

Dental tips for parents

A checklist for each stage

Your children need your help to keep their teeth healthy and strong. Here's how you can help.

Age 3:

- Teach your child how to brush using a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride
- Finish brushing your child's teeth because it's unlikely they've covered them all
- Put the toothpaste on the toothbrush for your child so they don't use too much and accidentally swallow it
- Offer your child healthier foods that have less sugar and aren't as sticky

Age 4:

- Make sure your child is brushing his or her teeth twice a day using a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste
- Supervise your children while brushing their teeth to make sure they're doing a good job
- Discourage your children from sucking their thumb or a pacifier
- Talk to your child about how and when they lose their baby teeth

Age 6:

- Make sure your child wears protective sports gear, such as a bike helmet and mouth guard
- Help your child choose healthy foods

Age 8:

- Teach your child how to floss
- Learn how to handle dental emergencies, and teach your child how to handle them
- Start talking to your children about the dangers of cigarettes and tobacco

Age 10:

- Talk to your child about the dangers of smoking
- Talk about the dangers of eating disorders and how it affects teeth

Adolescence:

- Talk to your child about eating healthy and avoiding sugary foods and drinks
- Emphasize the importance of wearing protective sports gear and seat belts to avoid injury to the face and mouth
- Discuss the effects that eating disorders have on teeth
- Discuss the dangers of tobacco and other drug use with your teen

For more great tips, visit
healthpartners.com/littlepartners.
