

# Keeping Kids' Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Healthy!



## HEALTHY TEETH



### Why should teeth stay healthy?

healthy  
AND READY TO  
learn

Children's  
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- Tooth decay or cavities are a common problem in the US.
- Children who have cavities are at a higher risk for getting more cavities.
- Tooth decay is painful. It will affect how your child eats, speaks and learns.
- Tooth decay happens over time. Children may change the way they eat or speak to avoid the pain.
- If you see tooth decay, get it evaluated by a dentist even if your child says it does not hurt. Dental screenings help identify cavities that your child is not complaining about.

Prevention  
is key!

### Students with dental pain may have trouble:

- Staying on track in school
- Having confidence or high self-esteem
- Making friends
- Focusing in class



### When should children see the dentist?

- Children should get their teeth cleaned at the dentist every 6 months, starting at age 1 - this helps them get used to going to the dentist.
- Even though they will lose their primary teeth, tooth decay on these teeth can cause problems with speaking, eating, and affect the formation and healthy of their adult teeth.

### Visit the dentist right away if children:

- Say their tooth or face hurts
- Say it hurts when they eat or drink
- Are sensitive to really hot or cold food and drink
- Have holes in their teeth
- Have brown, black or white stains on a tooth

If your child's school has a dental program, fill out all the paperwork to make sure they can get seen in school!

### Where can I find a dentist?

- Ask your child's teacher or school nurse if dental screenings happen at your child's school!
- Talk to other parents who take their kids to the dentist. If you find a good dentist, be sure to tell other parents so they can bring their kids there too
- If you are having trouble finding a dentist, sometimes your doctor or pediatrician can provide fluoride treatments. While a full dental cleaning is preferred, fluoride can protect kids teeth and can be a good alternative if there is no dentist in the area.
- It may be hard to get a dentist appointment quickly. Try to think ahead and schedule dentist cleanings!

### What can I do at home?

Make sure kids...

- Brush **2 minutes** morning AND night
- Use toothpaste with fluoride
- Floss once a day

#### Under Age 3

Use only a small "smear" of toothpaste because they won't be able to spit.

#### Ages 3 to 6

Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.



#### Begin brushing as soon as teeth come out of the gums!

When you start brushing your child's teeth, you can use a soft brush or a clean cloth with water on it 1-2 times per day.



#### As kids get older, encourage them to brush their own teeth!

When making this transition, have them brush first and then you brush for an additional 2 minutes to make sure they did a good job.