



Dental Health Week

Activities for Services



National Dental Health Week, starts on the first Monday of August and runs for one week. It is an initiative of the Australian Dental Association and links closely to three Munch & Move key messages of:

- 'Eat more fruit and vegetables',
- 'Choose healthier snacks'
- 'Choose water as a drink'



Promoting the importance of these key messages from an early age will help reduce the risk of poor dental health in the long term.

Activity ideas to promote Dental Health Week:

- Talking with children about teeth. E.g. Teeth are used for chewing food so that it is easy to swallow. Discuss what foods are good and not so good for your teeth. This is a great opportunity to discuss 'sometimes' foods and 'everyday' foods.
- Discuss with children why it is important for our mouth to be healthy. E.g. eating, speech, appearance, self-esteem, breath freshness and prevention of decay.
- Discuss what drinks are good and not so good for our teeth. This is a great time to mention water and how it is healthy for the body and teeth.
- Discuss with the children how many times a day they should brush their teeth in order to prevent decay and keep teeth healthy. It is important to mention that their parents need to help them brush their teeth until they are 8 or 9 years old. Children should start brushing their teeth from the time the first tooth appears.
- Have a dress up day where children dress in white to symbolise white healthy teeth. In the morning ask the children to look at how clean everyone's clothes (teeth) are. Then at the end of the day ask children if they have any dirt or marks (decay) on their clothes. It is most likely that children will be dirty and this is a great way of explaining that throughout the day their teeth would gather germs (decay). Encourage children to go home and clean their teeth, just as their clothes will have to be cleaned.
- Sing the song (with actions) 'This is the way we brush our teeth, brush our teeth, brush our teeth. This is the way we brush out teeth so early in the morning'.



Did you know that it takes about 2 to 3 minutes to brush your teeth properly but most people only take 30 seconds or less?





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Physical Activity Ideas

- Make up actions and new verses to the healthy teeth song on page 1 or search 'dental health songs' on the internet. Ask the children to sing and move along with you.
- Play a game of 'Teeth and Germs'. Pick two children to be 'germs', remaining children are 'teeth'. Ask the teeth to stand on one side, with germs in the middle. The aim is for the 'teeth' to run to the other side without being caught by a 'germ'. If caught they have to crouch down. They can be saved if another 'tooth' comes along and taps their hand (cleans) twice, saying 'brush brush'. You can incorporate FMS to replace running. E.g. ask children to gallop, jump or slide instead.
- Organise a relay by grouping children into teams at one end and at the other end have a basket of items that are important for brushing teeth. The aim of the game is to run and grab an item and bring it back to their 'home' (team). The children can only pick up one item at a time to take back to their 'home'. Items can include a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss and water. Incorporate different FMS. E.g. run, hop, gallop, leap and side slide.



- Place small pictures of teeth throughout the room. When the educator gives the signal, children become tooth fairies and search for the hidden teeth. The object of the game is to have fun. At the end of the game, give each child a tooth to take home.



Craft Ideas

- Take photos of each child's mouth. Have the children guess who's healthy mouth it is.
- Create a smile poster using pictures from magazines. Ask children to find pictures of things that make them smile and pictures of people with healthy smiles.
- Create a poster of different animals showing their teeth. Discuss with children how important it is for animals to have healthy teeth and how some animals need their teeth to survive.





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Healthy Eating Experiences

- Make a dental friendly fruit, vegetable and cheese platter to share with the children. Discuss why the platter is good for their teeth (foods high in nutrients for strong bones and teeth and no processed sugar). Discuss with children why it is important to eat these foods everyday, both for our dental health but also for our overall health.

Did you know...

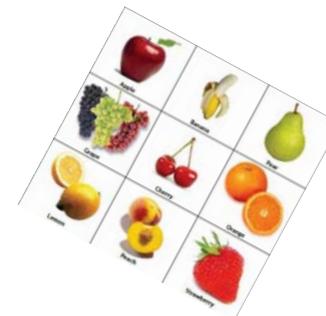


Even though dried fruit can be counted towards your child's fruit intake, as it contains important vitamins, minerals and fibre, it can actually increase your child's risk of developing dental cavities due to its high sugar content and often being left stuck on teeth for hours.

That's why we only recommend one serve per day.



- Scatter laminated pictures of fruits, vegetables and 'sometimes' foods and drinks around the room and play music for the children to dance to. When the music stops ask children to jump onto the dental friendly foods and drinks. Tell children to pick a different tooth friendly food each time the music stops.



Useful websites

Dental Health Week

www.dentalhealthweek.com.au

Australian Dental Association Inc.

www.ada.org.au

Teeth to cut up and hide for the tooth fairy game

