families set oral health goals.
- **Family/Parent Night** activities and demonstrations for engaging families in oral health in a fun and interactive way.
- **Information Bites** to share in your regular communications with families, in newsletters, websites, emails, etc.
- **Little Bites** to share with families when they ask about a specific topic or when the need arises.

"Cavity Free Kids makes incorporating oral health into group connections fun!"

Jennifer, Home Visitor

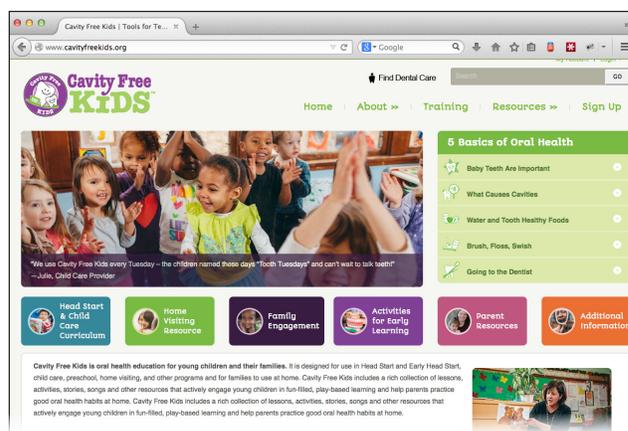
Quick Reference Booklet

The Quick Reference Booklet offers a snapshot of each **Basic of Oral Health** found in the complete home visiting book. Use the booklet to help plan visits or take it with you on a visit in place of the entire home visiting book. The Quick Reference Booklet can be found in the front pocket of Cavity Free Kids.

Cavity Free Kids Website

All of the information found in this book can be found on the Cavity Free Kids website. The website offers additional resources, information and tools for parents, and other oral health information.

Visit www.cavityfreekids.org to find more great ways for engaging pregnant women, children and families in oral health. Come back often to find out what's new!



Using Cavity Free Kids for Home Visitors

Cavity Free Kids is designed to help families establish good oral health habits and connect to dental care. The home visiting resources complement the curricula and tools you use with your families and can be incorporated into topic areas you already address with them. You can help families set and reach oral health goals and address oral health problems or emergencies when they arise.

Set and Reach Oral Health Goals

First Home Visit: Ideally, you should introduce oral health and the Cavity Free Kids home visiting resources to the families you serve by first delivering *The First Visit! Baby Teeth Are Important*. Work with the parent to fill out the *Let's Talk Teeth* questionnaire. Use her answers to help her set oral health goals using the *Let's Set Goals* sheet.

Subsequent Home Visits: Choose from the other **Basics of Oral Health** based on the oral health goals she set at the first home visit and the age of her child.

For example, if you are talking to a mother of a 21-month-old and she is interested in serving her child tooth-healthy foods and finding dental care for him, plan to use these Basics of Oral Health:

- Tooth Healthy Foods: Let's Choose Tooth Healthy Foods! (6—36 months)
- Going to the Dentist: Getting Regular Dental Checkups (6—36 months)

If, during your conversations, other oral health questions or topics arise, select other Basics of Oral Health or Little Bites to share with her. For example, if she is interested in checking her child's teeth for tooth decay, share the *Lift the Lip* handout in the Little Bites section.

Use the *Let's Talk Teeth* questionnaire regularly or as needed to set additional oral health goals with families.

Address Emergencies or Problems

You may also identify oral health emergencies or problems during your visits with clients. When these situations occur, select the appropriate Cavity Free Kids home visiting guide to help families address the problem.

For example, if during a home visit a parent mentions that her 4-year-old has tooth pain, snacks, and drinks juice and soda throughout the day, use the **Basics of Oral Health** *Going to the Dentist*, *Water for Thirst*, and *Brush, Floss, Swish*. Specifically, use these guides within the Basic:

- Going to the Dentist: Make and Keep Regular Dental Checkups (3 to 5 years)
- Tooth Healthy Foods: Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List (3 to 5 years)
- Water for Thirst: Drink Like an Elephant (3 to 5 years)

In this case, because the child is experiencing pain, use the *Going to the Dentist: Make and Keep Regular Dental Checkups* (3 to 5 years) guide right away. After the family has been connected with a dentist and the oral health problem has been addressed, use the *Tooth Healthy Foods* (3 to 5 years) and the *Water for Thirst: Drink Like an Elephant* (3 to 5 years) guides.

For more information, ideas, and resources,
visit the Cavity Free Kids website.

www.cavityfreekids.org

Baby Teeth Are Important

1

Big Bites

Key information to share with families:

- **Baby teeth are important.** They help us smile, eat, talk, and hold space for adult teeth.
- Baby teeth, also called primary teeth, will usually start to **come in at about 6 months of age** and continue to come in until about 30 months of age.
- The combination of germs and carbohydrates (sugars and starches) creates an acid that attacks teeth.
- **Cavity causing germs** can be passed from a mother or caregiver to a baby through kissing, sharing utensils, or by putting baby's pacifier in mom's mouth.
- Cavities in babies and young children can be prevented by making sure mom doesn't have active tooth decay. It is important for pregnant women and mothers of young children to get preventive care and dental treatment.
- White or brown spots on teeth can be early signs of a cavity and a black spot is probably a cavity.
- **Untreated cavities can lead to a serious infection.**

Goals

During this visit:

- Understand why baby teeth are important and what causes cavities.
- Select oral health goals and discuss next steps.

Baby Teeth Are Important

Goals

During this Visit:

- Understand why baby teeth are important and what causes cavities.
- Select oral health goals and discuss next steps.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Copy of Let's Talk Teeth (see page 19)

Supplies for Extending the Learning:

- "Baby Teeth Chant" song lyrics

Parent Practice Handout:

- Let's Set Goals

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- When I say oral health, what comes to mind? What about baby teeth?
- Do you know what causes cavities?
 - Today we're going to talk about baby teeth—why they are important, what causes cavities, and what cavities look like.
 - We're also going to talk about your families oral habits and set goals.
- There are lots of things we do to take care of our baby's teeth and mouth.

Parent/Child Activities

1

Talk with the parent and child about why baby teeth are important.

- You may have heard someone say “they're just baby teeth—don't worry about taking care of them, they're going to fall out.”
- The truth is that baby teeth are important. Ask the parent to tell you why baby teeth are important. Answers include:
 - They help children smile, eat, and form words.
 - They hold a healthy space for adult teeth.
- Also, pain caused by cavities in baby teeth can be very intense and can have a negative impact on children, including making it difficult for them to eat, get enough sleep, behave, pay attention in school, and learn to speak.

2

Talk with the parent and child about what causes cavities.

- The combination of the germs in our mouths and the foods high in sugar and carbohydrates (like chips, crackers, and white bread) and drinking sugary drinks (soda pop, juice, and sports drinks) causes an acid that attacks teeth. Repeated acid attacks cause cavities.
- Did you know that it's possible to pass cavity causing germs from mom (or caregiver) to baby through kissing, sharing utensils, or by putting baby's pacifier in mom's mouth? It's true!
- The bad news? Cavities are a big problem—tooth decay is the number one chronic disease of early childhood.
 - Tooth decay can look like white, brown, or black spots on the teeth. The backside of the upper front teeth is often the first place that shows signs of early decay.
- The good news? Cavities are almost entirely preventable and can be avoided by limiting continual snacking, drinking water instead of juice/soda, brushing/flossing, and by making sure mom doesn't have active tooth decay that she can pass to her baby.

3

Set oral health goals with the parent.

- Use the *Let's Talk Teeth* questionnaire and the *Let's Set Goals* sheet to set goals with the family and discuss which goal they'd like to start working on first.
 - First, help the parent answer the questions on *Let's Talk Teeth*.
 - Then, review and discuss the parent's answers with her. Work with her to identify areas she's interested in improving.
 - Choose oral health goals on the *Let's Set Goals* sheet that align with the areas she is interested in improving.
 - Discuss with the family which goal they would like to address first. Make a plan to talk about that goal at the next home visit or soon after.

Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

A Baby Teeth Chant

Baby teeth, baby teeth
Chew and smile
Stay strong and bright for a long, long while
Baby teeth, baby teeth
To keep you clean and strong
I'll brush and floss you every day
Baby teeth, baby teeth
Are you ready to come out today?
Let's count along...
One, two, three, four, five, SIX!

Closing

Questions to help her reflect and make a plan.

- What questions do you have about baby teeth or cavities?
- Did anything we talked about today surprise you? What and why?
- What are you looking forward to talking about next? Is there anything you're not looking forward to discussing?

Parent Practice Handouts

See page 20.

Let's Talk Teeth!

Parent's Name: _____ Child's Name: _____ Child's Age: _____

Answer the following questions about your child: (note: some questions may not apply based on the age and developmental stage of your child.)

- | | Yes | No | NA |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. If your child has teeth, do you brush them?
If YES: Times per day _____ Times of day _____ Days per week _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does your child drink anything besides water between meals and snacks?
If YES: What does she drink? _____ How often? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does your child go to bed with a bottle filled with anything besides water?
If YES: What type of drink? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Does your child eat between meals?
If YES: What does he/she eat? _____
When? (times of day) _____ How often? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Does your child have a dentist? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Have you had your child's teeth checked by a dentist or medical provider?
If YES: When? _____ By whom? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Does your child have cavities or pain in his/her mouth? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Do you have concerns about his/her teeth or mouth? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you are pregnant, answer the following questions:

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Do you brush your teeth?
If YES: Times per day _____ Times of day _____ Days per week _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Do you drink anything but water between meals and snacks?
If YES: What do you drink? _____ How often? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Do you eat between meals?
If YES: What? _____
When? (times of day) _____ How often? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Do you have a dentist? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Have you seen the dentist during your pregnancy? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Do you have cavities or pain in your mouth? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Do you have concerns about your teeth or mouth?
If YES: What? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Let's Set Goals

Select the oral health goals you would like to accomplish. Goals should be set based on your child's oral health needs or your needs if you are pregnant.

Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.



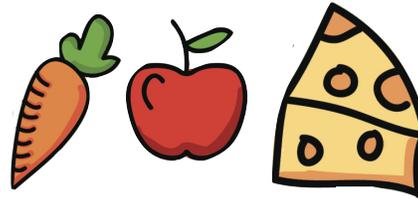
Drink only water between meals.



If baby goes to sleep with a bottle, fill it only with water.



Eat tooth healthy foods for snacks and meals.



Eat during meals and snacks only rather than "grazing" during the day.



Find a dentist.



Make a dental appointment.



Follow-up with treatment appointments.



The client may choose to set another goal that is not listed.

Other: _____



Water for Thirst



Big Bites

Key information to share with families:

- **Water is the best drink** to keep your teeth and body healthy.
- Water may contain **fluoride**, a natural mineral that helps prevent cavities.
- Drinking **juice or soda throughout the day causes repeated acid attacks**. Repeated acid attacks cause cavities.
- Juice and soda pop have a lot of sugar in them and no nutritional value. Replace them with water!
- When a **pregnant woman** snacks frequently to ease nausea or other pregnancy issues, encourage her to rinse with water after eating (or sipping sugary drinks).
- When **baby breastfeeds or sleeps** with a bottle of milk, the sugars stay on the teeth while the baby sleeps. This gives the germs time to attack and weaken the teeth and make cavities. If a baby goes to bed with a bottle, fill it only with water.
- **Early Childhood Caries** (Baby Bottle Tooth Decay) on the top and bottom front teeth, is commonly caused by frequent bottle feeding or allowing milk/sweet beverages to pool in the mouth during sleep.
- **Encourage children to drink water for thirst** in between meals and at snack time. This will help prevent cavities.

Goals

Pregnancy

- Discuss the benefits of drinking water.
- Talk about and make plans to drink water instead of sugary beverages.

Birth to 6 months

- Discuss that babies should drink water when they're ready for liquids besides breast milk or formula.
- Discuss how to introduce water to a baby.

6 to 36 months

- Encourage parent to serve water instead of juice, soda pop, and other beverages and explain why.

3 to 5 years

- Encourage children to drink water for thirst instead of juice, soda pop, and other beverages.

Water for Thirst: Drink Water for You, Drink Water for Two

Goals

During this Visit:

- Discuss the benefits of drinking water.
- Talk about and make plans to drink water instead of sugary beverages.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Nutrition labels (regular soda pops, juice, sports drinks, water)
- White sugar (bag or box of cubes)
- Teaspoon
- Clear container
- Water glass filled with water

Supplies for Extending the Learning:

- Sugar cubes
- Fresh fruits or vegetables to flavor water

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Drink Water for You, Drink Water for Two
- Drinking Water Chart

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- Most of us enjoy sugary drinks like soda pop, juice, and sports drinks. Do you like any of these drinks? If so, which ones and how often do you drink them?
- While they taste really good, the sugar in these beverages can cause cavities and weight gain. Every time you drink something with sugar in it, it causes an acid attack that can lead to cavities.
- While you may crave these types of drinks, let's talk about reaching for a glass of water instead.

Activity

1 How much sugar are you drinking?

Use the following script to demonstrate to the pregnant woman how much sugar is in some of the beverages she likes to drink.

- Let's explore the amount of sugar in different types of drinks and talk about why water is a better choice.
- *Show the pregnant woman the nutrition label on the right.* Let's guess the amount of sugar that is in this drink.
- This is a bottle (20 ounces) of regular cola. Let's look at the nutrition label to see how many servings and how much sugar is in this bottle.
- The label says Sugars—65 grams. There are four grams of sugar in a teaspoon. Divide the number of grams by 4 to tell us how many teaspoons of sugar. *Example $65 \div 4 = 16.25$*
- Now let's look at the number of servings in this container. There is one serving which means there are 16.25 teaspoons of sugar in this bottle.
- Let's pour 16.25 teaspoons into this container, so we can see how much sugar we're drinking every time we have a bottle of this. Would you ever think to spoon that much sugar into a glass and drink it? Would you want your baby or child to drink that much sugar? Probably not!

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 bottle (20oz)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 240	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Polyunsaturated Fat 0g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0g	
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 75mg	3%
Potassium 0mg	
Total Carbohydrate 65g	22%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 65g	
Other Carbohydrate 0g	
Protein 0g	
Vitamin A 0%	• Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 0%	• Iron 0%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	

How Much Sugar Are You Drinking Continued

- *Repeat process with two or three other drinks. End with water.* This is a glass of water. How much sugar do you think is in this glass of water? That's right, there is NONE. Water has no sugar, which means it doesn't cause cavities. In fact, it can help prevent them.
- If you have nausea or vomiting (morning sickness) it may be difficult to drink water. Drinking small sips of water throughout the day can help.
- Drinking water is good—for your oral and overall health and for your baby too! Also, rinsing your mouth with water helps neutralize the acids from nausea and vomiting.



Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

A Stack Sugar Cubes

Stack sugar cubes (each is about a teaspoon) in towers showing the amount of sugar she drinks in a day. Challenge her to keep the stack from getting so high it might fall over! Leave some sugar cubes for her to track her sugar drinks during the week.

B Drinking “Flavored” Waters

Drink flavored water instead of soda pop, juice, and other sugary drinks. Add sliced strawberries, lemon or cucumber; frozen melon cubes; or mint to tap water—it tastes great and is good for your teeth and your body!

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What could you do to drink more water every day? What can I do to support you in drinking more water?
- What barriers might you face when trying to incorporate more water into your day?
- How can I support you in drinking water instead of sugary beverages?
- What questions do you have about sugary beverages?

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 27-28.

Drink Water for You, Drink Water for Two

Did You Know?

- Beverages like soda pop, juice, and sports drinks contain sugar that can cause tooth decay.
- Water is good for your teeth, good for your body, good for your baby, and it's FREE!

