

Coventry Community Dental Service

A guide to the key oral health messages and activity ideas for those working with young people in early years

Key oral health messages

1 - Brush your teeth twice a day at night before you go to bed and one other time.

We say this because

- A thin sticky colourless film of bacteria called dental plaque grows on the surfaces of the teeth.
- If we don't brush the plaque away regularly it will collect and build up on surfaces where the tooth and gum meet and in-between the teeth.
- When the plaque builds up it irritates our gums making them red, sore and swollen. This is called gum disease or gingivitis.
- When the gums become red and swollen they may bleed when we brush.
- The more plaque we have in our mouth the more likely we are to suffer with tooth decay.

To brush your teeth you will need

- A small headed soft to medium textured toothbrush.
- The tooth brush needs to be small enough to reach the back teeth.
- A family fluoride toothpaste
 - Fluoride is important because it help to strengthen the teeth
- Children under 3 years of age should use a smear of toothpaste that contains no less than 1000ppm of fluoride.
- Children aged 3 to 6 years of age should use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste containing more than 1000ppm fluoride.
- Children should be supervised with tooth brushing up to the age of 7.
- Change your toothbrush every 8 to 12 weeks or as soon as the bristles become splayed, deformed or misshapen.

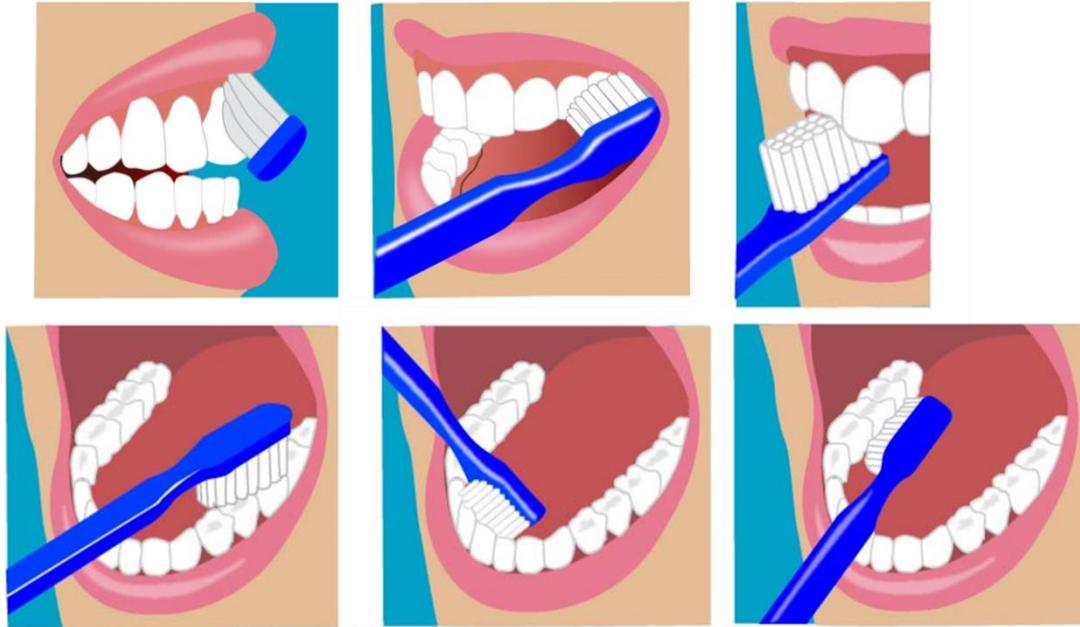
How to brush teeth

- It takes at least 2 minutes to brush all of the tooth surfaces properly.
- There is no need to wet the tooth brush, put the toothpaste onto the tooth brush and begin brushing.

- Spit do not rinse the mouth with water after tooth brushing.

The fluoride will stay on the teeth giving it time to strengthen the teeth.

Place the toothbrush on the gum and tooth (see first picture), move the tooth brush in a small circular movement cleaning the surface of every tooth a few times before moving onto the next tooth.



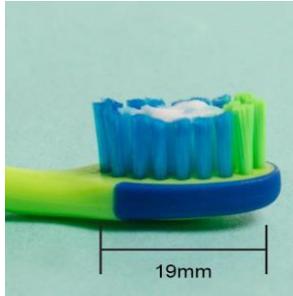
Remember to brush all surfaces of the teeth. This will take at least 2 minutes.

