

# ***ORAL HEALTH FOR HEAD START FAMILIES***





# BABY TEETH ARE IMPORTANT!

## **Baby teeth:**

- ✓ Help your child chew healthy foods.
- ✓ Hold the space for permanent teeth.



## **Baby teeth:**

- ✓ Help your child to speak clearly.
- ✓ Help your child smile with confidence.

# ***BABY TEETH ARE IMPORTANT!***

**Taking care of your child's baby teeth will help your child's permanent teeth stay healthy too!**

**Baby teeth:**

- ✓ **Help your child chew healthy foods.**
- ✓ **Hold the space for permanent teeth.**
- ✓ **Help your child speak clearly.**
- ✓ **Help your child smile with confidence.**

# WHAT ARE CAVITIES?

**Germs**



+

**Sugar**



=

**Acid**



- ✓ 1 in 4 Head Start children get cavities.
- ✓ You can stop cavities from getting started or getting worse!



# WHAT ARE CAVITIES?

- ✓ The germs in our mouth use the sugar that we eat to make acid.
- ✓ The acid eats at the enamel – the outer surface of the tooth – and forms a hole or cavity.

**The good news is that cavities can be prevented!**

# **BABY TEETH CAN GET CAVITIES**



**White spots are whiter than the rest of the tooth.**



**White spots can turn into cavities.**

# **BABY TEETH CAN GET CAVITIES**

## **White Spots:**

- ✓ May seem whiter than the rest of the tooth and are usually found near the child's gums.
- ✓ Are the first sign that cavities may be starting to form on the tooth.
- ✓ Take your child to the dentist if you see white spots on your child's teeth – a fluoride treatment may stop the cavities from forming!
- ✓ May become cavities without treatment.



# LIFT THE LIP



Check your child's teeth once a month to look for white spots.



# LIFT THE LIP

- ✓ Lift your child's lips and **LOOK** for white spots once a month.
- ✓ Take your child to the dentist if you find white spots.

# ***INFECTION***



# INFECTION

To keep your child healthy, make sure your child has regular medical **AND** dental check-ups. Cavities are a **DISEASE** and need to be treated. Children may not tell you when their mouth hurts. If cavities are not treated by a dentist, they can sometimes cause a serious infection.



# ***GIVE YOUR BABY A HEALTHY HEAD START***

- ✓ **Go to the dentist when you are pregnant.**
- ✓ **Dental exams and fillings are safe during pregnancy.**
- ✓ **Brush and floss every day.**



# ***GIVE YOUR BABY A HEALTHY HEAD START***

**Pregnant women who have a dentist should continue their regular schedule of routine care. All others should see a dentist no later than the second trimester to make sure that they don't have cavities that could lead to infection.**

**Changes to your body when you are pregnant may make your gums sore, puffy, and red if you do not brush and floss every day.**

- ✓ If you can't brush your teeth because you feel sick, rinse your mouth with water or a mouth rinse that has fluoride.**
- ✓ If you vomit, rinse your mouth with water.**

# **AFTER YOUR BABY IS BORN**



**By keeping your mouth clean and getting dental care, you will reduce the amount of germs in your mouth.**



# ***AFTER YOUR BABY IS BORN***

**By keeping your mouth clean and getting dental care, you will reduce the amount of germs in your mouth. Continue seeing a dentist for routine dental care.**

# KEEP YOUR TEETH HEALTHY!



Your child will want to copy you and to brush, too!

- ✓ Brush twice a day with a soft brush.

# **KEEP YOUR TEETH HEALTHY!**

Children learn by watching the adults in their family and will copy what you do.

To keep you and your child healthy, adults should:

- ✓ Brush twice a day with a soft brush.
- ✓ Floss every day.



# KEEP YOUR CHILD'S TEETH HEALTHY!

- ✓ Start to brush as soon as the first tooth appears.
- ✓ Stand or sit behind your child.



# **KEEP YOUR CHILD'S TEETH HEALTHY!**

- ✓ Start to brush as soon as the first tooth appears.
- ✓ Stand or sit behind your child and brush teeth for two minutes, twice a day. Use a timer or sing a song to make brushing more fun!

# CHILDREN NEED HELP BRUSHING

✓ Brush your child's teeth until age 8.