Amount of Sugar in Common Beverages

Name	Teaspoons of Sugar	Calories
Regular Soda, 12 oz.	9 $\frac{3}{4}$	140
Ginger Ale, 12 oz.	8	124
Apple Juice, 8 oz.	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	120
Sports Drink, 8 oz.	3	63
Latte, 9.5 oz.	4 $\frac{1}{4}$	140
Caffe Mocha, 16 oz.	8 $\frac{3}{4}$	330
Chocolate Milk, 8 oz.	6	150
1% Milk, 8 oz.	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	102
Water	0	0

Tips to help you drink more water:

- Flavor your water with fruits or vegetables—try adding a slice of lemon, strawberries, blueberries, or cucumber to a glass of water. Let it sit so the water picks up the flavor.
- Choose times during the day when you don't feel as nauseous and drink a glass of water, or sip on water all day.
- Set a daily goal for the amount of water you're going to drink.

Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Choose water instead of sugary beverages.
- Set a goal for the amount of water I'm going to drink each day.
- Use the water drinking chart to track my water intake.



Water Drinking Chart

Circle how many glasses of water you drink in a day! Each glass below represents one 8 ounce glass of water.

Week 1

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

Week 2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

Week 3

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

What's Next? Water is Best!

Goals

During this Visit:

- Discuss that babies should drink water when they're ready for liquids besides breast milk or formula.
- Discuss how to introduce water to a baby.



Planning the Visit

Supplies for Optional Activities:

- "Drinking Up the Water" song lyrics
- Sugar, spoon, labels, bottle or sippy cup

Parent Practice Handout:

- What's Next? Water Is Best!

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- What are some of the things you have heard from family, friends, or others about what your baby should be drinking now? What about as he gets older?

Parent and Child Activity

1 What to drink—now and later.

Discuss with the parent that breast milk or formula are the only things baby needs right now:

- Your baby is getting all of his nutritional needs from breast milk or formula. Breast milk or formula is best because it is easy for your baby to digest, helps baby stay hydrated, and contains all of the nutrition he needs.
- This won't change until baby gets a little bit older. Talk with your medical provider about when it's time to introduce other liquids and solids.
- Don't add any sweeteners, such as honey or sugar, to your baby's bottle. Honey and other sweeteners cause cavities.

Talk with the parent about when and how to introduce water:

- Even though your baby is getting all of his nutritional needs from breast milk or formula, he's going to be introduced to new foods and drinks before you know it.
- When you begin serving single grain cereal to your baby, mix it with water, breast milk, or formula—NOT juice or other sugary beverages.
- When you're ready to introduce liquids besides breast milk or formula, offer your baby water. Ask your medical provider when and if he should also start drinking milk at mealtimes.
- Babies DO NOT need juice, soda pop, or other sugary beverages. These drinks cause cavities and should be avoided.
- If you feed your baby during the night, when baby is ready, start substituting water for breast milk or formula (consult your medical provider).
- If you eventually give baby a bottle or sippy cup to drink from during the day and/or put baby to bed with a bottle, fill it only with water.

A **Sing the song “Drinking Up the Water”**
(To the tune “All the Fish are Swimming in the Water”)

(Insert child's name) is drinking up the water,
drinking up the water, drinking up the water.

(Insert child's name) is drinking up the water, gulp, gulp, gulp, gulp,
Ahhhhh!

(Repeat)

B **Busy, Thirsty Baby**

Have baby lay on the parent's lap facing her parent. Have the parent say the child's name in the chant as she gently exercises her hands and legs in and out.

Busy *(name)* needs a drink!

Water for *(name's)* little hand *(bring right hand to center)*

All the way to *(name's)* fingers! *(bring right hand out)*

Water for *(name's)* little foot *(bring right foot up toward tummy)*

All the way to *(name's)* toes! *(bring right foot back out)*

(Repeat with other hand and foot)

Thirsty *(name)* needs water to drink!

C **Label Reading**

Read labels on juice containers to determine the amounts of sugar. Spoon that amount into an empty bottle or sippy cup.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What questions do you have about water and your baby?
- What are some things you could say to your family or friends who tell you that you need to give your baby juice, soda pop, or other drinks?
- What barriers might you face in serving your baby water instead of juice, soda pop, or other drinks? How can I support you in overcoming those barriers?

Parent Practice Handout

See page 33.

What's Next? Water Is Best!

Did You Know?

- You should talk with your medical provider when it's time to introduce water.
- When you begin serving single grain cereal to your baby, mix it with water, breastmilk, or formula—**NOT** juice.
- When you're ready to introduce liquids besides breast milk or formula, offer your baby water.
- Babies **DO NOT** need juice, soda pop, or other sugary beverages. These drinks cause cavities and should be avoided.
- If you feed your baby during the night, when baby is ready, start substituting water for breast milk or formula.
- If you eventually put baby to bed with a bottle, fill it only with water.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Ask my medical provider when my baby should start drinking water.
- When it's time to start liquids besides breast milk and formula, serve water instead of juice, soda pop, or other drinks.



Water is Best for Teeth and Body

Goals

During this Visit:

- Encourage parent to serve water instead of juice, soda pop, and other beverages and explain why.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Sugar
- Spoon
- Clear container
- "Potter the Otter" book (family can keep book)

Supplies for Optional Activities:

- "Drinking up the Water" song lyrics

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Water Is Best for Teeth and Body
- Drinking Water Chart

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- What types of drinks do you offer your child? When do you offer them and why?
- What types of drinks do other people offer your child? When and why?
- Drinks other than water—juice, soda pop, and other beverages—contain sugar and cause cavities.
- Sipping on these drinks throughout the day (or night, if the child goes to bed with a bottle or sippy cup) is especially bad for your teeth.
- If you're serving your child sugary drinks, consider substituting those drinks for water.

Parent and Child Activity

1 How much sugar are you drinking?

If you haven't already, do the "Guess the Sugar" activity on page 140.

Tips for engaging the child in this activity:

- Help the child scoop the sugar into the container or let him scoop the sugar himself if he's able.
- Count the scoops of sugar with the child as you dump them into the container.
- As you scoop, ask the child to guess how many scoops of sugar might fit into the container. The answer doesn't matter!

2 Read the book "Potter the Otter" together.

- Talk with the parent about how she could start offering water to her child instead of other drinks.

Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

- A** **Sing the song “Drinking Up the Water”**
(To the tune “All the Fish are Swimming in the Water”)

(Insert child's name) is drinking up the water,
drinking up the water, drinking up the water.

(insert child's name) is drinking up the water, gulp, gulp, gulp, gulp,

Ahhhhh!

(Repeat)

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What can I do to help you promote water with you child/family?
- What barriers do you think you might face in serving water?
- How can I help you overcome them?

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 38-39.

Water Is Best for Teeth and Body

Did You Know?

It is best to offer your child water in a bottle or cup between meals and snacks, and at bedtime.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Offer my child water in a bottle, sippy cup, or cup between meals and snacks.
- Not serve juice, soda pop, or other sweet drinks in a bottle or cup.
- If I put him to bed with a bottle or cup, fill it only with water.



Water Drinking Chart

Circle how many glasses of water you drink in a day! Each glass below represents one 8 ounce glass of water.

Week 1

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

Week 2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

Week 3

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

Drink Like an Elephant

Goals

During this Visit:

- Encourage children to drink water for thirst instead of juice, soda pop, and other beverages.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Picture of elephant
- 2 small cups
- 2 or more gallons of water
- Big container to dump water into
- Straws

Supplies for Optional Activities:

- "Potter the Otter" book
- Paper or coffee filters
- Colored water (food coloring, water) in a spray bottle

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Drink Like an Elephant!
- Water Drinking Chart

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- What drinks do you serve at meal time? Between meals?
- What types of drinks does your child request?
- How does your child react when he is offered water?
- Juice, soda pop, and other drinks can cause cavities. Water is the best drink for our bodies—it's sugar and calorie free, and tap water may contain fluoride, a natural mineral that helps prevent cavities.

Parent and Child Activity

1 Drink like an elephant!

Use the following script to show the parent and child that drinking water can be fun!

- **What is the biggest animal that lives on the land?** The elephant!
- *(show picture)* **Look how big his teeth are!** Elephants have the largest teeth of any animal. They are called tusks. They also have more teeth inside their mouths that they use for chewing food.
- **I wonder how this elephant takes care of his teeth.** What do you think? *(wait for response)* If he lives in a zoo, the zookeeper brushes the elephant's teeth with a super big toothbrush.
- **And, what do you think he drinks to stay healthy?** *(wait for response)* He drinks water to keep his teeth and body strong and healthy. And just like an elephant, people need water, too. Drinking water helps our teeth stay strong and healthy.
- **Do you know how this elephant drinks water?** *(wait for response)* He has a trunk that is kind of like a straw. He uses his trunk to suck in the water and then he squirts the water into his mouth.
- **What does an elephant do when he is playing with his elephant friends and he gets thirsty?** *(wait for response)*
- **Does he drink juice?** **NO.**
- **Does he drink soda pop?** **NO.** He doesn't like juice or soda pop—he doesn't want cavities. **He drinks water with his trunk.**

Drink like an elephant! script (continued)

- **Let's see how much an elephant drinks compared to how much you drink.** (*pour water into a small or medium-sized cup*) You use these cups and drink this much during snack. If you are very thirsty, you might drink two cups of water. We want to drink water when we are thirsty. **Water keeps our bodies strong like elephants!**
- **Start pouring water into the big container.** Ask the child to tell you to stop pouring water when she thinks you've poured the amount that an elephant can drink. (*pour about two gallons of water*)—if the child says stop, say no, not yet, until you have poured two gallons of water.
- **Tell the parent and child** that two gallons (or point to the water and say “this much”) is how much an elephant can get into his trunk at one time.
- **Move the small cup next to the 2 gallon container** so children can compare the amounts of water.
- Look at all of this elephant water. Who would like to try some? (*pour a cup of the “elephant’s water” for the parent, child, and yourself. Give each person a straw so they can “drink like the elephant”*)

Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

A Read the book “Potter the Otter”

B Spray Bottle Water Color Art

Instructions: Let children spray colored water on coffee filters or paper. Watch how the water moves and fades. Talk about how important it is for us to drink water. Water spreads throughout our whole body to keep it healthy!

C Thirsty for Water

Instructions: Use objects found in the home (balls, small objects to jump over, etc) to set up an obstacle course with the child’s toys and other objects outside. Have the child run around the obstacle course until he is really tired. **Alternative:** Have child do 20 jumping jacks or another form of exercise.

Ask: Are you thirsty? What should we drink to help our bodies and teeth stay strong and healthy? Wait for response, then and give a drink of water to quench his thirst!

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What are some ways you could encourage your child to drink more water?
- Show parent and child the water chart—hang it up and set a goal for how much water they'll drink before the next visit (give one to the parent and one to the child if both would like to use it).

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 45-46.

Drink Like an Elephant

Did You Know?

- Water is the best drink for our teeth and bodies.
- It's best to offer water for your child's thirst throughout the day.
- Juice, soda pop, and sports drinks cause cavities. Save them for special days.
- Water may contain fluoride, a natural mineral that helps prevent cavities.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Drink and serve my child water instead of juice, soda pop, and sports drinks.
- Make drinking fun by giving my child a water bottle or straw.
- Make water more interesting for my child by adding slices of fresh lemon, cucumber, or strawberries.



Water Drinking Chart

Circle how many glasses of water you drink in a day! Each glass below represents one 8 ounce glass of water.

Week 1

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

Week 2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

Week 3

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						
						
						
						

Tooth Healthy Foods

3

Big Bites

Key information to share with families:

- **Tooth healthy foods are low in sugar and high in fiber and nutrients**, such as fruits, vegetables, cheeses, meat and beans, and whole grain breads and pastas.
- **Tooth unhealthy foods are starchy and high in sugar**, such as crackers, dried fruit, chips, and cookies, as well as juice and soda pop.
- Eating tooth unhealthy foods creates an acid that attacks teeth.
- Continual snacking on tooth unhealthy foods or drinking juice or soda causes repeated acid attacks. **Repeated acid attacks cause cavities.**
- It is important to **eat meals and snacks at regularly scheduled times**. This reduces the number of acid attacks on teeth.
- Limit tooth unhealthy foods for special days or occasions.
- When a **pregnant woman** snacks frequently to ease nausea or other pregnancy issues, encourage her to rinse with water after eating.

Goals

Pregnancy

- Discuss that what we eat, as well as how often we eat, impacts our oral health.
- Help pregnant woman plan to eat tooth healthy foods and limit eating to meal and snack times (factoring in pregnancy symptoms like nausea, etc. that may alter eating habits.)

Birth to 6 months

- Discuss introducing “tooth healthy” solid foods to the baby when she is ready.

6 to 36 months

- Discuss serving tooth healthy foods during meal and snack times.
- Discuss limiting eating to meal and snack times.

3 to 5 years

- Reinforce serving tooth healthy foods during meal and snack times.
- Discuss limiting eating to meal and snack times.

and When!

You are What You Eat

Goals

During this Visit:

- Discuss that what we eat, as well as how often we eat, impacts our oral health
- Help pregnant woman plan to eat tooth healthy foods and limit eating to meal and snack times (factoring in pregnancy symptoms like nausea, etc. that may alter eating habits)



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Clear container (small vase or bowl)
- Baking soda
- Ground black pepper
- White vinegar

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Eat Tooth Healthy Food for You and Baby!
- Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List

- Describe what you eat and drink during a typical day.
- Have your eating habits changed since you have been pregnant? If so, how?
- Today we are going to talk about how what you eat and how often you eat can impact your oral health.
- Every time we eat foods high in sugar and carbohydrates (sweets, crackers, chips, white bread/pasta, dried fruit, etc.), the bacteria in our mouths make acid that attack our teeth for 20 minutes. Reference the *Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List* on page 53 for examples.
- Snacking (or sipping on sweet drinks) throughout the day will cause multiple acid attacks that may lead to cavities. It's best to choose tooth healthy foods and limit eating to meal and snack times.
- However, if you feel nauseous as a symptom of pregnancy, you may feel better eating small meals throughout the day. If this is the case, choose tooth healthy foods if you can brush or rinse your mouth out with water after eating.

Activity

1 Germs + food = cavities.

Use the following script to demonstrate how eating tooth unhealthy foods throughout the day causes cavities. In the demonstration, the baking soda represents food, black pepper represents germs and vinegar is used to create the acid.

- Imagine that this container is your mouth. We know that germs already live in your mouth. *Sprinkle in pepper.*
- When we eat potato chips or other foods that we like (*pour in some baking soda*) the germs start eating the food.
- *Pour a small amount of vinegar in until it begins to bubble up.* The germs plus the food make acid.
- What do you notice? What do you think is happening here? *Encourage responses:* an acid attack is happening, constant acid attacks can cause cavities, the teeth are getting weak.
- What happens if we add more food? *Add more baking soda/vinegar. Encourage responses:* More acid attacks are happening, the teeth are getting weaker and susceptible to cavities.
- *Repeat the process.*

Germs plus food equals cavities (continued)

- Our teeth get cavities when germs eat tooth unhealthy foods and create an acid. If we eat tooth unhealthy foods throughout the day, acid attacks are constantly weakening our teeth. Cavities may be forming.
- How can we prevent acid attacks from happening on our teeth? *Encourage responses:* by eating tooth healthy foods and limiting when we eat to meal and snack times instead of eating throughout the day, rinsing with water after eating to reduce the acid.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What barriers or difficulties might you have replacing tooth unhealthy foods with tooth healthy foods? How can I help you overcome these barriers?
- How do you feel about eating only during meals and snack times? Is that possible during your pregnancy? If not, how do you feel about rinsing your mouth with water?

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 52-53.

Eat Tooth Healthy Foods for You and Baby

Did You Know?

- Tooth healthy foods are high in fiber and low in sugar and include fresh fruit, vegetables and protein rich foods like nuts, cheese and meats.
- It is important to have meals and snacks at regularly scheduled times instead of snacking or “grazing” all day. This reduces the number of acid attacks on teeth and gives them time to rest and rebuild.
- If you frequently snack to ease nausea, rinsing your mouth with water after eating will reduce the acid that causes cavities.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Limit grazing (eating throughout the day) and instead eat snacks and meals at regularly scheduled times.
- Rinse my mouth out after eating or drinking.
- Buy tooth healthy foods.



