

HEAD START BIRTH TO 5 TOOTHBRUSHING POLICY

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PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

1302.43 Oral Health Practices: A program must promote effective oral health hygiene by ensuring all children with teeth are assisted by appropriate staff, or volunteers, if available, in brushing their teeth with toothpaste containing fluoride once daily.

OBJECTIVES:

- To help parents and children recognize that brushing teeth is important to good health.
- To prevent tooth decay.
- To use procedures that are sanitary and affective.

PROCEDURES:

- Tooth brushing should occur once daily with staff supervising and modeling the correct technique.
- Tables and sink will be cleaned with the three step sanitation process before tooth brushing. After the tables and sink have been cleaned, the adult placing the toothbrushes on the tables and putting them up must wash their hands before and after tooth brushing.
- Each child will have his/her own soft bristled toothbrush, labeled by name, so that toothbrushes are not shared. The toothbrush holder will also be labeled with the child's name.
- The toothbrushes will be placed on the tables so that they do not come in contact with any other brushes.
- Toothpaste will be placed on the inside of a cup for each child and placed on the table with their toothbrush. **A small smear for children 0 to 36 months that have teeth. A pea sized amount for children 3-5 years old.**
- Staff must closely supervise the brushing of the whole class.
- Children are taught proper brushing techniques and are assisted if needed, so that a thorough cleaning is accomplished.
- After brushing their teeth, toothbrushes will be rinsed with water and allowed to air dry. After brushing, children will wash their hands.
- Tables will be cleaned with the three step sanitation process after tooth brushing. Toothbrushes will be stored in a way that they stay clean and open to circulating air, so that bristles do not touch any surface, including another toothbrush.
- Toothbrushes will be replaced every 3 months or when the bristles become bent (whichever comes first). Also, replace the toothbrushes when a child has a contagious illness and the illness is gone (such as chicken pox, common cold, diarrhea, fever, strep throat, etc.).
- Dental hygiene must be reflected on the classroom schedule.
- Parents are encouraged to brush their child's teeth at home at least twice per day.
- **Infants without teeth:**
- At least once during the program day, staff or volunteers must wash their hands and use a silicone finger-tip tooth brush to gently wipe infants' gums.