

GETTING READY TO LEARN



My Smile Is Special, Let's Keep It That Way!



Start Good Habits Early!

- ☺ You should start to **brush baby teeth** as soon as they appear. Try to make their first visit fun so they are not anxious for future visits!
- ☺ Teach your child to brush their teeth **twice a day for about 2 minutes** with a children's fluoride toothpaste.
- ☺ Choose a toothbrush with a small soft head and change it **every 3 months**
- ☺ Pre-school children only need a **pea-sized amount** of toothpaste
- ☺ Don't rinse out after brushing—as the fluoride toothpaste left behind will help protect the teeth.
- ☺ **Brushing should be supervised until children are around 7 years of age**
- ☺ **Water is the best drink to give at bedtime.** If you do give milk, do not add anything to it. Teeth are most at risk at night because there is less saliva in the mouth to protect them.

Healthy Eating

Avoid lots of sugary sweets or drinks, instead aim to give healthy snacks such as **fruit and raw vegetables**. Try oranges, bananas pieces or cucumber, carrot sticks, toast, rice cakes and plain popcorn.



From the age of 12-24 mths, children should only have **full-fat milk**. **Semi-skimmed milk** can be introduced from the age of 2, & **skimmed milk** should be only given to children over 5 years of age.

Unsweetened **juice and smoothies** still contain sugar and acids so stick to no more than 1 small glass (about 150ml) each day. **Never give your child fruit juice or fizzy drinks in a bottle.**

Sucking a dummy/thumb will encourage an open bite (when teeth move to make space for the dummy/thumb). This can affect a **child's speech development**. Thumb sucking won't cause permanent problems, but it can be a hard habit to break.

Teeth Brushing

Guide your child's hand so they can feel the correct movement. **Use a mirror** to help you child see exactly where the brush is cleaning their teeth.

Make tooth brushing **as fun as possible** by using an egg timer/watch to encourage your child to brush for 2 minutes. Use a **sticker chart** to reward good behaviour such as brushing their teeth for two minutes.

Never let your child run around with a toothbrush in their mouth, many serious accidents have occurred when a child has fallen and the toothbrush has caused damage.