Outer surfaces – upper and lower

- Inside surfaces – upper and lower
- To clean the inside surfaces of the front teeth tilt the brush vertically and make a few small, circular movements with the front part of the tooth brush.
- The biting surfaces – upper and lower - you can use a small backward and forward brushing movement for these surfaces.

Healthy gums do not normally bleed it is usually due to plaque building up and around the gum line causing irritation and swelling. This is normally due to poor tooth brushing and can be localised to a specific area. Tooth brushing should continue to remove the plaque and then the bleeding will stop.

Use a smear of family fluoride toothpaste unde 3 years of age



Pea size amount family fluoride toothpaste for over 3 years of age



2 - For healthy teeth keep all sugary food and drink to mealtimes.

We say this because

- An acid is produced in our mouths when we eat sugary foods and drinks the sugary foods and drink reacts with the bacteria and plaque on our teeth.
- This is often called an “acid attack” or demineralization.
- These acid attacks over time cause holes in our teeth which leads to tooth decay.
- The good news is when we have finished eating or drinking the saliva in our mouth will wash the acid away, and begin to repair any damage done by the “acid attack” but this can take as long as 2 hours to happen.
- To keep teeth decay free, it is best to reduce the amount of time during the day that our teeth are at risk from an “acid attack” the best way to do this is to keep sugary food and drink to mealtimes only.
- Tooth decay is also known as dental caries or cavities.

It is not always easy to spot sugar on ingredient lists; this is because it can come under lots of different names. The most common names for sugars added to foods and drinks are: [Sugar, glucose, maltose, fructose, molasses, sucrose, dextrose, honey, treacle, invert sugar and syrups \(e.g. glucose, fructose, corn and map\)](#)

What does the term Free Sugars mean?

- The term free sugars is given to those sugars added to food and drink to sweeten them.
- The term free sugars excludes lactose in milk, milk products as well as those sugars contained in fruit that is intact and eaten as a whole piece of fruit .

A colourful infographic showing 50 different names of sugar found in foods and drinks can be found at: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters->

[magazine/nutrition/sugar-salt-and-fat/names-for-sugar-infographic](https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/sugar-salt-and-fat/names-for-sugar-infographic)

A useful explanation of the different names for sugar that appear on the infographic can be found at: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/sugar-salt-and-fat/names-for-sugar-infographic/different-names-for-sugar>

3 – Only drink plain water and plain milk in-between meals.

We say this because

- Sugar free drinks (dilute juice or fizzy) and pure fruit juices can be harmful to your teeth.
- Another cause of tooth decay is dental erosion this occurs when teeth are exposed to an acid.
- Sugar free drinks and pure fruit juices contain an acid such as phosphoric, citric and tartaric.
- Sugar free drinks and pure fruit juices can be drunk at mealtimes but are best avoided in-between meals.

4 – Visit the dentist regularly.

We say this because

- Regular dental visits are important to maintain healthy teeth and gums
- Visit the dentist as soon as the first tooth comes through or by the age of 1
- It allows the dentist to check your mouth and spot any problems or concerns early.
- We would say... *“Go to see the dentist regularly, your dentist will advise you how often they want to see you”*.
 - Most young people are seen every 6 months however, some are seen more or less frequently this is decided by their dentist.

Activity Ideas

- Talk about visiting the dentist
 - Read stories about going to the dentist
- Talk about how often and why it is important to go to the dentist
- Discuss what we can do to keep our teeth healthy
- Make an area into a dental surgery and role play going to the dentist
- Draw and colour in your dentist
- Make a collage of good teeth friendly food and drinks
- Make a collage of healthy smiles
- Use the colouring in sheets or dot to dots included with this resource.
- Make a feely bag with different brushes; don't forget to include a toothbrush.
 - Which one would they want to brush their teeth with and why?
 - What colour toothbrush do they have? Make a bar chart recording the findings.
- Practice brushing teeth using a model
- Explore the smells of tooth brushing or going to the dentist:
 - Put toothpaste onto the laminated card squares you can then smell and feel the toothpaste
 - Put the antibacterial hand wash onto a laminated card square and pass round smell the "clean" smell of a dentist.
- Discuss when it is safe for your teeth to eat sugary foods and drinks.
 - Draw a chart or clock to show the safe times.
- Make a list of the foods and drinks that are safe for our teeth.
- Collect empty packets of the foods and drinks, look at the ingredients list and identify the sugar in them. How many teaspoons of sugar are in the different products?
 - You will find the infographic mentioned on page 4 useful for this activity.
 - Make a chart or record the food/drink and the teaspoons of sugar
- Measure out the amount of teaspoons of sugar in the products
- Explore what the different shapes and functions of teeth are.
- Explore how and why animals' teeth are different.

