

# Protect Your Child's Smile



36 Months



## Tips for a Healthy Mouth

Brush teeth twice a day.  
Floss once a day.  
Go to the dentist twice a year.  
Limit sugary snacks and drinks.  
Drink water with fluoride

### For more information on oral health:

SC DHEC Division of Oral Health  
[www.scdhec.gov/oralhealth](http://www.scdhec.gov/oralhealth)

SC Helpline for Women,  
Children & Infants  
Care Line Number: 1-800-868-0404

Connecting Smiles: an outreach effort to integrate preventive oral health information and resources into existing systems of care including medical and dental offices and community-based programs



## How to Make Toothbrushing Fun!

- Take your child to the store and let him pick out a few toothbrushes in his favorite color or with his favorite characters. When brushing his teeth, give him a choice of which toothbrush he wants to use. This will help motivate him to brush.
- Let your child brush her teeth at the same time you are brushing your teeth.
- Create a "toothbrushing routine." The routine can include playing music, getting things set up, and using a favorite cup for rinsing. Try and stick to the same routine every day.
- Let your child brush his own teeth first, then you should brush them again. Encourage your child to spit out the toothpaste after brushing.
- Keep in mind that most "children's toothpaste" brands are fluoridated. You should only use a very small amount. A small smear of toothpaste is recommended for children under age 3 and a pea-sized amount for children over age 3. Swallowing too much toothpaste with fluoride can lead to staining of the teeth (fluorosis).

## Sparkle Sung to: Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Original Author Unknown

*Sparkle, sparkle little teeth  
Some above and some beneath.  
Brush them all at every meal,  
Clean and fresh they will  
always feel.*

*Sparkle, sparkle little teeth  
Some above and some beneath  
Snacking, snacking, it's okay.  
Try it in the proper way.  
Eat raw veggies, fruit and cheese.  
They will make your mouth  
say, "Please!"*

*Snacking, snacking, it's okay.  
Try it in the proper way.  
Floss them, floss them, in between  
Cavities will not be seen!  
See your dentist twice a year,  
You will grin from ear to ear*

*Floss them, floss them, in between  
Cavities will not be seen!*

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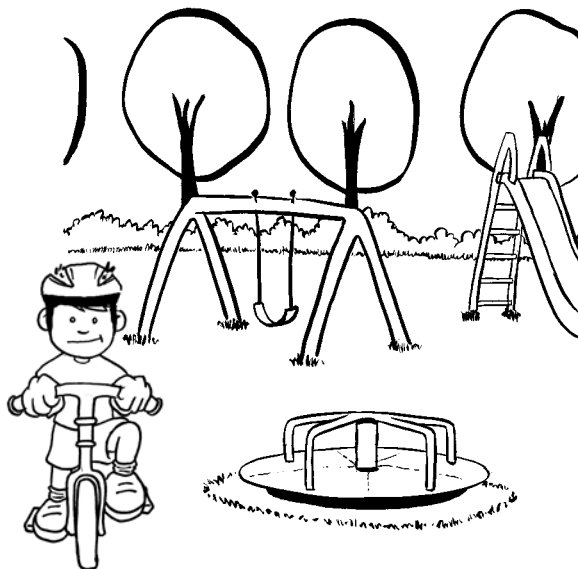
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## Keeping Your Preschooler's Smile Safe at Home and at School

Injuries to the head, face and mouth are common among preschoolers. Learn how to prevent injuries and how to handle them if they occur.

- Do not let your child walk around with something in his mouth, such as a cup, a Popsicle or a lollipop.
- Clean up toys, objects and spills to prevent tripping and falling.
- Teach your child to hold the handrail when walking up and down stairs.
- Provide the school with the emergency phone number of your child's dentist.
- Check out the play equipment at home and at school. It should be in good condition and surrounded by a soft material (i.e., loose sand, wood chips, mulch).
- Have your child wear a helmet when riding his bicycle or other riding toy.
- Teach your child not to bite or chew on hard objects, such as ice or pencils.



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## Taking Your Preschooler to the Dentist

A child should go to the dentist when they turn 1, and by the time a child is 3 to 4 years of age, they should be seen regularly (every six months) by a dentist.

### The purpose of these early visits to the dentist:

- To check your child's teeth.
- For the child, you and the dental team to get to know one another.
- To inform you and your child about how to prevent dental problems. Problems can occur from not brushing regularly and from poor eating habits.
- To decide if your child needs additional fluoride. This is generally recommended for children who are at a high risk for tooth decay.
- To discuss the need for dental sealants. A dental sealant is a thin plastic coating that is applied to the chewing surfaces of teeth to help prevent tooth decay.