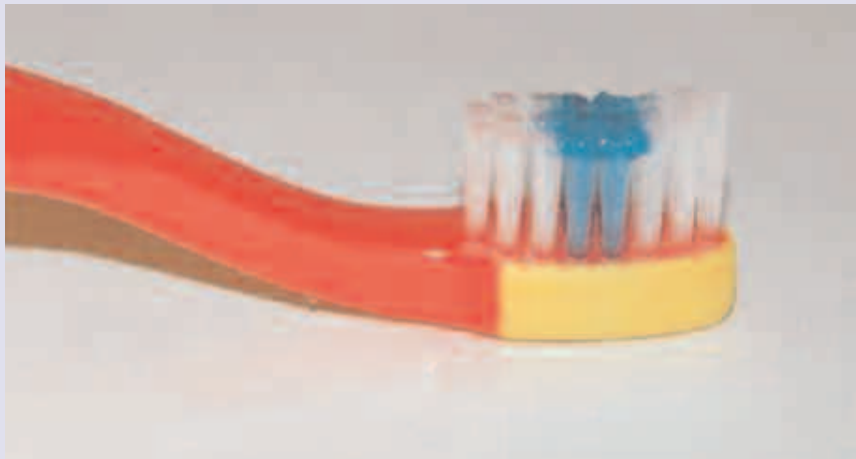




# ***CHILDREN NEED HELP BRUSHING***

**Young children are not able to brush well on their own. Brush your child's teeth until the age of 8 to remove the germs and sugar that cause cavities.**

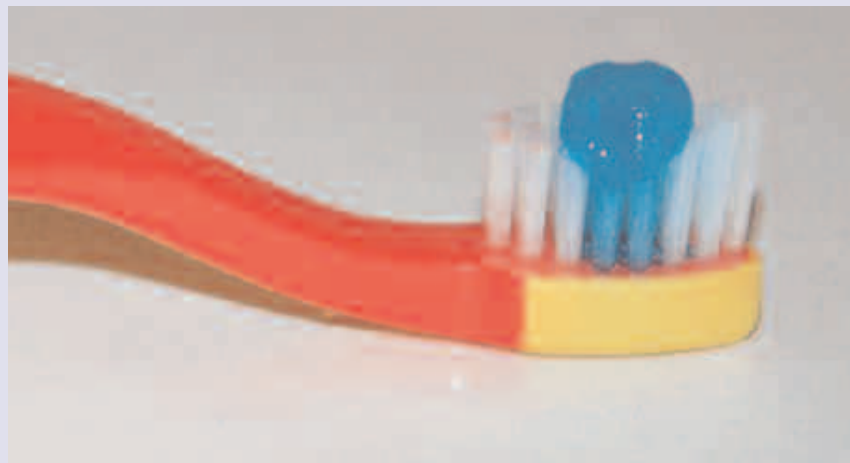
# BRUSHING YOUR CHILD'S TEETH



Small smear: Children under age 2

- ✓ Toothpaste with fluoride.
- ✓ Soft bristle brush.

***Spit Out - Don't Rinse!***



Small pea-sized: Children over age 2

# BRUSHING YOUR CHILD'S TEETH

- ✓ Use a toothbrush with **SOFT** bristles.
- ✓ Fluoride protects teeth from cavities. It can be found in toothpaste and tap water.
- ✓ For children under age 2 use a “smear” of fluoride toothpaste.
- ✓ For children over age 2 use a “pea sized” amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- ✓ Have your child **SPIT** out all toothpaste, and do **not** rinse with water because the fluoride in the toothpaste will continue to protect the teeth from cavities.
- ✓ Your child's doctor or dentist may also give you a prescription for fluoride or a fluoride treatment.
- ✓ Remember to keep toothpaste, fluoride and all medicines out of children's reach!



# ***DON'T SHARE TOOTHBRUSHES!***

**Or any items that have  
been in the mouth.**



# ***DON'T SHARE TOOTHBRUSHES!***

Germs that cause cavities can **spread** between family members. To reduce the chance that you will share germs between people in your family:

- ✓ Don't share toothbrushes.
- ✓ Don't share any items with your children that have been in your mouth.