Tooth Healthy Foods List



Apples
Bananas
Broccoli
Carrots
Cereals, low-sugar
Cheese
Cherries
Cottage cheese
Cucumber
Eggs
Fish
Grapes
Green beans
Lettuce
Meats
Melons
Nuts
Oranges
Peaches
Peas
Popcorn
Strawberries
Sweet potatoes
Tofu
Tomatoes
Whole grain breads
Whole grain crackers,
rice and pastas
Yogurt



Beverages:

Water
Milk

Tooth Unhealthy Foods List



Bread (White)
Breakfast cereal, sugary
Cake
Candy
Chips
Cookies
Crackers
Fruit snacks
Graham crackers
Granola bars
Gum—with sugar
Ice cream



Beverages:

Juice
Soda pop
Sports drinks
Sweet tea
Sweetened milk
Sweetened coffee



★ Choose and prepare foods that are **age appropriate** for your child.

Introducing Tooth Healthy Foods

Goals

During this Visit:

- Discuss introducing “tooth healthy” solid foods to the baby when she is ready.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Book: “Eating The Rainbow” (Babies Everywhere) by Star Bright Books

Supplies for Optional Activities:

- “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” song lyrics
- Plastic or wooden fruits, vegetables, cheeses, meats, etc.

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Introduce Tooth Healthy Foods!
- Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- What types of things related to your baby's eating habits or nutrition are you wondering about?
- Have you thought about what you'll feed baby when she is ready for solid foods?

Parent and Child Activity

1 Talk with the parent about tooth healthy and tooth unhealthy foods.

- Use the *Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List* on page 60 to show examples of tooth healthy foods (foods low in sugar and high in fiber and nutrients—fruits, vegetables, cheese/dairy products, meats/proteins) and tooth unhealthy foods (starchy foods high in sugar—chips, crackers, fruit snacks/gummies and other sticky foods that get caught in teeth)
- Tooth healthy foods are good for your teeth; tooth unhealthy foods feed the germs in our mouths, causing acid attacks that weaken teeth and cause cavities.

2 Read “Eating the Rainbow” with the parent and child.

- Talk with the parent about serving tooth healthy foods to her baby when it's time for baby to start trying solids (note: the parent can call her medical provider to find out when to introduce solids to her baby).
- Have the parent circle tooth healthy foods on the *Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List* that she'd like to serve to her child when baby is ready for solid foods.

A Sing the song “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”

Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O,
And on that farm he had some food, E-I-E-I-O,
With an apple here and a carrot there,
Fruits and vegetables everywhere,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.
And on that farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O.
With some good milk here and some good cheese there,
Strong teeth, strong bones, everywhere,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.
And on that farm he had a hog, E-I-E-I-O.
With some protein here and some iron there,
Strong teeth, strong bones, everywhere,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.

B Play Peek-a-boo

Bring some play foods and play “peek-a-boo” with baby. Demonstrate how parents can show excitement (“yum!”) about healthy foods.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What tooth healthy foods will you try first with your baby? Why?
- How can I support you in offering tooth healthy foods to baby when it's time?

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 59-60.

Introduce Tooth Healthy Foods!

Did You Know?

- Breast milk or formula is the primary source of nutrition for your infant.
- Beginning at about 6 months, infants may be introduced to solid foods (ask your medical provider when to begin serving solids).
- Tooth healthy foods are low in sugar and high in fiber and nutrients. Serving baby tooth healthy foods when he is ready will help prevent cavities.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

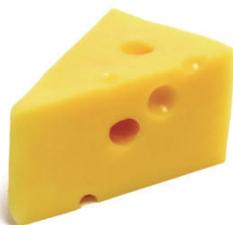
- Ask my baby's medical provider when to introduce solid foods.
- Introduce tooth healthy foods like squash, carrots, peas, and bananas.



Tooth Healthy Foods List



Apples
Bananas
Broccoli
Carrots
Cereals, low-sugar
Cheese
Cherries
Cottage cheese
Cucumber
Eggs
Fish
Grapes
Green beans
Lettuce
Meats
Melons
Nuts
Oranges
Peaches
Peas
Popcorn
Strawberries
Sweet potatoes
Tofu
Tomatoes
Whole grain breads
Whole grain crackers,
rice and pastas
Yogurt



Beverages:

Water
Milk

Tooth Unhealthy Foods List



Bread (White)
Breakfast cereal, sugary
Cake
Candy
Chips
Cookies
Crackers
Fruit snacks
Graham crackers
Granola bars
Gum—with sugar
Ice cream



Beverages:

Juice
Soda pop
Sports drinks
Sweet tea
Sweetened milk
Sweetened coffee



★ Choose and prepare foods that are **age appropriate** for your child.

Let's Choose Tooth Healthy Foods!

Goals

During this Visit:

- Discuss serving tooth healthy foods during meal and snack times.
- Discuss limiting eating to meal and snack times.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Pre-cut pictures of tooth healthy and tooth unhealthy foods from magazines and the internet
- Colored construction paper
- Glue or glue stick
- Contact paper (optional)

Supplies for Optional Activities:

- Five apples (optional)
- "Five Little Apples High In a Tree" song lyrics
- "Eating the Alphabet" book by Lois Ehlert
- Plastic/play foods (for the Eat a Rainbow)

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Let's Choose Tooth Healthy Foods!
- Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- Tell me about what and when your child eats in a typical day.
- Some foods are considered tooth healthy and others are tooth unhealthy. Do you know what kinds of foods are tooth healthy and why? What kinds of foods are tooth unhealthy and why?
 - Use the *Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List* on page 66 to show examples of tooth healthy foods and tooth unhealthy foods.
 - Tooth healthy foods are good for your teeth; tooth unhealthy foods feed the germs in our mouths, causing acid attacks that weaken teeth and cause cavities.
 - How often you eat is as important as what you eat. Snacking or “grazing” all day long causes constant acid attacks on teeth; constant acid attacks cause cavities.

Parent and Child Activity

1 Help the parent and child create a placemat with pictures of tooth healthy foods.

- Display tooth healthy and tooth unhealthy food pictures on the floor or the table.
- Ask the parent and child to select tooth healthy foods to glue onto the construction paper.
- If the child is able, have her glue the pictures onto the construction paper. If she’s too young, have the parent glue the pictures onto the construction paper or help the child.
- Show the parent how to use the placemat to help her child select what she’d like to eat by having the child point to her food choices.
- Tell the parent to use the placemat to help limit grazing and snacking all day. Show the parent and child how to put the placemat on the table when it’s meal or snack time along with food, and how to remove the placemat and food when meal or snack time is over.
- Develop a meal and snack schedule for the child to follow—for example, the child could eat three meals and two snacks a day.

A Chant “Five Little Apples High In a Tree”

Once there were five little apples high in a tree.

(Name of child) ate one apple and said: “Hey, look at me!” *(How many now?)*

Four little apples high in a tree.

(Name of child) ate one apple and said: “Crunchy apple just for me!” *(How many now?)*

Three little apples high in a tree.

(Name of child) ate one apple and said: “I’m as strong as I can be!” *(How many now?)*

Two little apples high in a tree.

(Name of child) ate one apple and said: “Healthy, I am going to be!” *(How many now?)*

One little apple high in a tree.

(Name of child) ate one apple and said: “This is good for me, you see!” *(How many now?)*

No more apples up in the tree, no more healthy apples for you or me!

B Read the book “Eating the Alphabet”

C Tooth Healthy Foods Treasure Hunt

Hide pictures of tooth healthy foods under the table, behind the chair etc. and have child find them.

D Eat a Rainbow

Using a variety of plastic/play foods, encourage parent and child to play together serving a “rainbow” of colorful healthy foods on each plate.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What are some ways you could introduce more tooth healthy foods at snacks and mealtimes?
- What might get in the way?

Parent Practice Handouts:

See pages 65-66.

Choose Tooth Healthy Foods!

Did You Know?

- Tooth healthy foods are good for your child's teeth; tooth unhealthy foods feed the germs causing acid attacks that weaken teeth and cause cavities.
- How often your child eats is as important as what he eats. Snacking or "grazing" all day long causes constant acid attacks on teeth; constant acid attacks cause cavities.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

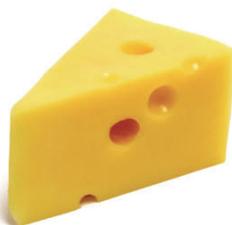
- Offer my child tooth healthy foods.
- Limit eating to snack and meal times.
- Hang up the tooth healthy and tooth unhealthy foods list to remind me to offer tooth healthy foods to my child.



Tooth Healthy Foods List



Apples
Bananas
Broccoli
Carrots
Cereals, low-sugar
Cheese
Cherries
Cottage cheese
Cucumber
Eggs
Fish
Grapes
Green beans
Lettuce
Meats
Melons
Nuts
Oranges
Peaches
Peas
Popcorn
Strawberries
Sweet potatoes
Tofu
Tomatoes
Whole grain breads
Whole grain crackers,
rice and pastas
Yogurt



Beverages:

Water
Milk

Tooth Unhealthy Foods List



Bread (White)
Breakfast cereal, sugary
Cake
Candy
Chips
Cookies
Crackers
Fruit snacks
Graham crackers
Granola bars
Gum—with sugar
Ice cream



Beverages:

Juice
Soda pop
Sports drinks
Sweet tea
Sweetened milk
Sweetened coffee

★ Choose and prepare foods that are **age appropriate** for your child.

Tooth Healthy Foods

Goals

During this Visit:

- Reinforce serving tooth healthy foods during meal and snack times.
- Discuss limiting eating to meal and snack times.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Two medium-sized baskets, boxes, or containers; one with a happy face and one with a sad face
- Play foods or pictures of foods—both tooth healthy (fruits, vegetables, cheese, meats, etc.) and tooth unhealthy (cookies, cake, chips, crackers, granola bars, raisins, etc.). Select more tooth healthy than tooth unhealthy foods.

Supplies for Optional Activities:

- “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” song lyrics
- “Snacks for Healthy Teeth” book by Mari Schuh
- Pictures of food or wooden or plastic play foods

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Tooth Healthy Foods!
- Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods list

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- What are some of your child's favorite foods?
- How do you feel about the number tooth healthy versus tooth unhealthy foods your child eats each day? (If needed, teach or remind the parent and child what tooth healthy and unhealthy foods are.)
- What is one tooth healthy food she really likes?

Parent and Child Activity

1 Sort the foods.

Play a game to reinforce the types of foods that are tooth healthy and the types that are unhealthy.

- Display the foods on floor and place the baskets/containers side-by-side.
- Ask the parent and child to select a piece of food from the display and say if it is tooth healthy or tooth unhealthy and explain why.
- If the food is tooth healthy, have the parent and child place the food in the basket with the happy face; if the food is tooth unhealthy, have the parent and child place the food in the basket with the unhappy face.
- Ask the parent and child to select foods they like.

A Sing the song “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”

Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O,
And on that farm he had some food, E-I-E-I-O,
With an apple here and a carrot there,
Fruits and vegetables everywhere,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.
And on that farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O.
With some good milk here and some good cheese there,
Strong teeth, strong bones, everywhere,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.
And on that farm he had a hog, E-I-E-I-O.
With some protien here and some iron there,
Strong teeth, strong bones, everywhere,
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.

B Read the book “Snacks for Healthy Teeth” by Mari Schuh

C Time for a Snack

Use pictures or play food to have a make-believe healthy snack or meal together. Model with the parent how to show enthusiasm as you “eat” together. Point out the large amount of healthy foods to choose from.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What did you notice when your child was making the decisions about foods?
- What are some ways to encourage your child to eat more “tooth healthy” foods?

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 71-72.

Tooth Healthy Foods

Did You Know?

- Tooth healthy foods include fresh fruit, vegetables and protein rich foods like nuts, cheese and meats.
- Tooth unhealthy foods include crackers, chips, dried fruit, fruit leathers, fruit snacks, and cookies.



Teeth need breaks between meals and snacks to prevent cavities.

Schedule regular meals and snack times for your child.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Make a healthy snack with my child (for example, cheese and apple slices).
- Serve my family tooth healthy foods for snacks and meals.
- Hang up the tooth healthy and tooth unhealthy foods list to remind me what to serve.



Tooth Healthy Foods List



Apples
Bananas
Broccoli
Carrots
Cereals, low-sugar
Cheese
Cherries
Cottage cheese
Cucumber
Eggs
Fish
Grapes
Green beans
Lettuce
Meats
Melons
Nuts
Oranges
Peaches
Peas
Popcorn
Strawberries
Sweet potatoes
Tofu
Tomatoes
Whole grain breads
Whole grain crackers,
rice and pastas
Yogurt



Beverages:

Water
Milk

Tooth Unhealthy Foods List



Bread (White)
Breakfast cereal, sugary
Cake
Candy
Chips
Cookies
Crackers
Fruit snacks
Graham crackers
Granola bars
Gum—with sugar
Ice cream



Beverages:

Juice
Soda pop
Sports drinks
Sweet tea
Sweetened milk
Sweetened coffee



★ Choose and prepare foods that are **age appropriate** for your child.

Brush, Floss, Swish

4

Big Bites

Key information to share with families:

- **Everyone should brush their teeth for two minutes, two times a day** (after breakfast and before bed) with a soft bristle toothbrush.
- **Brushing, flossing, and swishing is important during pregnancy** because dietary and hormonal changes can affect the health of a woman's mouth and teeth.
- **Pregnancy gingivitis** is the term used to describe irritated gums during pregnancy.
- **Before teeth come in** gently wipe baby's gums and tongue each day.
- **First teeth begin to come in usually between 6 -10 months.** Cavities can begin as soon as the first tooth comes in.
- Use a smear of **fluoridated toothpaste** starting with first tooth to age 3; after that, use a pea-sized amount.
- **Brush** all sides of each tooth using a small amount of fluoridated toothpaste. If possible, do not rinse your mouth out when you finish brushing.
- **Floss** at least once a day to remove food and germs stuck between teeth. Begin flossing a child's teeth when the teeth touch.
- When brushing is not possible after eating, rinse your mouth with water. **Swish** the water around your mouth and then **swallow it**. Children can usually swish and swallow at about age 3.
- An adult should **assist a child with brushing** until 8 years old.

Goals

Pregnancy

- Explain changes in pregnancy and why it's important for mom to take care of her mouth.
- Show pregnant women how to brush, floss, swish and swallow.

Birth to 6 months

- Explain reasons why, and show parents how, to clean baby's mouth.
- Encourage parents to clean baby's mouth after feedings.

6 to 36 months

- Demonstrate how to brush, swish, and swallow.
- Encourage parents to create a toothbrushing routine.

3 to 5 years

- Discuss why flossing is important.
- Demonstrate how to floss.
- Encourage building flossing into a daily routine.

Brush, Floss, Swish!

Goals

During this Visit:

- Explain changes that happen in a pregnant woman's mouth and why it's important for mom to take care of her mouth.
- Show pregnant women how to brush and floss and swish and swallow.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Toothbrush, tooth model, toothpaste
- Dental floss, white yarn

Supplies for Extending the Learning:

- Toothbrushes: sample toothbrushes (soft, medium, hard)
- Floss: What's best? Samples of different types of floss (waxed, unwaxed)

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Brush, Floss, Swish!
- How to Brush
- How to Floss
- Toothbrushing Chart

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- Many women notice changes in their mouths during pregnancy. Have you noticed any changes in your teeth or mouth since being pregnant? You may notice **pregnancy gingivitis** (sore, puffy, or bleeding gums).
- Do you have any concerns about your teeth or mouth? What are they?
- Are you brushing your teeth? How often? What about flossing?

Discuss or remind mom why it's important to take care of her oral health while she's pregnant:

- Mom's oral health can impact pregnancy. For example, an infection in mom's mouth can spread and cause harm to her unborn baby.
- After baby is born, mom can pass cavity causing bacteria to baby by kissing, sharing utensils, and putting baby's pacifier in her mouth and then baby's.

Activities

1

Demonstrate how to brush and floss.

- Use the tooth model, toothbrush and "How to Brush" handout instructions to demonstrate proper toothbrushing.
- Use the floss or white yarn and "How to Floss" handout instructions to demonstrate proper flossing. Use hand to represent the mouth (each finger represents a tooth). Floss between each finger.

