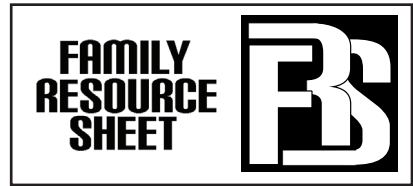



Taking Care of Teeth



Your child has been learning how important it is to take care of his or her teeth. We have talked about how dentists are health helpers for our teeth. But your child's brushing and flossing habits will make the biggest difference in his or her oral health. Here are some ways to urge your child to practice good oral care.

Brush	Floss	Rinse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have your child brush his or her teeth at least twice a day: once in the morning and again before bed. If your child eats sweet or sticky foods, brushing afterwards helps. • See if he or she can brush for at least two minutes. Set a timer or play a song to make sure your child is brushing long enough. • Check your child's teeth to see that they are clean. Children at this age need help. • Try to replace each family member's toothbrush every three or four months or sooner if the bristles get frayed. • Use fluoride toothpaste. A small amount is enough – about the size of a pea. Remind your child to spit the toothpaste out when he or she is finished rather than swallowing it. • Use the chart on the other side of this sheet to keep track of your child's brushing. Have him or her color the first tooth in the morning and the second tooth in the evening after brushing. When the chart is complete, fill out the "Happy Tooth Award" and put it up for family and friends to see. • Be a good health model for your son or daughter by asking him or her to fill in a chart for you. Have him or her sign the chart as you brush your teeth. Then he or she can make up an award and give it to you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends flossing. Help your child to floss once a day until your child is old enough to floss for him or herself. By age seven or eight, consider letting your child try by him or herself. • Devices are available at the drug store that can help you floss your child's teeth without putting your fingers in his or her mouth. • Visit the ADA website or ask your dentist if you have questions about flossing your child's teeth. www.ada.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a good habit for your child to brush his or her teeth after every meal. When this is not possible, have him or her rinse his or her mouth with water or an appropriate mouthwash. This helps to dilute the acids made by germs from the sugar and food your child eats. Rinsing with water or mouthwash should not take the place of brushing and flossing after breakfast and before bedtime.
<div style="text-align: center;">  <h2 style="margin: 0;">Visit the Dentist</h2> <p>The American Dental Association recommends that children visit the dentist regularly for checkups beginning when your child is one year old. Children may have anxiety about their first visit to the dentist since it is a new experience. Here are ways to help them feel more at ease:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let your child go with you and watch while you have your appointment. • Play dentist with your child by taking turns looking into each other's mouths with flashlights. • Draw pictures of how it feels to have healthy teeth and smiles. • Visit, Mouth Power, at www.mouthpower.org. This website has interactive dental games for young people. You or an older sibling may need to help your kindergartner. • Read books about going to the dentist or coping with a cavity or loose tooth. Consider these books: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Show Me Your Smile!: A Visit to the Dentist</i>, by Christine Ricci – <i>The Dentist and You</i>, by Diane Swanson – <i>Trevor's Wiggly-Wobbly Tooth</i>, by Lester L. Laminack – <i>Loose Tooth</i>, by Lola M. Schaefer </div>		

Brush Your Teeth Chart



**FAMILY
RESOURCE
SHEET**

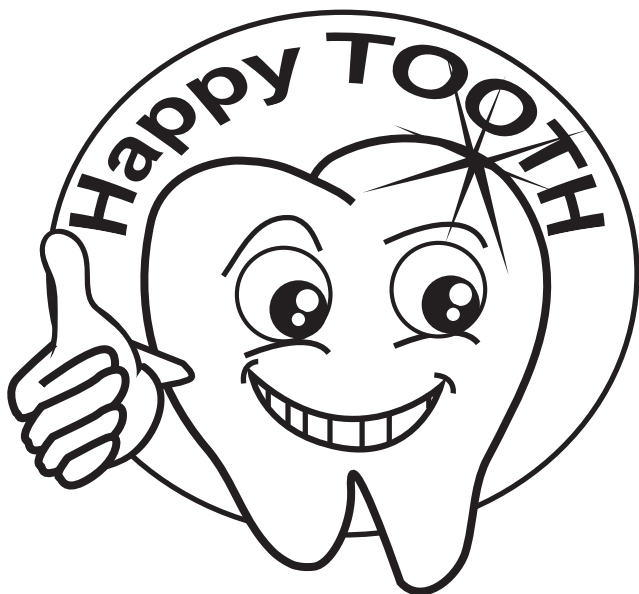
	Morning	Evening
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Parent's Signature

Child's Signature

For information about teeth and how to keep them healthy, visit the American Dental Association website, www.mouthhealthy.org. Your child might enjoy visiting the "For Kids!" link.

You can also visit the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) website, www.michigan.gov/oralhealth.



Happy Tooth Award

This is to show that

*has taken good care
of his or her teeth.*

signed

date