

GOOD BEGINNINGS NEVER END

N.C. Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center • 1-800-246-6732

February 1999

Key Points

- Baby teeth are just as important as permanent teeth.
- Most 3 year olds have a full set of 20 baby teeth.
- A healthy diet is important in maintaining good dental and physical health.
- Fluoride is one of the most effective agents for preventing tooth decay.
- A child's first visit to the dentist should be before the third birthday.
- The primary purpose of brushing is to remove plaque.

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You can promote healthy smiles by teaching children good habits that will last a lifetime.

Brush Up on Your Smiles

Smiles help us feel confident and self-assured. Healthy teeth make healthy smiles. Healthy smiles come from teeth without tooth decay. Tooth decay comes from plaque, a sticky film of bacteria that coats the teeth and gums. Brushing removes plaque and prevents tooth decay.

You can start babies off to a healthy smile as soon as the first tooth appears. Simply wipe the baby teeth and gums with clean damp gauze or a washcloth to prevent any buildup of plaque. Baby teeth are important for chewing, learning to speak, and smiling.

You can promote healthy smiles by teaching children good habits that will last a lifetime. Brushing teeth after lunch and snacks has the double benefit of cleaning teeth and teaching a good habit. There are two basic health and safety rules to remember:

1. Each child must have his own toothbrush, labeled by name, that must never be shared.
2. Toothbrushes must be stored so that they stay clean and open to the air. The bristles should not touch any surface.

Make brushing part of your daily schedule after lunch and snack time. This routine, if it is planned well, will probably not take more than 5 minutes a day. Here are some ideas for organizing your toothbrushing time:

- Select 2-3 children at a time to brush their teeth to avoid having children wait in line.
- Direct children to stand in 3-6-9 o'clock positions around the sink to give more elbow room.
- Use a small toothbrush with soft rounded bristles for children. Replace toothbrushes when the bristles become bent, about every 3 months.
- Use toothpaste with fluoride for children over 3 years of age that can rinse it out and not swallow it. Swallowed toothpaste can actually damage the teeth due to excess fluoride. Choose toothpaste that is not highly flavored to discourage children from eating it.
- Dispense toothpaste carefully to prevent the spread of germs. Put individual pea-sized portions of

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At Your Service

North Carolina Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center

Providing Training, Consultation & Resources for North Carolina's Child Care Community

JANUARY CALL STATISTICS

Total Number of Calls	767
Number of Calls from Family Child Care Providers	189
Primary Reason for Calling:	
Handwashing	138
Lice	2
ABC Book	6
ADM Credential	2
Asthma	15
Biting	2
Immunizations	4
Other	20

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The Resource Center is here to help you get information to make your child care program a healthy and safe environment. We are open 9-5, Monday through Friday, except state holidays. If you cannot call us during those hours, leave a message on our voice mail and we will return your call!

Thanks to Mr. Durwood Johnson at Patterson Dental Supply, Inc. and Mr. Randy Eckard at Thompson Dental Company for their kind donations of children's toothbrushes for our "Test Your Knowledge" prizes this month. Patterson Dental Supply, Inc. and Thompson Dental Company believe that establishing good dental care habits at an early age is of primary importance to a child's future health and well-being.

Training Opportunities



March 3
Best Practices in Record Keeping,
Fayetteville, 910-860-CCRR

March 6
Contracts, Policies & Procedures,
Southern Pines, 910-692-3005

March 6
5th Annual Inclusion Conference:
Allowing Abilities to Bloom: Tools for
Success, Raleigh, Diane Dalton
919-781-3616, ext. 209

March 8
Family Day Care Rating Scale Training,
Raleigh, Diane Lewis 919-832-5210

March 8
Asthma and Allergies,
Chapel Hill, 919-967-3272

March 9
New Rules & Regulations for FCC Home
Providers, Fayetteville,
910-860-CCRR

March 13
Child Care in the 90s, Mecklenburg Co.,
Debbie Haywood 704-341-5357

March 13
The Financial Business of Family Child
Care, Fayetteville, 910-860-CCRR

March 16
Taxes for Family Child Care Homes,
Southern Pines, 910-692-3005

March 16
How to Work With Problem Parents,
Wilkes Community College,
Kris 336-838-0977

March 16
Giving Every Child Floor Time,
Lincolnton, Pat 704-732-0497

March 16
How to Prevent Common
Communicable Diseases in Children
0-5, Fayetteville, 910-860-CCRR

March 17
Family Day Care Rating Scale Training,
Fayetteville, 910-860-CCRR

March 17
Family Child Care Home Start Up
Workshop, Southern Pines,
910-692-3005

March 18
Television and Other Sources of
Overstimulation, Cary, 919-677-1400

March 19-20
20th Annual Child & Family
Development Conference,
UNC—Charlotte, Dr. Bryan Robinson
704-547-4720

March 20
Brain Development and Resiliency,
Ashe Co., 336-246-4070

March 24-May 26
Orientation to Family Child Care,
Wake Tech Community College,
Jay Brewer 919-662-3439

March 25
Communicating with Children,
Hendersonville, 828-692-3847

March 25
Mastering Sleep, Feeding and Toilet
Training, Cary, 919-677-1400

March 27
Spring Child Care Conference,
Laurinburg, April Chavis 910-276-3367

The ABC's of Safe and Healthy Child Care...