How to brush

- Use a soft bristle toothbrush and fluoridated toothpaste. Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.
- Hold the brush at an angle where the gum meets the tooth. Food and germs like to stick there.
- Move the toothbrush in small circles. Count to 5 before moving the brush to another spot.
- Remember to brush the biting surfaces. That is where the food gets stuck and germs hide.
- Brush the tongue. Germs hide there.

How to floss

- Wrap the floss around your middle or index fingers to get a firm grip.
- Hold between your thumbs and fingers.
- Gently slide the floss between two teeth. Then, wrap the floss toward one tooth, hugging it as you gently slide it up, back, forth, and down.
- Repeat this process on all teeth. Remember to hug that back tooth even though it is the last one in line.



2

Demonstrate how to swish and swallow.

- Tell parent they can swish and swallow after eating or drinking when they don't have a toothbrush with them.
- Demonstrate how to take a drink of water, swish it around, and swallow it.
- Reinforce that children should begin swishing and swallowing around age 3.

Reminder—this is not a substitute for toothbrushing.

Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

A

Toothbrushes

- Bring samples of toothbrushes, bristle type (soft, medium, hard). Have parent test each by rubbing circles on her hands to feel the difference. Note that gums are like soft skin and require gentle, daily cleaning (with a soft toothbrush)—not occasional, hard cleaning.

B

Floss: What's best?

- Bring samples of different kinds of floss (waxed, unwaxed, tape, flavored, inexpensive, more expensive) and talk about the best kind: there is no best kind, the one the parent prefers and will use is the best!

Closing

Questions to help her reflect and make a plan.

- What would help you be successful in brushing your teeth every day? How about flossing?
- How can I support you in brushing and flossing?

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 79-82.

Brush, Floss, Swish!

Did you know?

- When you are pregnant, problems like sore, bleeding gums are common, making oral hygiene even more important.
- It is important to continue brushing and flossing daily to keep gums and teeth clean and healthy and prevent cavities.
- When you are unable to brush you can “swish and swallow” with water after eating and drinking sugary beverages like juice and soda.



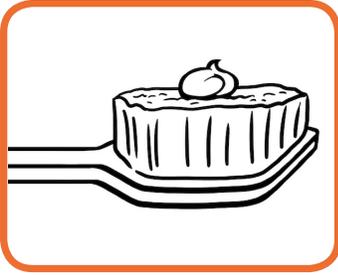
Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Practice flossing.
- Floss daily.
- Get in the routine of swishing and swallowing when I can't brush!

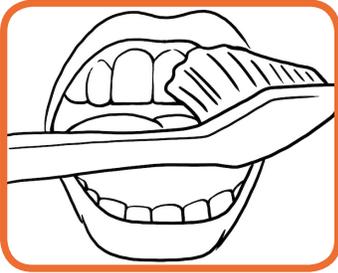


How To Brush



Use a soft bristle toothbrush and fluoridated toothpaste.

Use a **pea-sized** amount of toothpaste.



Hold your brush at an angle where the gum meets the tooth.

Food and germs like to stick there.



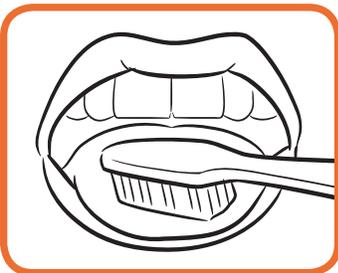
Move the toothbrush in small circles.

Count to 5 before moving the brush to another spot.



Remember the biting surfaces.

That is where the food gets stuck and germs hide.



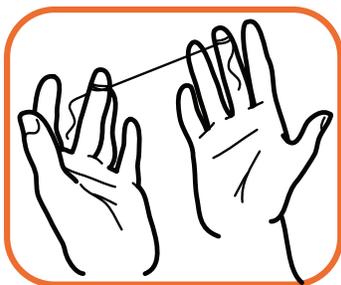
Brush the tongue.

Germs hide there.

Brush after breakfast and before bed.



How To Floss



Wrap the floss around your middle or index fingers to get a firm grip.

Hold between your thumbs and fingers.



Gently slide the floss between two teeth. Then wrap the floss toward one tooth, hugging it as you gently slide it up, back, forth, and down.



Repeat this process on all teeth. Remember to hug that back tooth even though it is the last one in line.

Remember...

- ✓ Always use a clean piece of floss between teeth.
- ✓ Never snap or force floss as this may cut or bruise gum tissue.
- ✓ Children cannot floss by themselves, they need your help.
- ✓ Start flossing your child's teeth as soon as teeth touch.
- ✓ It will help your child learn good habits if they see you floss.



Toothbrushing and Flossing Chart

Color or check in the box when you brush in the morning and night and when you floss.

Week 1

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						

Week 2

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						

Week 3

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						

Week 4

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						
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Cleaning Baby's Mouth

Goals

During this Visit:

- Discuss the reasons to clean baby's mouth beginning at birth.
- Show parents how to clean baby's mouth.
- Encourage parents to clean baby's mouth after feedings.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Baby washcloth or gauze

Parent Practice Handout:

- Cleaning Baby's Mouth

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- Tell me some of the things you do to keep your baby happy and healthy.
- What types of things do you do to take care of your baby's mouth?
- Besides washing his face, it is also important to clean his mouth.

There are a few reasons to start now:

- By starting now, your baby will learn that taking care of his mouth is a part of his daily routine.
- He will get used to you cleaning his mouth, so that when his teeth come in, it may be easier to introduce toothbrushing.



Parent and Child Activities

1 Demonstrate how to clean baby's mouth.

- Ask the parent to dampen the baby washcloth with water.
- Make a circle with your fingers and thumb to make it look like a little like a toothless mouth; use the "mouth" to show the parent how to clean baby's mouth.
- Wrap the damp washcloth over your finger.
- Gently wipe the cloth around the "mouth"—both the top and bottom—and mention that it is important to clean a baby's tongue, too.



2**Practice cleaning baby's mouth.**

- If baby is awake and ready, invite the parent to practice cleaning the baby's mouth and tongue.
- Model ways to stabilize the baby's head.
- Ask the parent if she and baby would be more comfortable on the couch or on the floor.
- Have the parent smile and talk to baby then touch baby's mouth with the cloth so he is not startled when she puts the cloth inside his mouth.
- With the damp baby washcloth, coach the parent to gently wipe around baby's top and bottom gums, and his tongue. Doing this every day will help the parent notice changes in baby's mouth, like when the first tooth comes in.
- Reassure the parent that it's normal if baby initially cries or is resistant.
- End by giving baby a big smile and perhaps by singing a song. It will get easier as mom and baby practice.
- Tell the parent to try to do this after every feeding or at least twice a day.

Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

A**Silly Songs**

- Make up silly songs to engage baby while the parent is cleaning baby's mouth. Use a common song and change the words.

Example: Open, open, open your mouth. Mommy's looking in. (To the tune "Row, Row, Row Your Boat")

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- When you think about how often you might be able to clean your baby's mouth, what seems realistic?
- What are you still wondering about? What questions do you have?

Parent Practice Handout

See page 87.

Cleaning Baby's Mouth

Did you know?

Wiping baby's gums and tongue helps you and baby get comfortable with having his mouth (and later his teeth) cleaned. When you clean baby's mouth, you can also check to see if baby has gotten new teeth.

To Clean Baby's Mouth:

Wrap a clean, damp washcloth around your finger. While stabilizing baby's head, gently wipe the gums (top and bottom) on both the cheek and tongue sides of his mouth. Finish by wiping the tongue. It may take a couple of times for the two of you to get comfortable. Don't worry if baby cries. Cleaning baby's mouth does not hurt him.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Practice cleaning my baby's gums and tongue every day so we both get comfortable with it.
- Clean my baby's gums and tongue twice a day.



Let's Brush

NOTE: This activity is designed for children who have at least one tooth. If the child hasn't gotten his first tooth, use the "Cleaning Baby's Mouth" activity on page 84 instead.

Goals

During this Visit:

- Demonstrate how to brush a child's teeth and swish and swallow.
- Encourage parents to create a toothbrushing routine—brush the child's teeth two times a day.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Fluoridated toothpaste
- 2 soft toothbrushes—adult and child size
- Doll or stuffed animal

Supplies for Extending the Learning:

- Stickers
- Stuffed animal and extra toothbrush for play
- Special toy for child

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Let's Brush!
- How to Brush
- Toothbrushing and Flossing Chart

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- Tell me some of the things that you are doing to take care of your child's teeth. What's going well?
- Have you tried brushing your child's teeth?
- What does your child do when you brush his teeth?

Parent and Child Activities

1 Demonstrate how to brush a child's teeth.

- Demonstrate how to brush a child's teeth by using a doll or stuffed animal and following the brushing instructions on the "How to Brush" handout on page 95.
- Show parent how to choose a comfortable position—the child can lay on the floor, sit in her lap, or sit or stand next to her.
- Show the parent how to talk with the child calmly or sing a song while brushing—it will soothe the child and make him more comfortable and engaged.
- Practice "brushing" on the doll or stuffed animal.

How to brush

- Use a soft bristle toothbrush and fluoridated toothpaste. Use a smear of toothpaste from the first tooth up to age 3, a pea-sized amount after that.
- Hold the brush at an angle where the gum meets the tooth. Food and germs like to stick there.
- Move the toothbrush in small circles. Count to 5 before moving the brush to another spot.
- Remember to brush the biting surfaces. That is where the food gets stuck and germs hide.
- Brush the tongue. Germs hide there too.

2**Practice brushing child's teeth.**

- Invite parent to practice brushing child's teeth.
- If the child needs to have his head stabilized, show the parent how to do this.
- Let parent choose position she would like to brush the child's teeth—on the floor, in her lap, or sitting or standing next to her.
- Brush child's teeth—talk or sing to the child while brushing and end with a hug.

**3****Introduce swish and swallow.**

- Tell parent she can help her child swish and swallow after eating or drinking when they don't have a toothbrush with them.
- Children can start swishing and swallowing when they are old enough to spit (usually close to three years old).
- Demonstrate how to take a drink of water, swish it around, and swallow it.

A Sing the song “This is the Way I Brush My Teeth”

(To the tune “Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush”)

This is the way I brush my teeth, brush my teeth, brush my teeth

This is the way I brush my teeth so early in the morning.

This is the way my toothbrush goes round and round, round and round

This is the way my toothbrush goes round and round so early in the morning.

This is the way I swish and swallow, swish and swallow, swish and swallow

This is the way I swish and swallow so early in the morning.

- Let the child practice brushing a baby doll’s teeth.

B Make stickers

- Let the child draw toothbrushes, teeth, or germs on the stickers. Use the stickers on the toothbrushing chart.

C Toothbrushing routine

- Have the child brush a doll/stuffed animal’s teeth and then put the doll/stuffed animal to bed. Remind the child that the toothbrush is the last thing to touch his teeth before he goes to sleep!

D Toothbrushing is fun!

- Have parent put a special toy in the bathroom before brushing time. The toy can “watch” the parent and child brush or the child can hold the toy during tooth brushing time.
- Take turns: child starts brushing, parent finishes.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What questions do you have about brushing your child's teeth?
- What can you do to make brushing fun?
- What can you do to establish and maintain a brushing routine?
- What time(s) during the day would your child need to swish and swallow?

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 94-96.

Let's Brush!

Did you know?

- You need to brush your child's teeth until they are eight years old.
- You can make toothbrushing fun and easy by taking turns with your child. First, let your child brush her own teeth. Then take the toothbrush and brush the sides and biting surfaces of every tooth in small circles.



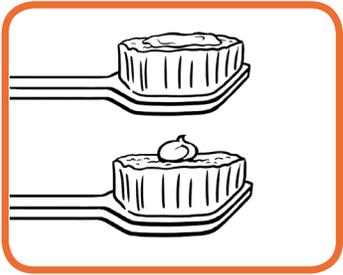
Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Brush our teeth together every day—after breakfast and before bedtime.
- Make toothbrushing fun by telling my child to open big and roar like a lion!
- Make sure the toothbrush is the last thing to touch my child's teeth before bed!



How To Brush



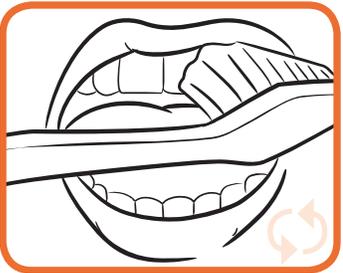
Use a soft bristle toothbrush and fluoridated toothpaste.

Use a smear of toothpaste from the first tooth up to age 3, a pea-sized amount after that.



Hold your brush at an angle where the gum meets the tooth.

Food and germs like to stick there.



Move the toothbrush in small circles.

Count to 5 before moving the brush to another spot.



Remember the biting surfaces.

That is where the food gets stuck and germs hide.



Brush the tongue.

Germs hide there.

Brush your child's teeth (and yours!) twice a day—after breakfast and before bed.



Toothbrushing and Flossing Chart

Color or check in the box when you brush in the morning and night and when you floss.

Week 1

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						

Week 2

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						

Week 3

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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<input type="checkbox"/>						
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Week 4

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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Flossing Is Fun!

NOTE: If the parent is not brushing the child's teeth, start by going over the parent practice handout "Let's Brush!" on page 94.

Goals

During this Visit:

- Discuss why flossing is important.
- Demonstrate how to floss.
- Encourage building flossing into a daily routine.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Floss and or white yarn

Supplies for Extending the Learning:

- Egg carton (cut in half and place upside down to represent a row of teeth)
- Plastic or cut outs of food pieces or wrappers
- Scarf or yarn

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Flossing is Fun!
- How to Floss
- Toothbrushing and Flossing Chart

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- Does your child have teeth that touch? If yes, how do you clean in between the teeth?
- Have you tried flossing your child's teeth?
- How does your child respond when you floss his teeth? What's working well? What can I help you do?
- It is recommended that we all floss our teeth at least once a day that includes adults and children!

Parent and Child Activities

1

Demonstrate How to Floss a Child's Teeth

- Demonstrate how to floss a child's teeth by using the parent's hand (each finger represents a tooth). Use floss or white yarn and the flossing instructions on the "How to Floss" handout, page 101.

2

Practice Flossing the Child's Teeth

- Show the parent the different types of floss/flossers and let her choose the one she likes best.
- Coach the parent as she flosses her child's teeth. Model how to encourage the child to open his mouth. For example, tell the child to open wide like an alligator.
- Remind the parent that flossing takes practice, and it will become easier over time.

HOW TO FLOSS

- Wrap the floss around your middle or index fingers to get a firm grip.
- Hold between your thumbs and fingers.
- Gently slide the floss between two teeth. Then wrap the floss toward one tooth, hugging it as you gently slide it up, back, forth, and down.
- Repeat this process on all teeth. Remember to hug that back tooth even though it is the last one in line.

Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

A Let the child paint or color teeth on an egg carton

- Once the carton is painted, the child can practice flossing in between the teeth with white yarn.

B Bring some teeth cuts outs and hide them around the room

- Let the child find them while you're talking with the parent!

C Flossing dance

- Turn on some music and give child a piece of white string, yarn or scarf and let her dance and wiggle the "floss" up and down her side to the music.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What might make flossing fun for you and your child?
- What can you try so that flossing becomes a regular part of your child's daily routine?
What time of day would work best?

Parent Practice Handouts

See pages 100-102.

Flossing is Fun!

Did you know?

- When your child's teeth touch, it's important to begin flossing.
- Flossing removes germs and food stuck between teeth that may cause cavities.
- You should floss your child's teeth daily.



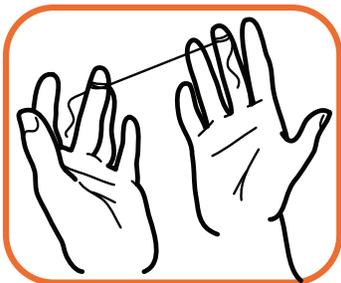
Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Find a comfortable position for my child and me and practice flossing his teeth.
- Sing a song while flossing.
- Make flossing a part of my child's daily routine.



How To Floss



Wrap the floss around your middle or index fingers to get a firm grip.

Hold between your thumbs and fingers.



Gently slide the floss between two teeth. Then wrap the floss toward one tooth, hugging it as you gently slide it up, back, forth, and down.



