

GETTING READY TO LEARN

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to Learn

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



Start Good Habits Early!

- ☺ **Visit the dentist as soon as first teeth appear.** Try to make their first visit to the dentist fun so they are not anxious for future visits!
- ☺ You should start to **brush baby teeth** as soon as they appear
- ☺ 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.
- ☺ Pre-schoolers should not use a dummy or bottle after the age of 12 months*
- ☺ **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

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.

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.

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.

Brushing should be supervised until children are around 7 years of age