Healthy Food for Healthy Teeth

Eating a variety of nutritious foods helps children develop and maintain strong teeth that resist decay. Sugars and starches can cause tooth decay and frequent snacking increases the risk of cavities. Encourage children to snack on healthy foods for their teeth.

Offer these snacks:

- Raw vegetables (carrots, broccoli, celery, cauliflower)
- Lowfat cheese
- Lowfat milk and yogurt
- Hard fresh fruits like apples
- Sugar-free peanut butter



Avoid these snacks:

- Candy
- Sticky foods such as raisins, granola bars, and fruit roll-ups
- Soda/pop
- Potato chips
- Pre-sweetened cereals



Visiting the Dentist

A child's first visit to the dentist should take place before his or her third birthday after all 20 teeth have erupted. A good first trip will help the child feel secure about visiting the dentist for many years. As you talk with children in your program, remember these key points:



1. Make dental visits an important adventure.
2. Tell the children that the dentist is a friendly doctor who will keep their teeth healthy.
3. Talk about the visit in a positive way.
4. Prevent fear. (Avoid statements that suggest the visit may be unpleasant, such as "It won't hurt.")

Plan a field trip to visit the dentist or invite a dentist and/or dental hygienist to come talk to your children. Smocks and various dental props can help children prepare for dental visits through dramatic play. As children play, they can talk about their experiences.

Teething and Baby Bottle Tooth Decay

Teething can cause irritability, drooling, rubbing at the mouth and pulling at the ear. Teething does not cause fever in a child. If a child has a significant fever while teething it is likely to be a sign of another illness. Take these steps to comfort a child who is teething:



1. Provide something hard and/or cold to bite on such as a very cold, large carrot, a bagel, a teething biscuit or a safe teething ring toy.
2. Rub the child's gums with a clean finger or an ice cube. Remember to wash your hands before doing this.

Baby bottle tooth decay often develops when a child is allowed to go to bed with a bottle of milk or juice at naptime or bedtime or is allowed to walk around with a bottle or training cup. The sugary liquid surrounds the teeth and can cause severe cavities. Encourage parents to begin teaching their baby to drink from a training cup by 9 months. By 12 months, children should be drinking from a cup and not a bottle. Prevent baby bottle tooth decay by following these tips to put a child to sleep without a bottle:



1. Hold or rock the child.
2. Quietly sing or play soothing music.
3. Read or tell the child a story.
4. Offer a "security" blanket, favorite toy or doll to take to bed.

Is Your Water Fluoridated?



Using fluoride is one of the safest, most effective and least expensive ways to prevent tooth decay. About 60% of the US community water is fluoridated. Find out if your water is fluoridated by calling your local water department, your city or county health department, or your dentist. If you have well water you may want to check with your dentist about fluoride tablets. Talk to the parents of children in your care about fluoride.

Test Your Knowledge

Read the following and decide which of the 3 providers is promoting the best dental health for the children in her care. Call us at 1-800-CHOOSE-1 with your answer. If you are among the first 100 callers with the correct answer you will WIN TOOTHBRUSHES for the children in your care!

Yolanda

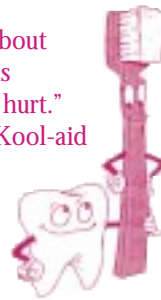
- Brushes her teeth with her children while they brush after every snack and meal.
- Stores toothbrushes in individual labeled containers bristle side up so they do not touch each other and are open to the air.
- Schedules field trip to a dentist's office.
- Serves raw vegetables and fluoridated water for snacks.

Mary

- Brushes children's teeth after snacks and meals.
- Stores toothbrushes in individual ziploc bags.
- Encourages pretend play by borrowing dental smocks.
- Serves peanut butter crackers and juice for snacks.

Tonya

- Lines children up after every snack and meal to brush their teeth one at a time.
- Stores toothbrushes individually in toothbrush holders.
- Reads book to children about visiting a dentist and adds "Don't be afraid. It won't hurt."
- Serves fruit roll-ups and Kool-aid for snacks.



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- toothpaste on waxed paper or foil. Ask the child to use his toothbrush to pick up the toothpaste. Never put toothpaste directly onto the child's toothbrush.
- Teach children proper brushing technique using a circular motion.

- Supervise children while they brush. Brush your teeth with them. Comment positively on what you observe. They'll be watching you!

For more information, call 1-800-CHOOSE-1.

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This publication is produced monthly by the N.C. Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center and distributed to family child care providers by the Healthy Child Care North Carolina Campaign.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

or if you would like to send suggestions or comments

WRITE:

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OR CALL:

1-800-246-6732

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