Repeat this process on all teeth. Remember to hug that back tooth even though it is the last one in line.

Remember...

- ✓ Always use a clean piece of floss between teeth.
- ✓ Never snap or force floss as this may cut or bruise gum tissue.
- ✓ Children cannot floss by themselves, they need your help.
- ✓ Start flossing your child's teeth as soon as teeth touch.
- ✓ It will help your child learn good habits if they see you floss.



Toothbrushing and Flossing Chart

Color or check in the box when you brush in the morning and night and when you floss.

Week 1

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						
						
						

Week 2

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						
						
						

Week 3

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						
						
						

Week 4

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						
						
						

Going to the Dentist

5

Big Bites

Key information to share with families:

- Dental care during pregnancy—including dental treatment—is **safe, important, and recommended**.
- By getting a pregnant woman’s cavities treated prior to baby’s birth, there will be **fewer cavity causing germs transmitted to baby**. Baby will be at lower risk for developing cavities.
- A pregnant woman should contact a dentist immediately if she is experiencing **mouth or tooth pain**.
- A dentist or a medical provider should check children’s teeth **by first tooth or first birthday**.
- Young children may get **fluoride varnish** to strengthen teeth and help prevent cavities.
- The **dentist and/or the child’s medical provider** will watch for signs of early **tooth decay**, which can look like white spots—usually along the gum line. Brown or black spots may be cavities.
- If the dentist identifies any concerns, such as a cavity, they will discuss it with the family and **schedule a follow-up appointment** to treat it.
- Everyone should have **regular dental checkups**; follow your program’s requirements and providers’ recommendations for dental screenings, referrals, and checkup schedules.
- Families may need encouragement, support and information about **why dental visits are necessary** and important.

Goals

Pregnancy

- Discuss importance of regular dental care during pregnancy and what to expect at a dental visit.
- Connect the pregnant woman with dental care.

Birth to 6 months

- Discuss importance of a checkup by baby’s first tooth or first birthday.
- Plan first dental visit.

6 to 36 months

- Reinforce reasons for regular dental checkups.
- Discuss what might happen at a dental checkup.
- Discuss how to make and keep a dental appointment.
- If needed, assist with scheduling an appointment.

3 to 5 years

- Reinforce reasons for regular dental checkups.
- Schedule appointment if child doesn’t have one.

Dental Care During Pregnancy Is Safe And Important

Goals

During this Visit:

- Discuss why it is important to get regular dental care during pregnancy and what to expect at a dental visit.
- Connect the pregnant woman with dental care.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- For a list of dental providers in Washington State, visit www.cavityfreekids.org and select "Find Dental Care"

Parent Practice Handout:

- Dental Care During Pregnancy Is Safe and Important

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- Did you know that you can pass the germs in your mouth that cause cavities to your baby? This can lead to cavities in your baby's teeth.
- By taking care of your mouth and any active tooth decay before baby is born, you'll have less cavity causing germs to pass to baby and your baby will be at lower risk for developing cavities.
- Here's the good news—it is safe and recommended that you get dental care (cleanings, x-rays, and dental treatment) during your pregnancy.
- When did you last see the dentist?
- Are you currently experiencing any tooth pain?
 - If yes, she should be connected with a dentist immediately.
- What are your thoughts about visiting the dentist during your pregnancy?

Activity

1

Discuss what to expect at a dental appointment and how to prepare for a visit.

- **Ask the pregnant woman to describe the experiences she has had at the dentist.** Share some or all of the following depending on her responses:
 - If the woman has fears or negative feelings about dental care, discuss them with her to alleviate any concerns.
 - Talk with her about finding a dentist she's comfortable with—suggest some dentists, or tell her to ask her friends.
 - Share that regular dental checkups usually include an examination, cleaning, oral hygiene instructions (brushing & flossing), x-rays, fluoride varnish and follow-up appointments for treatment such as fillings.
 - Help her make a list of questions and areas of concern to share with the dentist (for example, sore gums, tooth sensitivity).

2

Schedule a dental appointment.

- Determine if she has a dentist or if you need to help her find one.
- Check to see if she has dental insurance—in Washington state, Medicaid covers dental.
- Talk about the best time of for an appointment. Which day of the week, time of day works best?
- Remember while a woman can receive dental care at any point in her pregnancy, she might feel most comfortable during the second trimester. Morning sickness is usually gone and sitting may be more comfortable than in the third trimester.
- Discuss how to overcome potential barriers to keeping the appointment such as transportation, work commitments, cost, finding childcare for other children, and insurance.

If she seems hesitant to make an appointment:

- Ask her to share more about why she is hesitant and what her concerns are.
- Encourage her to call the dentist’s office and talk through some of her concerns; help her make the call if she is willing and the office is open.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- How are you feeling about going to the dentist?
- What can I do to support you in making and keeping your dental visit?

Parent Practice Handout

See page 108.

Dental Care During Pregnancy Is Safe and Important

Did you know?

- Moms with untreated tooth decay and gum infections can pass cavity-causing germs to their babies through kissing, sharing utensils, and putting baby's pacifier in their mouths.
- Dental visits during pregnancy are safe and important.
- You want to have a cavity free mouth when kissing baby. Go ahead—kiss your baby!



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Find a dentist through the resource list or ask a friend.
- Schedule a dental appointment.
- If needed, follow up with treatment appointments.



First Dental Visit by First Tooth or First Birthday

Goals

During this Visit:

- Talk about why it's important to have a baby's teeth checked by first tooth or first birthday.
- Plan for baby's first dental visit.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- For a list of dental providers in Washington State, visit www.cavityfreekids.org and select "Find Dental Care"

Supplies for Extending the Learning:

- "If You're Happy and You Know It" song lyrics
- The book "My Teeth" by Milestones Project, 2007

Parent Practice Handout:

- First Dental Visit by First Tooth or First Birthday

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- Even though your baby may not have teeth yet, now is the time to start thinking about dental care. Did you know that babies should have their teeth checked by their first tooth or first birthday?
- A dentist or medical provider can provide the checkup—he or she will look for tooth decay and other that may occur in your baby’s mouth. If the dentist or medical provider finds cavities, the dentist can treat them. This will give your baby a healthy start.

Activity

1 Ask: Do you know where you’d like to take your baby for his first dental checkup?

If she answers YES:

Have her call to confirm that the dentist sees children or the medical provider conducts oral screenings. Make sure the provider accepts the type of insurance her child has.

If she answers NO:

Use the resource list to find a dentist for the baby or call the baby’s medical provider’s office and ask if they provide oral health checkups during well-child checks.

If she uses a calendar to plan her time, add “schedule baby’s first dental visit” to the calendar on or around baby’s first birthday.

Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

A Sing the song “If You’re Happy and You Know It”

First verse:

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands!
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands!
If you’re happy and you know it then your face will surely show it,
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands!

Second verse:

If you’re happy and you know it, smile big!
If you’re happy and you know it, smile big!
If you’re happy and you know it then your face will surely show it,
If you’re happy and you know it, smile big!

B Read a book together

- “My Teeth” by Milestones Project, 2007

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What questions do you have about taking your baby for his/her first checkup?
- What might prevent you from scheduling that first appointment? What about keeping that first appointment? How can I support you in making and keeping baby’s first checkup?

Parent Practice Handout

See page 112.

First Dental Visit by First Tooth or First Birthday

Did you know?

- Infants should have their teeth checked by their first tooth or first birthday.
- The first visit may be done by a dentist or a medical provider.
- It is important to get regular checkups because changes in your child's mouth can happen quickly.



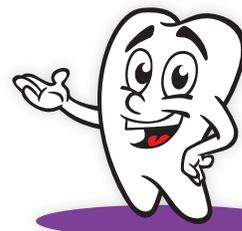
Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Schedule my baby's first visit with a dentist or medical provider.
- Put a reminder note on my calendar to schedule my baby's first dental visit. (Set the reminder note about 1 month in advance!)



Schedule my child's first dental visit.



Getting Regular Dental Checkups

Goals

During this Visit:

- Reinforce the reasons to have regular dental checkups.
- Discuss what might happen at a dental checkup.
- Discuss how to make and keep a dental appointment.
- If needed, assist parent in scheduling a dental appointment for the child.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- For a list of dental providers in Washington State, visit www.cavityfreekids.org and select "Find Dental Care"

Supplies for Extending the Learning:

- "The Dentist Is My Pal" song lyrics
- Paper towel, yarn, stickers, watercolor markers, crayons

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Dental Visits Are Important

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- It's important to have regular dental checkups because changes in your child's mouth can happen quickly. If tooth decay is caught early, it can be reversed.
- Have you taken your child to the dentist? If so, tell me about your child's dental checkup. What went well? What surprised you? What did the dentist or medical provider tell you about your child's teeth?
- Do you have a dental checkup (either a first visit or your child's next visit) scheduled? If so, when is it? If not, let's spend a few minutes today scheduling your child's visit.

Parent and Child Activities

1

Sing “Going to the Dentist” with the parent and child.

Hold hands and walk in a circle doing the motions and singing to the tune “Ring Around the Rosie.”

Going to the dentist, going to the dentist
My turn! My turn! Let's sit down!
Getting all my teeth cleaned, getting all my teeth cleaned!
My turn! My Turn! Open big!

2

If the parent has not scheduled a dental checkup for her child or has questions, discuss what happens at a dental checkup.

- The first visit will usually be done using a knee-to-knee exam.
- When the child is in this position, the dentist or medical provider can get a good look inside his mouth. The provider can check teeth for early signs of tooth decay (white or brown spots).



- The provider can also look for brown or black spots on the teeth, which may be cavities. If the provider sees them, he or she will talk with you about next steps for treating them.
- He or she may also talk about teething, healthy eating and drinking water, and show you how to brush your child's teeth.
- This visit is a great time for you to ask any questions you might have about your baby's teeth and oral development.
- The provider might apply fluoride varnish to the teeth. Fluoride varnish is like a special vitamin that keeps teeth strong and healthy and prevents cavities.



White spots



Brown spots

3

If the parent needs to make a dental appointment for the child, work with her to schedule it.

- If she already has a dentist or medical provider who provides checkups, suggest she call the provider and schedule an appointment.
- If she doesn't have a provider, use the resource list to find a dentist for the baby or call the baby's medical provider's office and ask if they provide oral health checkups during well-child checks.

Reminders:

- Arrive at the appointment 15 minutes early to complete paperwork
- Find childcare for other children and bring your insurance card, photo ID, and money for a co-payment if necessary.
- Bring some toys or books for the child to play with during wait times.
- Call at least 24 hours in advance if you need to cancel and reschedule the appointment.

A Sing the song “The Dentist is My Pal”

To the tune “The Farmer in the Dell”

Chorus:

The dentist is my pal, the dentist is my pal,
The chair goes high, the chair goes low.
The dentist is my pal

First verse:

There is a waiting room, with lots of things to do,
Books and toys for girls and boys
Are waiting there for you. Oooohhh!!

Repeat Chorus

Second verse:

They ask me open wide and then they look inside.
Carefully they check my teeth
And keep them shining bright. Oooohhh!

Repeat Chorus

B Make a dental bib

- Let the child decorate a paper towel using age appropriate art supplies like water colors, stickers, and markers. The parent can help the child make a hole in the paper towel and thread the yarn.
- Take a photo of the child wearing the bib. Encourage the parent to show it to the dentist when the child goes to the dentist.

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What questions do you have about taking your child for a dental visit?
- What can I do to help you get ready for your child's next dental visit?

Parent Practice Handout

See page 118.

Dental Visits Are Important

Did you know?

- It is important for your child to get his first dental visit when his first teeth come in or by his first birthday. **After a child's first visit it is important for him to get regular checkups.**
- During a dental visit, a provider may:
 - Count your child's teeth.
 - Check your child's teeth for cavities and if any are found, treat them.
 - Paint fluoride varnish to your child's teeth.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Make an appointment for my child's dental checkup!

My child's first dental visit is scheduled with

(Dentist or Medical Provider Name)

on _____ at _____

(insert date) (insert time)

- Remember to bring my insurance card, photo ID and money for co-payment (if needed) to my child's dentist appointment.
- Arrive 15 minutes early to complete paperwork.
- Bring some small toys or a book for my child to play with during the waiting time.



Make and Keep Regular Dental Checkups!

Note: This activity is designed for children who have had at least one dental visit. If the child has not had his first dental visit, use the “Discuss What Happens at a Dental Checkup” activity on page 114.

Goals

During this Visit:

- Reinforce the importance of regular dental checkups for preventive care and treatment.
- Schedule a dental appointment for the child if he doesn't have one already.



Planning the Visit

Supplies Needed:

- Baby doll or stuffed animal
- Toothbrush
- Child's paint brush

Parent Practice Handouts:

- Your Child Has a Dental Visit Coming Up

Supplies for Extending the Learning:

- “Max Goes to the Dentist” by Adria F. Klein
- “The Dentist is My Pal” song lyrics
- Paper towel, yarn, stickers, watercolor markers, crayons

Starting the Conversation

Questions and information to get started.

- How often do you take your child to the dentist?
- What questions do you have about taking your child to the dentist?
- It's important to have regular dental visits. This way the dentist can examine your child's teeth and make sure they are healthy.
- Now that your child is a little older, he can understand some of the things that might happen at a dental visit.
- Let's play a game together that helps you and your child get comfortable (and maybe even excited!) about going to the dentist.

Parent and Child Activity

1 Role play: dental office

Use the following script to play dental office. Assign the following roles:

home visitor » **dentist** parent » **parent** doll/stuffed animal » **patient**

Parent: (Child's name) Let's play Going to the Dentist. We can pretend to take Baby Doll to the dentist.

Parent: Here is the dentist office. Mommy brought a book. Let's read it to Baby Doll to help her wait for our turn.

Home Visitor: Hi, I am the dentist. Time to see me now! Come along Baby Doll. We will help you hop up into the chair and lay back.

Home Visitor: In my office I have lots of interesting things to look at. I have a bright light and special tools that help me check your teeth.

Home Visitor: Let's put a bib on you so that your clothes stay clean.

Home Visitor: It's time to look in your mouth Baby Doll. Open really big!

Home Visitor: I can see all your teeth. I am going to count them. One, two, three... You have (insert number) teeth!

Home Visitor: Good job, Baby Doll!

Parent: Didn't Baby Doll do a good job of sitting quietly and opening wide? Now it's time for us to go home.

2

Schedule a Dental Visit

If the parent needs to schedule a dental visit for the child, work with her to schedule it.

- If she already has a dentist, suggest she call and schedule an appointment.
- If she doesn't have a dentist, use the resource list to find a dentist for the child.

Extending the Learning

Optional activities to engage the family during the home visit.

A

Read the book “Max Goes to the Dentist”

B

Sing the song “The Dentist is My Pal”

To the tune “The Farmer in the Dell”

The dentist is my pal, the dentist is my pal,
The chair goes high, the chair goes low.
The dentist is my pal

There is a waiting room, with lots of things to do,
Books and toys for girls and boys
Are waiting there for you. Oooohhh!!

They ask me to open wide and then they look inside.
Carefully they check my teeth
And keep them shining bright. Oooohhh!

C

Make a dental bib

- Let the child decorate a paper towel using age appropriate art supplies like water colors, stickers, and markers. The parent can help the child make a hole in the paper towel and thread the yarn.
- Take a photo of the child wearing the bib. Encourage the parent to show it to the dentist when the child goes to the dentist.

Supplies needed: *paper towel, yarn (for tie) and age-appropriate art supplies like stickers, markers and water colors.*

Closing

Questions to help parent reflect and make a plan.

- What help do you need to make and keep regular dental checkups for your child?

Parent Practice Handout

See page 123.

REMINDER

Your Child Has a Dental Visit Coming Up!

(Child's Name) _____

HAS A DENTAL APPOINTMENT

On (date) _____ at (time) _____

With Dr. _____

(Address) _____

(Phone) _____

Remember to bring: *(Circle applicable items)*

- Insurance card
- photo ID
- money for co-payment
- other: _____

Reminders:

- Arrive 15 minutes early to complete paperwork.
- Bring some small toys or a book for your child to play with during the waiting time.