***TIME FOR A NEW TOOTHBRUSH!***

**Bent and broken bristles.**





# ***TIME FOR A NEW TOOTHBRUSH!***

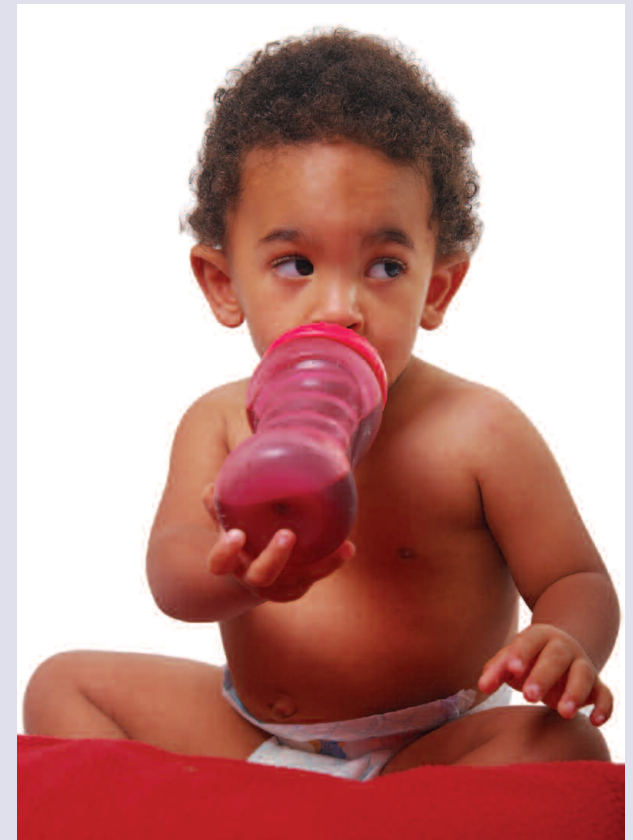
**Toothbrushes should be replaced when the bristles are worn out and bent.**

# BOTTLES AND CUPS



- ✓ Hold your child when bottle feeding using only formula or breast milk in the bottle.

- ✓ Introduce a cup at 6-9 months.



# **BOTTLES AND CUPS**

## **Bottles**

- ✓ Hold your child when bottle feeding.
- ✓ Use only formula or breast milk in bottles.
- ✓ Don't give your baby a bottle in bed.

## **Cups**

- ✓ Introduce a cup at 6-9 months.
- ✓ Do not let your child carry around a bottle or sippy cup.
- ✓ Offer only milk or water between meals.



# SNACKING TIPS



- ✓ Limit sugary foods and drinks.
- ✓ Limit fruit juice to 4 oz at meal times.

## **HEALTHY** Snack Choices

- ✓ Cheese
- ✓ Crackers
- ✓ Fresh fruit
- ✓ Vegetables
- ✓ Plain cheerios
- ✓ Pretzels
- ✓ Sugar free snacks



# SNACKING TIPS

- ✓ What you eat affects your overall health, not just the health of your teeth and gums.
- ✓ Sugary foods and drinks are not good for teeth and should be eaten in small quantities with meals.
- ✓ Sticky, gooey foods such as candy or even dried fruit and raisins stick to the teeth which means sugar stays on your child's teeth for a longer time.
- ✓ Serve cheese. Cheese triggers the flow of saliva, which helps wash food particles away from the teeth.
- ✓ Serve fruits and vegetables. Younger children especially like small, bite-sized pieces.
- ✓ Limit fruit juice to 4 oz at meal times.
- ✓ Encourage your child to drink fluoridated water or plain white milk between meals.

# MEDICINE



Whenever your child takes medicine, be sure to have your child brush or rinse with water afterwards.



# MEDICINE

Children's medicine often has a lot of sugar in it to make it taste better. Some medicine causes children to have less saliva in their mouth which helps to protect their teeth. Whenever your child takes medicine, have your child brush or rinse with water afterwards.



# FIRST DENTAL VISIT BY THE FIRST BIRTHDAY



**A dentist will help care for your child's teeth!**



# **FIRST DENTAL VISIT BY THE FIRST BIRTHDAY**

- ✓ Your doctor may check your child's teeth at Well-Baby visits, but your child must visit the dentist too - it is a Head Start requirement!
- ✓ Have your child see a dentist no later than his or her first birthday.
- ✓ If you need help finding a dentist ask your Head Start program!

# GIVE YOUR CHILD HEALTHY TEETH FOR LIFE!



- ✓ Start brushing teeth early – as soon as you see teeth! Help brush your child's teeth until age 8.
- ✓ Check for white spots at least once a month.
- ✓ Use a **small** amount of fluoride toothpaste. **SPIT** out all toothpaste and do not rinse.
- ✓ Snack healthy: limit sugary/sweet foods and drinks. The more often you eat sugary foods the more likely cavities will form.
- ✓ Schedule a dental exam for your child by his or her first birthday.
- ✓ Forming good habits at a young age can help your child have healthy teeth for life!



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