Links to other resources

- A short clip showing a child visiting the dentist for a check-up and introduces the sights and sounds of the dental surgery.

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- Colouring pages, circle time and game ideas, art, literacy and maths ideas, from Making Learning Fun at:
<http://www.makinglearningfun.com/themepages/DentalHealthPrintables.htm>
- Dental Surgery/Dentist Role-Play Pack, Dental Surgery Role Play Patient Pack and word mat, and more from Twinkl at: <http://www.twinkl.co.uk/search>
- Activity sheets and colouring pages at:
<http://www.drbethkailes.com/tour/pediatric-dentistry-activity-sheets/>
- Snack ideas for children booklet,
<http://www.child-smile.org.uk/uploads/documents/22388-Childsmile%20Snack%20ideas-9-16-English.pdf>
- Change for life, sugar information: <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life-beta/food-facts/sugar#yjAqRHbjZyC6wlsJ.97>
- Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures programme:
<http://www.colgate.co.uk/app/BrightSmilesBrightFutures/UK/Program-Materials/For-Teachers.cvsp>
- The Dental Buddy programme (Oral Health Foundation) is an educational resource for Early Years Education, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, including activity sheets, lesson plans and interactive presentations:
<https://www.dentalhealth.org/our-work/dental-buddy>
- Action on Sugars, food labelling and free sugars factsheet:
http://www.actiononsugar.org/media/actiononsugar/resources/health-factsheets/17774_CASH-label-factsheet-A4-2016-FINAL!.pdf
- <https://www.dentalhealth.org/early-years-foundation-stage>
- Diagram of a tooth to label: <https://www.abcteach.com/search.php?q=teeth>
- Dental Bingo Game: <https://www.dentalhealth.ie/publications/list/dental-bingo/>
- Fruit and Veg Bingo Game:
<https://www.dentalhealth.ie/publications/list/fruit-and-veg-bingo/>
- Printable activity and puzzle sheets:
<http://www.mouthhealthykids.org/en/activity-sheets/puzzle-diversion>
- Printable activity and puzzle sheets focusing on sugar:
<http://www.mouthhealthykids.org/en/activity-sheets/sugar-wars>

- The Story of the tooth – presentation that reminds us how important it is to look after your teeth
https://www.dentalhealth.ie/download/pdf/storyofthetooth_new3.pdf
- Animals including Humans – Excuse me, are these your teeth, presentation and resources
<https://www.hamilton-trust.org.uk/science/y4/01-excuse-me-are-these-your-teeth/117322>
- Actions on sugar food labelling and free sugar fact sheets.t
www.nhs.uk/change4life-beta/campaigns/sugar-smart/home
- <https://play.google.com/store/appts/>
- Brush your teeth with ginger the cat
<https://download.cnet.com/Talking.Ginger/3000-31711>
- <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health/get-oral-health-advice/free-oral-health-resources/>

Social Story

- Tom goes to the Dentist – Social Story
https://www.dentalhealth.ie/download/pdf/tom_goes_to_the_dentist_social_story.pdf

Easy Read Sheets

- In the dentist room - <https://widgit-health.com/download-files/dental-procedures/in-the-dentists-room.pdf>
- My visit to the dentist: -<https://widgit-health.com/download-files/dental-procedures/my-visit-to-the-dentist.pdf>
- Healthy teeth = <https://widgit-health.com/easy-read-sheets/pdfs/Healthy%20teeth.pdf>

Free Apps:

- Brush DJ: <http://www.brushdj.com/#nogo>
- Change4Life – Free Sugar Smart app:
<http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Change4Life-SugarSwaps.aspx>
- Tooth Brushing App -www.brushupgame.com

Resources can be purchased from

- Oral Health Foundation supply oral health educational resources such as books, models, puppets, school packs and much more :
www.educatingsmiles.org
- Off we go specialise in books for children with special needs and their families to promote inclusion of everyone in day to day activities:
<http://www.offwego.ie/index.php>
- National smile month is the largest and longest campaign to promote good oral health.
- <http://www.nationalsmilemonth.org/>

Loanable Resources- Early Years

Unfortunately due to the current situation with COVID we have stopped loaning resources. We hope in the future to be able to resume the loaning of resources and will advise you accordingly.

For more information or support contact:

Oral Health Promotion –susan.smith2@covwarkpt.nhs.uk