Family Engagement Tools



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Frequently Asked Questions

When should I start brushing baby's teeth?

Answer: Clean baby's mouth like you clean the rest of her/him—even before teeth come in. Wipe baby's gums and tongue with a clean, moist cloth. When the first teeth come in, brush gently with a soft baby toothbrush, with a smear of fluoride toothpaste.

My baby is teething and is so fussy. What can I do?

Answer: Teething biscuits or cookies are not good for teeth. Try a cold teething ring or a clean moist cloth.

My grandma told me to dip the baby's pacifier in honey to help him sleep. Honey is a natural sugar, so it won't hurt his/her teeth, will it?

Answer: Any kind of sugar or sticky food can cause tooth decay. Besides creating a problem for your child's teeth, honey is not recommended for infants because it may contain certain bacteria that could make your child sick.

I only brush my baby's teeth 3 or 4 days each week. The last time I brushed I saw some very white spots on the front of her teeth. Should I brush harder to get rid of the white spots?

Answer: Those white spots may be the beginning stages of tooth decay. When the teeth aren't brushed every day, the cavity-causing germs stay on teeth and can start to destroy the teeth. Check with the dentist right away in order to keep the white spots from developing into cavities.

My mother watches my 18-month-old while I work. She lets my daughter walk around with a bottle of apple juice because it's less messy than a cup. What do I say to my mom?

Answer: You could use 3 different approaches:

- Explain to her that the "natural" sugar in juice can cause tooth decay. Sipping on sweet drinks covers the child's teeth in cavity-causing acids each time she takes a sip. Those repeated "acid attacks" can weaken and destroy her teeth.
- Juice has no nutritional value. Ask your mother to serve whole fruits and vegetables since they have more nutrients and are higher in fiber which is good for everyone! Between meals, ask her to fill the sippy cup with water.
- Suggest that your mother fill the bottle with water when your daughter is walking around, or try switching to a sippy cup filled with water.

My two year-old likes to eat toothpaste out of the tube. Should I worry about this?

Answer: No. Children should not swallow toothpaste. Toothpaste is for teeth, not tummies. Remember—just a pea-sized amount! Putting the toothpaste on is a grown-up job. Keep toothpaste out of a child’s reach.

My two year-old brushes all by himself! Should we help him?

Answer: It is wonderful that your child is showing independence, but two-year-olds do not have the coordination to brush well enough. After your child brushes, you can finish the job. Children need to be supervised and helped with brushing until they are between 6 and 8 years old or can tie their shoes.

Why should I worry about baby teeth?

Answer: Baby teeth are important! They help children eat foods, form words, and hold space for adult teeth. Healthy baby teeth mean a healthy mouth for the adult teeth.

We use a water filter at our house. Does this take out the fluoride?

Answer: The faucet or pitcher type filters do not remove fluoride from the water. Whole-house filtration or distilling systems usually remove fluoride. If your system removes the fluoride, check with your dentist or medical provider about giving your child fluoride drops or pills.

Bottled water seldom has fluoride. It is better than a soft drink, but does not help strengthen the teeth like water with fluoride does.

I don’t know if we have fluoride in our water. How can I find out?

Answer: Call your local health department or water provider to see if there is fluoride in the water.

More Conversation Starters

Oral health is a topic that may not always come up naturally in conversations with families. Tooth decay is almost 100 percent preventable, and if we can find ways to discuss oral health with families, we can promote and reinforce good oral health habits. Below are some questions to help start conversations about oral health.

General Oral Health

- Tell me about your child's oral health.
- What is something about your child's teeth or mouth that you have questions about?
- What is something that concerns you about your child's oral health?
- What more do you want to learn about your child's oral health?
- What is one thing you could do today to improve your child's oral health?
- What type of support do you want with your child's oral health?

Water and Tooth Healthy Foods

- Tell me about your child's eating and drinking habits.
- What is something that concerns you about your child's eating or drinking habits?
- What is one thing you could do today to support your child's eating and drinking habits?
- What would be helpful to know more about nutrition and water?

Brushing and Flossing

- Describe what you do every day to take care of your child's teeth.
- What is going really well with toothbrushing? Flossing?
- What questions do you have about brushing or flossing?

Going to the Dentist

- What do you remember about visiting the dentist when you were younger?
- What type of experience do you want your child to have at the dentist? What are some ways we can help make that happen?
- What concerns you about taking your child to the dentist?
- What do you have questions about?
- What can I do to support you in scheduling a dental appointment for your child?

Let's Talk Teeth/Let's Set Goals

Work with the parent to fill out the *Let's Talk Teeth* questionnaire on the next page. Use her answers to help her set oral health goals using the *Let's Set Goals* sheet on page 131. These tools can be used during home visiting, family nights, or in any other communications with families.

Let's Talk Teeth!

Parent's Name: _____ Child's Name: _____ Child's Age: _____

Answer the following questions about your child: (note: some questions may not apply based on the age and developmental stage of your child.)

- | | Yes | No | NA |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. If your child has teeth, do you brush them?
If YES: Times per day _____ Times of day _____ Days per week _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does your child drink anything besides water between meals and snacks?
If YES: What does she drink? _____ How often? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does your child go to bed with a bottle filled with anything besides water?
If YES: What type of drink? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Does your child eat between meals?
If YES: What does he/she eat? _____
When? (times of day) _____ How often? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Does your child have a dentist? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Have you had your child's teeth checked by a dentist or medical provider?
If YES: When? _____ By whom? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Does your child have cavities or pain in his/her mouth? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Do you have concerns about his/her teeth or mouth? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you are pregnant, answer the following questions:

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Do you brush your teeth?
If YES: Times per day _____ Times of day _____ Days per week _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Do you drink anything but water between meals and snacks?
If YES: What do you drink? _____ How often? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Do you eat between meals?
If YES: What? _____
When? (times of day) _____ How often? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Do you have a dentist? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Have you seen the dentist during your pregnancy? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Do you have cavities or pain in your mouth? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Do you have concerns about your teeth or mouth?
If YES: What? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



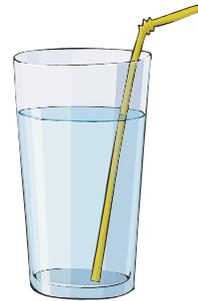
Let's Set Goals

Select the oral health goals you would like to accomplish. Goals should be set based on your child's oral health needs or your needs if you are pregnant.

Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.



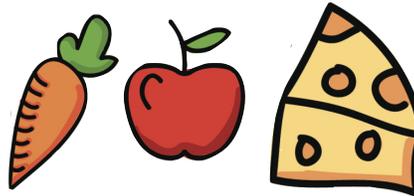
Drink only water between meals.



If baby goes to sleep with a bottle, fill it only with water.



Eat tooth healthy foods for snacks and meals.



Eat during meals and snacks only rather than "grazing" during the day.



Find a dentist.



Make a dental appointment.



Follow-up with treatment appointments.



The client may choose to set another goal that is not listed.

Other: _____



Family Night Activities

This section includes Cavity Free Kids activities, discussion questions and parent practice handouts that you can use to educate families about oral health during Family Nights. Make the whole evening a Cavity Free Event! Try:

- Serving tooth healthy foods and drinks.
- Offering toothbrushes and toothpaste to families for brushing after dinner.
- Setting up art activities such as decorating teeth, smiling faces, or mouths for children to engage in while you talk with parents.
- Inviting a dentist or hygienist to come speak to parents about oral health and the importance of regular dental visits.
- Inviting a representative from state Medicaid or ABCD program to discuss available dental care options.
- Providing brochures and a local dental resource list for families to take home.
- Giving everyone a toothbrush and floss to take home.

Basics of Oral Health 1

Baby Teeth Are Important

Instructions: Ask for three volunteers from the audience to line up next to each other. They will be the primary (baby) teeth. Each person will begin by holding a “tooth,” white side of paper toward the audience. The presenter is the permanent tooth.

These three volunteers are baby teeth that start out clean and healthy (*hold white side out toward audience*). But they go to bed with a bottle of juice or eat crackers all day long. The germs get fed and the food is not cleaned off—soon they begin to develop decay that looks like brown spots. (*turn papers over to colored side toward audience*)

One tooth has a really bad cavity and is ready to fall out or maybe it was taken out early because it was so decayed. (*center “tooth” moves away*)

What happens to the baby teeth that are left? (*ask for ideas from audience*) They shift in to fill the space. (*volunteers bend toward each other*) They might become crooked. They are hard to keep clean.

Pretty soon, children grow up and begin to lose their baby teeth. It is time for a permanent adult tooth to come in. The first two adult front teeth come in at about age 6. (*presenter becomes the Permanent Tooth and tries dramatically to squeeze in between the two baby teeth while holding white side of paper toward audience*)

What happens to that perfect new tooth? (*ask for ideas*) Yes, there is hardly room, it may come in crooked, hard to clean, etc. and it is coming into a mouth full of tooth decay! It hardly has a chance because there is so much decay in the mouth. Soon it will decay, too. (*flip to colored side of paper, so now the colored sides of all the teeth are facing the audience*)

Let’s remember baby teeth ARE important! Even though children’s baby teeth are only in their mouths for 6-12 years, they have really big jobs that will help protect and shape our permanent (adult) teeth. We need a healthy mouth!

Supplies

- Four sheets each of white and brown paper to make four paper “teeth”—front side is white; the back side is brown.
- “Baby Teeth Are Important” handout.

Discussion and Parent Practice Handout

- What is something you learned about baby teeth tonight?
- Do you have any questions about baby teeth?
- What are some ways you could use this story with your children?
- Here is a handout for you to take home. This handout has some important reminders of the things you can do to keep baby teeth healthy!

Baby Teeth Are Important

Did You Know?

Never think they are just baby teeth! They have important jobs to do—they help children eat foods, form words, and hold a healthy space for adult teeth.

Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Ask family, friends, or my home visitor for the name of a dentist who works with young children.
- Schedule my baby's first dental visit by his/her first birthday.
- Hang the "My Baby's Teeth Are Important" sign in the bathroom to help us remember to wipe baby's gums or brush every morning and night (as soon as he/she gets teeth!)

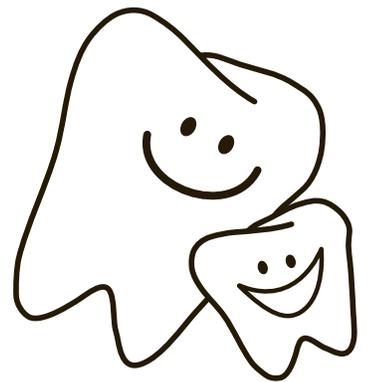


My baby's teeth are important and I will help keep them clean!

Sing "If You're Happy and You Know It" with the following verses while wiping baby's gums or brushing his teeth:

If you're healthy and you know it brush your teeth! If you're healthy and you know it brush your teeth, if you're healthy and you know it and you really want to show it, if you're healthy and you know it brush your teeth!

If you're healthy and you know it shout, happy teeth! If you're healthy and you know it wipe baby's gums! If you're healthy and you know it smile big!



Basics of Oral Health 2

Acid Attack!

Instructions: *This small group demonstration shows children and parents how the combination of germs and food causes cavities. In the demonstration, baking soda represents food, black pepper represents germs and vinegar is used to create the acid.*

Demonstration

Imagine that this bowl is your child's mouth. We know that germs already live in this mouth. *Sprinkle in pepper.*

Let's say this is a baby who is in the habit of going to sleep with a bottle of formula/milk. *(The baking soda represents food, pour in some baking soda)* Germs plus food make acid. *(Pour small amount of vinegar in until it begins to bubble up)*

We call that the "acid attack" and it lasts for 20 minutes each time we eat or drink.

The bottle falls out of baby's mouth so the mother wakes up again. Mom pops the bottle back in. Baby drinks more milk *(add more baking soda)* and what happens? *(pour in more vinegar)* Twenty more minutes of acid attack.

Later in the night, baby cries again. Mom stumbles in and props the bottle. What happens? *(repeat baking soda and vinegar—by now the container is pretty full of bubbles and looks dirty)*

By now, Baby's teeth have been sitting in acid all night long, getting weak and soft.

This is how children get Baby Bottle Tooth decay. You have probably seen it—you might have other names for it (bottle rot, etc.) The official name is Early Childhood Caries. But it isn't just milk in baby bottles that leads to decay. Think about the soda pop you sip on all afternoon. Or crackers your preschooler snacks on all morning. Each time we eat or drink—anything but water—our teeth get twenty minutes of acid attacks. If we eat too often we get acid attacks again and again. Eventually, our teeth get weak and can easily decay or get cavities.

Supplies

- Small bowl or vase.
- Baking soda.
- Black ground pepper.
- White vinegar.
- Spoon.
- "Germs and My Teeth" handout.

Discussion and Parent Practice Handout

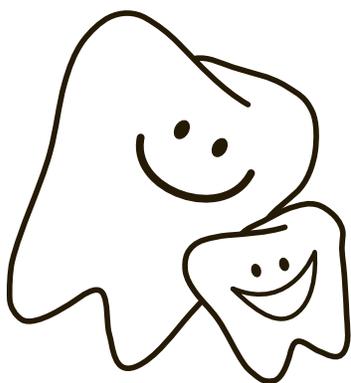
- What can we do?
- Limit acid attacks. Clean teeth after eating.
- Serve food or drink at meal and snack time instead of all day or all night long—3 meals and 2 snacks (depending on the child's age).
- Avoid filling sippy cups with juice or sugary beverages—if children are thirsty, fill it with water.
- Avoid putting children to bed with a bottle unless it has water in it.
- During this discussion time, we've talked about some important things you can do to take care of your family's teeth. The handout provides reminders of things you can do to keep your family's teeth healthy.

Germs and My Teeth

Did You Know?

- Germs cause cavities. We have germs in our mouths that use the food we eat to make acid. This acid weakens teeth and causes cavities.
- To prevent cavities, clean away food and germs. Brush every day—after breakfast and before bed.

Hi! I'm a cavity germ.



Do Together

Make toothbrushing a regular and fun part of your child's bedtime routine. When you brush your child's teeth tonight, tell him/her you're going to get all of the "cavity germs".

Say fun things like, "Oh, I got one!" or "Oh, there's another one, I'm going to get it!"

Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Brush my child's teeth every morning and night with a soft bristle toothbrush and fluoridated toothpaste—a smear from the first tooth up to age 3, the pea-sized amount after that.
- Make toothbrushing fun by telling my child "I'm going to get all of the cavity germs! Oh, I got one!"



Basics of Oral Health 2

Germ Puppet Show!

Instructions: Ask for two volunteers to play the germs; the teacher is the toothbrush. Ideally, give volunteers the script to review a few minutes before performing.

Lactobacilli: Yup, yup, yup (notice audience) Hello! My name is Lactobacilli—isn't that a silly name? That's why people call me SILLY. Can you say my name with me? SILLY!

I am silly and sticky and I live on teeth. Yup, yup, yup. I do! I do! I live on that one, and that one, and that one waaaaay in back. I'm sticking real tight! But you can't see me. I'm tiny and invisible. And I love to stick on teeth! Hey! Who else is on that tooth?

Strepto: I'm Strepto—I have a tough name because I am tough! Can you say my name? STREPTO! Say it again! STREPTO! I'm tiny and invisible but I am tough. I live on teeth, too. I live on that one, and that one, and that one waaaaaaay in back. I like to eat the food that comes in. Food makes me STRONG.

Lactobacilli: Food makes me SILLY and STICKY.

Strepto: Together we do bad things to your teeth. We stick and make them weak.

Lactobacilli: If we stay on your teeth we can make holes in them. Yup, Yup, Yup. We do, we do!

Strepto: *(whisper)* But sometimes we don't get to stay on teeth!

Lactobacilli: *(whisper)* Sometimes we get brushed away! Sometimes, *(louder)* Oh, NO, here it comes!

Toothbrush: I'm tougher than germs! I'm brushing you down the drain! *(giant toothbrush brushes them away)*

Lactobacilli: Oh, no, here we go!

Strepto: *(weakly)* But we'll be back tomorrow.

