



February 2020

Healthy Living With Head Start

Celebrate Oral Health Month with a Smile

A healthy smile plays a big part in overall health in more ways than you may think. The impact of oral health can be seen in everything from eating habits, illness, confidence, and even school attendance. Here is a quick look at how oral health can affect daily life:



Nutrition - Dental decay will lead to tooth pain and may eventually lead to the loss of teeth. Your child needs healthy teeth to eat nutritious foods like apples, greens, whole grains, and low fat proteins.

Pain - Avoid pain with regular brushing, flossing, and visits to the dentist. If your child is experiencing dental pain, make an appointment immediately with your family's dentist.

Health - Like any other infection, dental decay is hard on your body. A cavity can lead to a serious infection quickly. If your family is struggling to get needed dental treatment, talk to your Family Partner or Classroom Teacher to learn about ways we can help.

Self Esteem - The state of a child's smile has a big impact on their self image. Dental decay may cause embarrassment in social situations or struggles with speech development.

A healthy smile leads to better learning



Oral Health Starts at Home

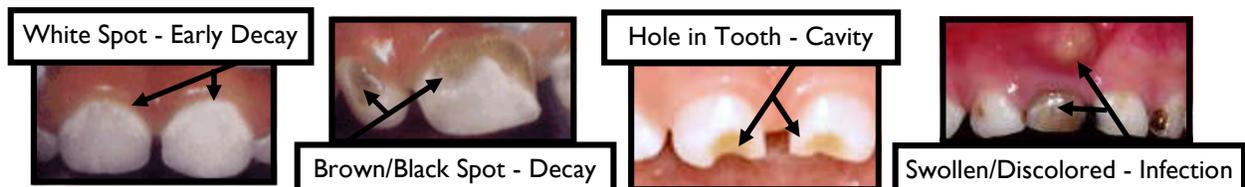
Daily oral health care is an easy way to keep dental decay away. Brush teeth as a family at least twice a day to make sure every tooth is getting the attention it needs. Remember, children under the age of 7 will need help getting every nook and cranny clean.

-  1. Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste
-  2. Brush the front, back, and sides of all teeth gently
-  3. Brush your tongue to remove bacteria and freshen breath
-  4. Floss daily to remove plaque between teeth

As foods break down, they turn to acids. Acids in the mouth can eat away at the protective outer layers (enamel), exposing teeth to bacteria that cause dental decay. Waiting an hour between snacks and meals will allow your mouth to naturally neutralize acids.



Watching for signs of decay at home is an important part of staying on top of your family's oral health. An early sign of decay is a small white spot on a tooth. At this stage, decay can easily be treated by your family's dentist with a fluoride treatment. Make a game out of checking for decay by playing dentist at home.



Tap into a Healthier Smile

During periods of growth like pregnancy, infancy, childhood, and adolescence teeth develop through mineralization to become healthy and strong. Remember, teeth are being formed long before we get our first tooth.

What is Mineralization?



Fluoride is one mineral that is incorporated into the tooth structure to make teeth strong and decay resistant. It helps prevent mineral loss in tooth enamel and replaces lost minerals to keep teeth protected. Fluoride occurs naturally in the soil, water, and air. It has been reported that fluoride intake from birth can reduce cavities by as much as 25%.

To find a good source of fluoride, many of us do not have to look further than the kitchen sink. Many local communities supply water that is fluoridated. If your community does not fluoridate the public water, you may want to supplement with fluoride drops or tablets prescribed by the doctor. Check below to see if your community has fluoridated water:

Communities with Fluoridated Water

Otsego County:

Cooperstown

Oneonta

Richfield Springs

Schoharie County:

Middleburgh

Richmondville

Cobleskill

Delaware/Chenango County:

Sidney

Norwich

Stamford

Delhi



Sip smart: Buy a reusable water bottle and fill it with tap water to save money on bottles of water and cut down on waste and pollution.

Making Mealtime Memories

Healthy Smile Snack

Turn snack time into a chance to talk about oral health with this edible spin on tooth brushing! Lots of fiber and protein make this a fun and healthy snack that will support healthy smiles in your family.

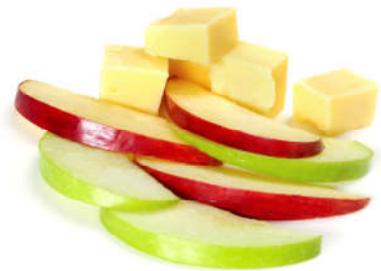
Ingredients

Apple Teeth:

- * Apple slices (2 per mouth)
- * Cheese sticks cut into small (tooth-like) pieces
- * Peanut butter or cream cheese

Celery Brushes:

- * Celery sticks
- * Cheese sticks



Directions

Apple Teeth:

- * Spread peanut butter or cream cheese on one side of each apple slice.
- * Place cheese pieces in a line on top of the peanut butter (or cream cheese) on the bottom slice of apple.
- * Place top slice of apple with the peanut butter (or cream cheese) side down on top of the cheese pieces.

Celery Brushes:

- * Cut cheese sticks into pieces about 1/3 of the size of the celery sticks.
- * Cut the top of the cheese to look like the top of a toothbrush.
- * Slide cheese into the crease of the celery stick.

Newsletter created by: Amy Losee

Please contact Amy Losee, Head Start Dental/Nutrition Specialist, with any questions or comments at (607) 433 - 8060

 Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/foinc](https://www.facebook.com/foinc)

This Agency is an equal opportunity provider

The leader in developing innovative solutions that promote healthy lives, thriving families, and caring communities.