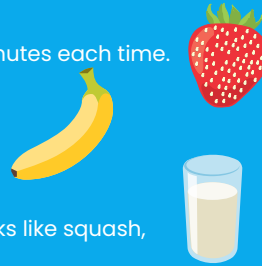


BrightBites Advice for Parents



You can help your child build healthy habits early by:

- Brushing their teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, for 2 minutes each time.
- Supervising brushing to make sure every tooth is cleaned
- Choosing a healthy diet rich in fruit and vegetables
- Limiting sugary snacks and drinks, which can cause tooth decay
- Encouraging them to drink water and milk rather than sweet drinks like squash, juice and milkshakes
- Visiting the dentist every 6 months for check-ups to monitor their oral health



For children aged 0–3 years:

Start brushing your child's teeth as soon as first tooth appears. Use a smear of toothpaste that has a fluoride content of 1000 ppm twice per day.



For children aged 3–6 years:

Supervise your child's brushing. Use a pea-size amount of 1000ppm fluoride toothpaste and brush twice daily. Make sure to brush all of the teeth, brushing in small circular motions making sure to include the gums. Encourage your child to spit out the toothpaste rather than rinsing as this helps retain fluoride on their teeth for added protection.

What is BrightBites / who is Dentaid The Dental Charity

Dentaid The Dental Charity's BrightBites programme is an oral health education scheme supported by Denplan. The sessions are for children and is delivered both in the UK and overseas. They visit schools, holiday clubs and childcare organisations to deliver an interactive presentation, which supports the national curriculum and covers toothbrushing, teeth names and functions, sugar awareness and the importance of regular dental appointments. Every child receives a toothbrush and toothpaste to take home too.



Toothbrushing and positive health habits shouldn't been seen as a chore, here are some fun suggestions which may help to motivate children to look after teeth:

- Review sugar content in foods/drinks. You could make a game of seeing how many teaspoons/cubes are in each item. This reminds children that unhealthy foods should be a treat, and consumed in moderation.
- Use a sand timer or timer on your phone to motivate and encourage children to brush for the correct length of time.
- Utilise a toothbrushing chart to aid children with keeping on track of their brushing routine.
- Brush your teeth together, you could ask your children to 'help you'!
- Sing songs or read books about why and how we look after our teeth.
- Encourage your children to practice toothbrushing on one of their toys.
- Gently remind them what might happen if they don't take care of their teeth; show images of teeth with cavities, talk about bad breath and remind them that teeth may need to be removed in hospital if they aren't looked after.

Why good oral health matters

Promoting the importance of good oral health is a key part of the national curriculum. This is designed to support children's learning and development, including their physical health and wellbeing. It is widely understood that oral health is an important part of general health even with baby teeth. **This is because children's teeth:**

- Help them to bite and chew
- Support speech and language development
- Help them feel confident when they smile
- Make space for and help to guide adult teeth



Good oral health also keeps children free from toothache, infection and swollen gums, which could result in tooth extractions being needed.