Toothbrush: That's OK because I am going to brush you away. I brush EVERY day!

Supplies

- "Strepto and Silly" script.
- 2 germ puppets.
- 2 adult volunteers.
- Toothbrush.
- "Germs Make Cavities" handout.

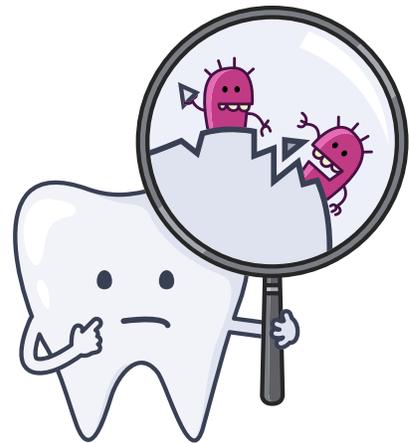
Discussion and Parent Practice Handout

- What questions do you have about what causes cavities?
- What are some ways that you could use this story with your children.
- Pass out the Germs Make Cavities handout.

Germs Make Cavities

Did you Know

- **Germs plus food and drinks** high in sugar or carbohydrates cause cavities.
- White or brown spots on teeth may be early signs of tooth decay and a black spot is probably a cavity.
- Cavities get bigger and bigger until the dentist fixes them.



White spots
(the start of cavities)



Tooth decay

Cavities can be prevented!

Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Check my child's teeth for white, brown, or black spots.
- Make an appointment with my child's dentist if I see any white, brown or black spots.



Basics of Oral Health 3

Guess the Sugar

Instructions: Prior to the family night, create a display board that shows the sugar contents of different drinks that are common among the families in your program—set it up to show after your demonstration.

Use granulated sugar in plastic baggies or sugar cubes that are glued next to the beverage label or container. Drink examples are included on page 142: 4 grams of sugar equals one teaspoon—divide 4 into the number of grams to get the number of teaspoons. Remember, many drinks have two servings in one container, so multiply the sugar in one serving times the number of servings in the entire container.

Parent volunteers compare the content of different drinks and talk about which would be the healthier option. End with water and talk about why it is the healthiest option.

Opening

Here are a few questions to get us started:

How much of our body weight is made up of water?

Answer: Water makes up half of our body weight.

What is one thing that water does for our body?

Answers: Helps digest food, moves nutrients through our blood, keeps our skin hydrated.

How much water does an elephant drink in a day?

Answer: About 2 gallons.

How much water should each of us try to drink in a day?

Answer: 8-10 glasses (8 ounces each; about 64 ounces).

Most drinks have a nutrition label on them. This label provides a lot of information about what is in the drink. We're going to focus on the sugar part of the label and how much sugar is in a serving of your favorite drink. When you look at the label, it will tell you how many grams of sugar are in each serving.

Grams? How do we know how much a gram is? We all know how much a teaspoon is, so let's figure out how to turn grams into teaspoons. Four grams of sugar equals one teaspoon. The label also tells you how many servings are in the bottle. Sometimes, there is more than one serving. So you might have to double or triple the amount of sugar to know how much sugar is in the whole bottle!

Supplies

- Sample drink containers.
- Sugar—granulated or cubes.
- Teaspoons.
- Containers.
- Chocolate milk nutritional label page 143.
- Pitcher of water.
- Display board.
- Nutritional Labels handouts.
- "Water is Best" handout.

Continued on next page »

Guess the Sugar *continued*

Demonstration

I am going to show you a drink—and I want you to guess the amount of sugar in each drink.

Ask for a parent volunteer to pile up the sugar cubes or scoop sugar into a container for each example. Hold up the tray or container each time so all of the parents can see.

Sample script: Here is a large soda pop. How much sugar do you think is in this pop container?
(responses)

The label says there are [] grams of sugar. Let's use the conversion to figure out how many teaspoons that is.

Divide 4 into []. That means there are [] teaspoons of sugar in this drink.

But, we should look at the servings, too. How many servings do you think are in this container? It's two servings! It has [] grams of sugar in each serving, so we need to double that. [] for one serving plus [] for the other serving makes [] all together. That means there is two times as much sugar than you might think!

How many of us only drink one serving and save the rest for later? Would you ever think to spoon that much sugar into a glass and drink it? Would you want your child to drink that much sugar? Probably not!

(Repeat process with two or three other drinks or show the sugar board. Use water as the last example.)

This is a glass of water. How much sugar do you think is in this glass of water? That's right, there is none. Water has no sugar, which means it has no calories. And, we learned earlier that water is important for our bodies. Tap water is healthy to drink and may contain fluoride, a natural mineral that helps prevent cavities.

Discussion

Let's talk about some ways that we could all drink more water and less sugar sweetened drinks during the day. Examples to mention if the group does not:

- Tap water is free!
- Tap water has no added sugar—it is calorie free!
- Water is good for our bodies.
- If children start drinking water, they will like it and ask for it. Once you introduce drinks that taste sweet because of added sugar, they'll probably want them.
- Save soda pop and juice for special days, like a party.
- Serve fresh fruit instead of juice—it has more vitamins and nutrients.
- Fill water in sippy cups and bottles for children to drink in-between meals.
- Make water fun! Serve water with straws or in refillable bottles.
- Add slices of cucumber, mint, or fruit like strawberries to add some flavor to water.
- Pass out the Water Drinking Chart.

Drinks and Juices (non carbonated)

8 oz. serving unless otherwise noted

Name	Teaspoons of Sugar	Calories
Apple Juice, Tree Top	6 ½	120
Arizona Iced Tea	6	90
Capri Sun, Berry, 6.75 oz. serving	5	90
Capri Sun, Fruit Punch, 6.75 oz. serving	4	60
Capri Sun, Wild Cherry, 6.75 oz. serving	4	60
Country Time Lemonade	5	80
Gatorade	3	63
Grape Juice	9	152
Hawaiian Punch	7	120
Juicy Juice, Grape	7	140
Juicy Juice Punch	6 1/2	120
Kool Aid Burst, 6.75 oz. serving	2 1/4	35
Kool Aid, Grape	4	60
Orange Juice	5	122
SoBe Strawberry Banana	6 1/4	100
SoBe Power Fruit Punch	6 1/4	100
SunnyD	3 1/3	55
Tang	5 1/2	90



Soda Pop (carbonated)

12 oz. servings

Name	Teaspoons of Sugar	Calories
Coca Cola, Classic	9 3/4	140
Coca Cola, Mexican	9 3/4	150
Cream Soda	11 1/2	180
Crush, Orange	12 1/2	180
Dr. Pepper	10	150
Fanta	10 1/2	160
Mountain Dew	11 1/2	170
Pepsi	10 1/4	150
Root Beer, A & W	11 1/4	170
Root Beer, Barq's	11 1/4	160
Root Beer, Mug	10 3/4	160
7-up	9 3/4	140
Sierra Mist	9 3/4	140
Sprite	9 1/2	140
Sprite, Mexican	10	160
Squirt	9 1/4	140

Milk and Milk Drinks

8 oz. servings unless otherwise noted

Name	Teaspoons of Sugar	Calories
McDonalds chocolate shake, 12 oz.	19 1/4	560
McDonalds vanilla shake, 12 oz.	15 3/4	530
Nesquick chocolate milk	6	150
Starbucks Frappuccino, 9.5 oz.	8	200
Starbucks Vanilla Latte 9.5 oz.	4 1/4	120

Energy Drinks

8 oz. servings

Name	Teaspoons of Sugar	Calories
Monster Energy	6 3/4	110
Red Bull	6 3/4	110
Rock Star Energy	7 3/4	140



Chocolate Milk

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 8 oz.

Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 180

Total Fat

Saturated

Unsaturated

Cholesterol

Sodium

Total Carbohydrate

Fiber 1 g

Sugar 28 g



Basics of Oral Health 3

The Sugar We Eat In One Day

Demonstration

Pretend that the clear container is a child's tummy. Give the container, the sugar, and the scoop to a parent.

*Say: Guess how many teaspoons of sugar are in a bowl of Trix?" (see *How Much Sugar in Some Favorite Foods? List* for the answer).*

Tell families the answer, and ask the parent with the container to scoop the number of teaspoons of sugar in one bowl of Trix into the clear container.

Continue choosing foods and asking participants to scoop the sugar into the clear plastic container. Having participants scoop the sugar and see the sugar pile up is very powerful. Choose common foods that have surprisingly high sugar content to see how quickly the container fills up.

You don't have to go through the entire day to see that people can consume a lot of sugar. Stop whenever you feel that the participants have received the message.

Say: We have a lot of choices in the types of foods we eat. Let's close by talking about some foods that are tooth healthy versus tooth unhealthy. Mention foods that children commonly eat that you may not have mentioned during the demonstration—fruit snacks, crackers, white bread

Supplies

- Sugar—granulated or cubes
- Teaspoons
- Clear plastic containers
- "Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List" and "How Much Sugar in Common Foods" handouts

Discussion and Parent Practice Handout

- What are some ideas you have on how to eat less sugar in a day?
- I have a couple of handouts for you to take home.
 - The first is Tooth Healthy and Tooth Unhealthy Foods List. You might want to stick on your refrigerator to help remind you of the tooth healthy foods to eat.
 - The second handout "How Much Sugar is in Common Foods".

Tooth Healthy Foods List



Apples
Bananas
Broccoli
Carrots
Cereals, low-sugar
Cheese
Cherries
Cottage cheese
Cucumber
Eggs
Fish
Grapes
Green beans
Lettuce
Meats
Melons
Nuts
Oranges
Peaches
Peas
Popcorn
Strawberries
Sweet potatoes
Tofu
Tomatoes
Whole grain breads
Whole grain crackers,
rice and pastas
Yogurt



Beverages:

Water
Milk

Tooth Unhealthy Foods List



Bread (White)
Breakfast cereal, sugary
Cake
Candy
Chips
Cookies
Crackers
Fruit snacks
Graham crackers
Granola bars
Gum—with sugar
Ice cream



Beverages:

Juice
Soda pop
Sports drinks
Sweet tea
Sweetened milk
Sweetened coffee



★ Choose and prepare foods that are **age appropriate** for your child.



How Much Sugar and Carbohydrates in Some Favorite Foods?



	Serving Size	Carbohydrates	Teaspoons of Sugar
Breakfast			
• Trix cereal	1 C	27 g	10 g sugar (2.5 tsp.)
• Milk (2%)	1 C	12 g	12 g sugar (3 tsp.)
• Orange juice	6 oz.	22 g	16 g sugar (4 tsp.)
Snack			
• Low-fat yogurt	6 oz.	32 g	32 g sugar (8 tsp.)
• Apple juice	1 C	28 g	24 g sugar (6 tsp.)
Lunch			
• Hamburger, fast food	1 regular	28 g	6 g sugar (1.5 tsp.)
• Fries, fast food	small	30 g	.15 g sugar (0 tsp.)
• Apple slices	½ C	9 g	6.5 g sugar (1.5 tsp.)
• Apple juice	6.75 oz.	24 g	20 g sugar (5 tsp.)
Snack			
• Chocolate milkshake	20	63 g	63 g sugar (16 tsp.)
• Graham crackers	2 whole	22 g	9 g sugar (2 tsp.)
Dinner			
• Chicken nuggets	5	15 g	.71 g sugar (0 tsp.)
• Hash browns	½ C	22 g	.75 g sugar (0 tsp.)
• Green beans	¼ C	2 g	.4 g sugar (0 tsp.)
• Chocolate milk	1 C	30 g	24 g sugar (6 tsp.)
Snack			
• Chocolate ice cream	½ C	19 g	17 g sugar (4.25 tsp.)
• Animal crackers	10	18.5 g	3.5 g sugar (1 tsp.)



Basics of Oral Health 4

How to Brush

Ask participants: (tell them to just think of the answer, not say it out loud)

- How often do you brush your teeth?
- How much toothpaste do you use?
- When do you think children can start brushing their teeth all by themselves?

There is a right way to brush so that every part of every tooth gets clean.

Use a soft toothbrush and toothpaste—a small smear when the first tooth appears and a pea-sized amount for three and older.

Fluoride in toothpaste helps strengthen teeth.

Everyone should brush at least two times every day—after breakfast and before bed. Bedtime is the most important time to brush so that food does not sit on teeth all night which can cause cavities.

Hold your brush against where the gum meets the tooth. The food and germs stick there.

Use small circles and count to 5 before moving to the next area. Move around in a pattern from tooth to tooth—inside, outside, top and bottom. With children we say: “make tiny, tickly, wiggly, circles” and we count out loud to 5 (*ask children or parents to count to 5 with you*) Do this until every side of every tooth has been cleaned. It usually takes about 2 minutes.

It is not easy for children—parents need to brush until children are 8 years old.

Remember the biting surfaces. Those teeth have bumps and grooves where food gets stuck and germs are hiding.

Remember to brush your tongue too! (*pretend to brush tongue*)

This time (hold up your “pointer” finger) let’s pretend this is your toothbrush. Keep your finger outside of your mouth. Let’s brush and count together—round and round:

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

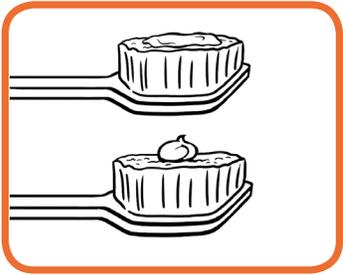
Supplies

- Toothbrush.
- Mouth model.
- “How to Brush”handout.

Discussion and Parent Practice Handout

- What questions do you have about toothbrushing?
- This handout has some helpful brushing tips.

How To Brush



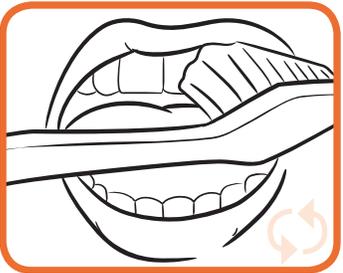
Use a soft bristle toothbrush and fluoridated toothpaste.

Use a smear of toothpaste from the first tooth up to age 3, a pea-sized amount after that.



Hold your brush at an angle where the gum meets the tooth.

Food and germs like to stick there.



Move the toothbrush in small circles.

Count to 5 before moving the brush to another spot.



Remember the biting surfaces.

That is where the food gets stuck and germs hide.



Brush the tongue.

Germs hide there.

Brush after breakfast and before bed.



Basics of Oral Health 4

How to Floss

Instructions: Explain that good home care can really make a difference to prevent cavities and keep a mouth healthy. Brushing is one part—flossing is the other. Flossing cleans off the food and germs where the toothbrush cannot reach in between the teeth.

You won't get rid of all the germs but you can sure make it hard for those germs to take over! The germs are like these plastic cups. *Hold up plastic cups*. They get together and build sticky plaque walls. *Stack the cups on a table*. If we leave them they will get stronger and stronger and take over the whole mouth. If we floss them every day we can break down their walls. *Knock cups over*.

Every day they will start over again (*build a smaller stack*), but if we keep flossing them away every day we can keep them under control. (*knock them down again*)

When flossing, at first the gums may bleed. This is normal. Don't worry and don't stop flossing! Floss every day and the gums will get healthier and will stop bleeding.

Let's learn the right way to floss. Working with a partner, one of you uses your yarn as floss. The other one holds up your fingers as if they were teeth lined up in a mouth and your partner will floss between your fingers. Some teeth are very tight together!

Wrap "floss" around your middle or index fingers to get a firm grip. Hold between thumb and finger.

Gently slide the floss down between two teeth (*two fingers*); now wrap the floss toward one tooth, (*finger*) hugging it as you gently slide it back up and out.

Gently slide it down in the same place; wrap it toward the neighbor tooth, hugging that one as you gently slide it back up and out.

Repeat this process to all teeth—remember to hug that back tooth even if it is the last one in line.

Always use a clean piece of floss between teeth.

Never snap or force floss as this may cut or bruise gum tissue.

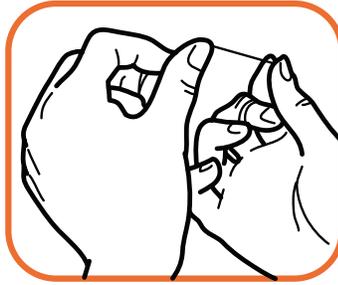
Supplies

- Plastic cups that stack.
- A piece of yarn about 12-18" long.
- "How to Floss" handout.

Discussion and Parent Practice Handout

- Children cannot floss by themselves. It is a parent's job. Floss your child's teeth when the sides of your child's teeth touch each other.
- And remember, you're an important role model for your child! Children need to see you floss your teeth, too.
- Open the discussion up for questions.
- This handout has some helpful flossing tips.

How To Floss



Wrap the floss around your middle or index fingers to get a firm grip.

Hold between your thumbs and fingers.



Gently slide the floss between two teeth. Then wrap the floss toward one tooth, hugging it as you gently slide it up, back, forth, and down.



Repeat this process on all teeth. Remember to hug that back tooth even though it is the last one in line.

Remember...

- ✓ Always use a clean piece of floss between teeth.
- ✓ Never snap or force floss as this may cut or bruise gum tissue.
- ✓ Children cannot floss by themselves, they need your help.
- ✓ Start flossing your child's teeth as soon as teeth touch.
- ✓ It will help your child learn good habits if they see you floss.



Basics of Oral Health 5

Make and Keep a Dental Appointment

Tonight, we are going to talk about going to the dentist and why it's important for you as parents to know how to find a dentist, schedule, and keep dental appointments for your child.

Here are a few questions to get us started:

Why is it important for your child to go to the dentist? *(wait for responses)*

Answer: Check for cavities, fix cavities, paint on fluoride, regular checkup, keep my child from getting cavities.

Some of your children may even ask, "When can I go to the dentist?" The dentist wants to keep your child's teeth healthy and strong. Regular visits to the dentist can help prevent cavities if they are caught early! It's recommended that children be seen by a dentist or medical provider by their first tooth or first birthday.

You may find it surprising to hear the "first visit by first tooth or first birthday message." And, you might even be told that your child doesn't need to see the dentist until he is three years old.

Starting regular dental visits early allows the dentist or medical provider to check your child's teeth for early signs of tooth decay or catch any cavities when they are still very small.

If you don't have a dentist for your child, tonight we will talk about ways to identify a dentist, schedule an appointment for your child, and prepare for the visit.

Locate a Dentist or Dental Resources

We are fortunate to have dentists who are trained to work with children in our community. Have you heard of the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program before? *(responses)*

The ABCD program is for children ages birth to six on Medicaid (ProviderOne). The ABCD dentist will see your child in his or her office. The dentist and staff have had training on how to care for young children.

Before you schedule an appointment with an ABCD dentist you need to enroll in the ABCD program. I can help you enroll in the ABCD program with our local ABCD coordinator *(pass out the ABCD enrollment forms to the families and fill out).*

Supplies

- Copies of Local Community Dental Resources.
- Medicaid enrollment information.
- ABCD enrollment form/registration.
- Appointment reminder cards.
- Pens.
- "Reminder" handout.

Make and Keep a Dental Appointment » continued

If your child is not on Medicaid we have local community dental clinics (*share list of clinics*) that will see your child. You do not need to enroll; you can call them directly.

Scheduling Your Child's Dental Appointment:

Once your child is enrolled in ABCD and has a dentist, you can call and schedule an appointment. Before you call to schedule decide what days and times work best for you. What are some other things that you want to think about when you schedule an appointment? (*wait for responses, ideas may include transportation, evening hours, getting off work*) Figuring these things out ahead of time can help make sure you can keep the appointment.

When you call to make the dental appointment, have the appointment reminder card (*pass out a card for each family*) ready to fill in. Or put it on your calendar. Post the card on the refrigerator as a reminder of the upcoming appointment.

Consider the time you need to get there. Do you need to take a bus or pick up your child from child care? You want to arrive about 5 to 10 minutes early for your child's dental appointment.

The dentist has scheduled time just for your child's visit. Make the appointment a priority.

What are some ways you can make the appointment go smoothly? (*responses*) Consider packing a bag with your child's favorite toy, books, a water cup, extra diapers and wipes, and anything else that can make the waiting time be pleasant.

During your child's checkup, the dentist and his or her team will look for early signs of decay, talk with you about how to brush and floss your child's teeth, and may paint fluoride on their teeth to help prevent cavities. If your child has a cavity or cavities they will schedule your child to come back for treatment appointment.

And one last thing—if something comes up and you need to cancel your child's appointment, call the dental office at least a full day (24 hours) ahead of the appointment. This is very important—some offices charge a fee when you don't cancel the appointment in advance.

Discussion and Parent Practice Handout

- What type of support do you need to help schedule an appointment?
- What questions do you have about taking your child to the dentist?

REMINDER

Your Child Has a Dental Checkup Coming Up!

(Child's Name) _____

HAS A DENTAL APPOINTMENT

On (date) _____ at (time) _____

With Dr. _____

(Address) _____

(Phone) _____

Remember to bring: *(Circle all that apply)*

- Insurance card
- Photo ID
- Money for co-payment
- Other: _____

Reminders:

- Arrive 15 minutes early to complete paperwork.
- Bring some small toys or a book for your child to play with during the waiting time.



Suggested ways to share Information Bites with families:

Parent Newsletters

Include Information Bites in parent newsletters. Parents will begin to look for Bites in future newsletters when there is a recurring Cavity Free Kids corner in the newsletter.

Program Website

Insert a new Information Bite of information on your program's website every week/month.

E-Mail

Include Information Bites in messages to parents.

Parent Meeting and Family Night

Include Information Bites in parent meeting agendas or within presentation materials.

Posters

Create a series of Information Bites posters to hang on walls where parents will be likely to see them during a parent meeting.

Baby Teeth are Important

- Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease of young children. However, it is almost 100% preventable!
- Healthy baby teeth are important—they help us eat foods, form words, and hold space for adult teeth.
- Healthy baby teeth mean a healthy mouth for adult teeth.
- Tooth decay can affect your child’s overall health and ability to learn. Children with pain caused by cavities have a hard time paying attention in class and miss more school days than other children.

What Causes Cavities?

- We all have germs in our mouths called “Strep Mutans” and “Lactobacilli.”
- The combination of germs and carbohydrates (sugar and starches) creates an acid that attacks teeth for up to 20 minutes.
- Plaque is a sticky film that is constantly building up on our teeth, and is made from the germs and their byproducts.
- Germs will never be completely gone from our mouths—the goal is to keep them under control by brushing and flossing.
- Repeated acid attacks on our teeth can make cavities.
- Cavities must be treated by a dentist.

Cavities are Preventable!

- Cavities are almost 100% preventable.
- Brush twice a day, two minutes at a time, with small amount of fluoride toothpaste—smear the size of a grain of rice until age 3, the size of a pea after that. Floss once a day as soon as teeth touch!
- Get a dental checkup twice a year. Medicaid and most dental insurance plans cover two preventive visits each year.
- Ask the dentist about fluoride varnish and sealants—they help protect the teeth from cavities.

Drink More Water—Less Juice and Soda Pop!

- Nutrition plays a key role in oral and overall health. Foods and drinks high in sugar and lower in fiber can cause acid attacks on your teeth, leading to cavities.
- Water is the best drink for your body. It makes up half of our body weight and it helps digest food and moves nutrients through our body.
- Water may contain fluoride, a natural mineral that helps prevent cavities.
- Juice and soda have a lot of sugar in them and no nutritional value. Replace them with water!

Tooth Healthy Everyday Foods

- “Tooth healthy” foods and drinks are lower in refined carbohydrates and include fruits, vegetables, cheese, meat and beans, and whole grain breads and pastas. “Tooth unhealthy” foods and drinks include crackers, dried fruit, fruit snacks, chips, cookies, juice, and soda pop.
- A treat every once in a while is okay! Instead of not allowing certain foods or drinks or labeling them as unhealthy, save them for special days.
- It is important to have meals and snacks at regularly scheduled times. This limits the number of acid attacks on teeth, giving teeth time to rest and rebuild.

Snacking for Healthy Teeth

Here are some tooth healthy snack ideas:

- Cheese and yogurt
- Unflavored milk
- Vegetables
- Whole grain breads and cereals
- Fresh fruit
- Meat
- Water
- Beans

Frequency of Snacking

- How often kids snack—not just what they eat—can be harmful to their teeth.
- Teeth need breaks between meals and snacks to prevent cavities.
- Grazing on snacks or sipping juice all day causes cavities.
- Eat and drink in one sitting instead of sipping and snacking all day long.

Brushing and Flossing

- Brushing and flossing our teeth are two important ways to prevent tooth decay.
- Brush all sides of every tooth using a small smear of fluoridated toothpaste, which takes about two minutes, two times a day. Don’t rinse the toothpaste from the teeth.
- A parent should assist with brushing until a child is around 8 years old.
- Brush your teeth with the kids! You are an important role model and this shows that you take care of your teeth, too.
- Each family member should have their own toothbrush. Replace each toothbrush every 3 to 4 months.
- When the sides of teeth touch, it is important to floss at least once a day to remove food and germs stuck between teeth.

Swish and Swallow

- After you eat and when brushing is not possible, rinse your mouth with water, a technique called swish and swallow. Kids can usually swish and swallow at about age 3.
- Swish and swallow does not replace brushing, but helps rinse food off teeth and decrease the acid.

Lift the Lip and Look!

- At least every month, lift your child’s lip and take a close look at the teeth and gums.
- Tooth decay often starts along the front or back side of the front teeth or along the gums. The first sign of early tooth decay is a white spot. If you notice white or brown spots on the teeth or see anything unusual, contact your child’s dentist or medical provider.
- A dentist or medical provider may be able to stop or reverse decay if it is caught early by applying fluoride varnish.

Visiting the Dentist

- Children should have their teeth checked by a dentist or medical provider by their first birthday or when the first tooth comes in.
- Regular dental checkups are important for every child because changes in teeth can happen quickly.
- A dentist focuses on preventing and treating problems with your teeth and gums.
- Other members of the dental team assist the dentist—they may brush and clean the teeth, apply fluoride varnish, or take x-rays of the teeth.
- Be aware of children’s feelings about going to the dentist—some may feel nervous, some may feel excited.
- The more children understand about visiting the dentist, the more comfortable they may feel.

Get the Most Out of Your Child’s Dental Visit

During your child’s checkup:

- Talk about your child’s eating and snacking habits.
- Ask the dentist if you are brushing your child’s teeth correctly.
- Share any concerns or questions about your child’s oral health. Is he at high risk for tooth decay? What can you do to reduce the risk?
- Discuss whether your child needs fluoride. If your water doesn’t contain fluoride, drops or tablets may be recommended.
- Ask about fluoride varnish.

Fluoride

- Fluoride is a natural mineral that helps prevent cavities and can even reverse early tooth decay!
- Find out if your water is fluoridated. If it is not, your child may need to get fluoride from another source, such as fluoride drops or tablets from your dentist or medical provider.
- It is important to use fluoride toothpaste when you brush. It helps prevent cavities by strengthening teeth.
- Ask your dentist or medical provider about fluoride varnish to protect against cavities. Fluoride varnish is like a special vitamin that keeps our teeth strong, happy and healthy. It is “painted” on the child’s teeth during a dental checkup or at the doctor’s office during a well-child visit.

Little Bites

Little Bites are designed to be shared with families when they ask or when the need arises.

These additional parent practice handouts address the following topics:

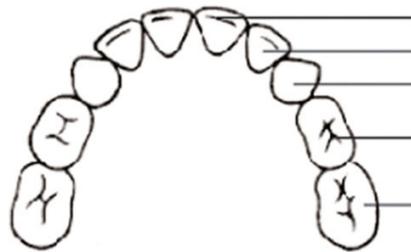
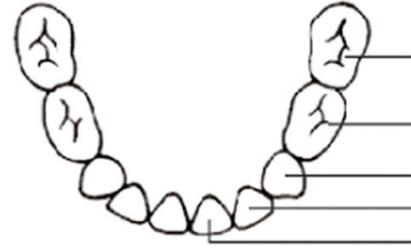
- **Teething**
- **Lift the Lip**
- **Fluoride**
- **Accidents**
- **Sealants**

Teething

Did You Know?

- Babies will usually begin to get their teeth around 6 months of age.
- While teething, babies may chew on their fingers, hands, or anything that they can get into their mouths.
- Comfort a teething baby by offering a cold, firm, safe and clean teething object, like a teething ring or slightly frozen damp washcloth.
- Drooling and fussiness are normal signs of teething.

Teething biscuits and crackers are often sticky and sugary and can cause cavities. **Do not offer them for teething.**

	Upper Teeth	Erupt
	Central incisor	8-12 months
	Lateral incisor	9-13 months
	Canine (cuspid)	16-22 months
	First molar	13-19 months
	Lower Teeth	Erupt
	Second molar	23-31 months
	First molar	14-18 months
	Canine (cuspid)	17-23 months
	Lateral incisor	10-16 months
Central incisor	6-10 months	

Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Get a teething ring or put a washcloth in the freezer to comfort my teething baby.



Lift the Lip

Did You Know?

- Lift the Lip is one way for you to check your child's teeth for early signs of tooth decay.
- It's quick and easy to do—take a minute to Lift the Lip while you're reading or playing with your child, before bed or during toothbrushing.
- By checking your child's teeth once a month, you can help identify early tooth decay and prevent cavities.



Ignoring early signs of decay can lead to cavities.

How to Lift the Lip

1. Lift or gently push the upper lip so the teeth and gums are visible.
2. Look at the upper teeth. Check the front and back of the teeth for plaque on the gum line and white, brown, or black spots.
3. Repeat the process with the lower teeth.
4. If you see spots or anything unusual, have your child's teeth checked by a dentist or medical provider as soon as possible.

Your child may fuss, cry, or wiggle while you check his teeth. As you both get more comfortable with the process it will get easier.

Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Lift my child's lip at least once a month to check for early signs of tooth decay.
- Make an appointment with dentist or medical provider if I see white, brown or black spots or have other concerns.



Fluoride Facts

Did You Know?

- Fluoride is a natural mineral that helps prevent cavities and can even reverse early tooth decay.
- Sources of fluoride include fluoridated water, varnish, rinse, toothpaste, drops, and tablets.
- It is important to use fluoride toothpaste when you brush.

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Ask your dentist or medical provider about fluoride varnish to protect against cavities. Fluoride varnish is like a special vitamin that keeps our teeth strong, happy, and healthy. It is “painted” on teeth during a dental checkup or at the doctor’s office during a well-child visit.

If your water is not fluoridated, your child may need to get fluoride from another source such as fluoride drops or tablets from your dentist or medical provider.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Brush my child’s teeth with fluoridated toothpaste.
- Call my local health department or water department to find out if my water is fluoridated.
- If my water is fluoridated, make sure my child drinks it when he is old enough to drink water.
- If my water is not fluoridated, ask my dentist or medical provider for fluoride supplements for my child.



Sometimes Accidents Happen

If a baby tooth is knocked out:

- If your child knocks out a baby tooth, take him and the tooth to the dentist right away.
- The tooth cannot be put back in, but the dentist can determine whether any care is needed.

If a permanent tooth is knocked out:

- Pick up the tooth by its biting end (not the root). Do not wash or handle it. Gently rinse it with milk (if available), and place the tooth back in the hole in the gum until you can get to the dentist.
- If the tooth cannot be put back into the hole, place it in a container of cold milk.
- Take the child and the tooth to the dentist immediately.

If a tooth is broken:

- Save tooth fragments you can find and place them in a cup of milk or water.
- Rinse the injured tooth and area with warm water to remove dirt and debris.
- Place a clean, cold compress on the injured area.
- Take the child and the tooth fragments to the dentist immediately.

Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Keep my dentist's name and phone number handy in case of an emergency.

- My dentist's name: _____

- My dentist's phone number: _____

- Office hours: _____



Sealants

Did You Know?

- Sealants are thin protective coatings that are simply painted on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth to prevent cavities.
- Sealants help keep cavity-causing germs out of the grooves of the molars, areas that can be difficult to keep clean.



Take the Healthy Mouth Challenge!

I will:

- Talk to my child's dentist about applying sealants on my child's teeth.



Notes

Notes