Tooth Brushing Programme
**Introduction**

Although over the last twenty years children’s oral health has improved and there has generally been a decline in levels of dental decay in the first and second teeth it is still a problem.

A recently published review by the prestigious Cochrane Oral Health Group, found that regular brushing with a fluoridated toothpaste results in 24 percent fewer cavities than brushing with a non-fluoridated toothpaste.

In 1993, over three-fifths of children aged nine years and 45 percent of five year olds had decayed or filled teeth.

A more recent study of twelve year olds in England and Wales found that on average 38 percent of 12 year olds had dental decay.

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the Foundation, said: "These findings reinforce one of our key messages that recommends people brush their teeth twice a day for two minutes with fluoride toothpaste.

"This systematic review by the Cochrane Oral Health Group emphasises the need for parents to continue to protect their children’s teeth by using a fluoridated toothpaste”.

Regular daily brushing with an appropriate fluoride toothpaste is highly effective in preventing dental decay. Good oral hygiene practice should be established at an early stage in a child’s life and become an integral part of normal daily hygiene (Delivering Better Oral Health, 3rd Edition, 2014).

This programme is designed to help guide nursery and school staff wishing to set up and implement a daily toothbrushing programme for children in their care.

For those that wish to participate, this toothbrushing programme is suitable for all children of all ages in both part-time and full-time education and care.
Good Practice

Toothpaste

Under 3 years of age

A smear of toothpaste containing 1000 parts per million (ppm) fluoride should be used for children under 3 years. Do not reapply if paste is swallowed.

Over 3 years of age

A pea sized amount of toothpaste containing 1350-1500 parts per million (ppm) fluoride should be used for children aged over 3 years. Do not reapply if paste is swallowed.

Toothbrushes

- Toothbrushes should be have a small head size with soft bristles
- Toothbrushes are replaced at least every 3 months, or sooner if required
- Toothbrushes are individually identifiable for each child

How to brush

Place the head of the toothbrush against the teeth, then tilt the bristle tips to a 45 degree angle against the gum line. Move the brush in small circular movements, several times, on all the surfaces of every tooth.

Brush the outer surfaces of each tooth, upper and lower, keeping the bristles angled against the gum line.

To clean the inside surfaces of the front teeth, tilt the brush vertically and make several small circular strokes with the front part of the brush.

Spit out after brushing and do not rinse, so that the fluoride stays on the teeth longer.
Good Practice continued

Introducing a tooth brushing programme into the everyday activities will help to ensure that this is a positive activity which becomes a routine.

- Each child brushes at least once a day. It is hoped that the child will also have brushed their teeth for two minutes at least once at home.

- Children are closely supervised when brushing and there should be suitable instruction to all children on how to brush their teeth to create effective brushing and good habits.

- Tooth brushing takes place at a time which is most suitable for each group.

- Tooth brushing takes place either in groups or individually either at a dry area, or at a sink.

- When a toothpaste tube is shared, toothpaste should be dispensed directly onto a clean surface such as a paper towel or plate. There must be sufficient space between the quantities of dispensed toothpaste to allow collection without cross contamination.

- Children are discouraged from swallowing toothpaste during and after brushing. Toothpaste should be spat out, do not rinse.

- A tooth brush storage system should be used which facilitates air drying and prevents cross contamination.

- After tooth brushing, brushes are rinsed thoroughly and replaced in the storage system to dry.

- Food and drink can soften the tooth enamel so tooth brushing should not take place within one hour of a snack or meal. It is understood that a child may not be in the educational / care environment long enough for this to be practical. Therefore it is acknowledged that the benefit of tooth brushing and prevention of tooth decay, outweighs the risk of dental erosion.

Toothbrush storage

Toothbrushes are a potential source of infection. Good practice would encourage the use of a system which:

- stores toothbrushes in either an appropriate storage system or individual holders
- enables brushes to stand upright when positioned
- allows sufficient distance between toothbrushes to avoid cross contamination
- stores toothbrushes in systems which allow for natural air drying
- have covers and are stored at adult height.

Cleaning procedures

Good cleaning practice should be an integral part of childcare in the nursery and standards should include:

- wearing of household gloves to clean storage systems and sinks, and all cuts, abrasions, and breaks in the skin are covered with a waterproof dressing before cleaning is carried out
- storage systems and storage areas are cleaned, rinsed and dried at least once a week using warm water and general purpose neutral detergent
- care is taken to ensure that tooth brushes do not touch when being removed or replaced in storage systems
- storage systems are not positioned adjacent to the sink area or next to the children whilst tooth brushing is taking place in order to prevent cross contamination
- storage systems are replaced if cracks, scratches or rough surfaces develop
- any toothbrushes dropped on the floor are discarded. Toothbrushes should not be soaked.
An example of how to run a group brushing session can be seen below:

1. The child should be supervised at all times.

2. The supervisor is responsible for collecting the toothbrush from the storage system.

3. Toothpaste is dispensed by the supervisor by placing the appropriate smear or pea sized amount directly onto a paper towel or plate. Each dispensed amount should be placed apart from each other to allow collection onto a brush head without contamination from other brushes or pastes.

4. Each child or a supervisor can collect the paste from the paper towel or plate using their brush head.

5. Children may be seated or standing whilst tooth brushing takes place.

6. Make sure that all children use correct brushing techniques (allowing for a learning period) and that they brush for two minutes.

7. After tooth brushing is completed, children can spit excess toothpaste into either a disposable tissue or disposable paper towel.

8. Tissues/paper towels must be disposed of immediately after use in a refuse bag.

9. Toothbrushes can be:
   a. returned to the rack by the child and taken to an identified sink area by the supervisor who is responsible for rinsing each toothbrush individually under running water or
   b. rinsed at a designated sink area where each child is responsible for rinsing their own toothbrush under cold running water.
   c. the supervisor or the child can be responsible for the control of the cold running tap.

10. Toothbrushes are returned to the storage system by the supervisor or child and allowed to air dry.

11. Supervisors are responsible for rinsing sinks after tooth brushing is complete.
Frequently asked questions

1) How do we clean the toothbrushes?

Rinse under the cold running tap, ensuring all the toothpaste is removed. At no time should brushes be stored or cleaned together. Do not put them in a sink together.

2) Is rinsing the toothbrushes enough?

Yes rinsing is enough as each brush is only used by that one child so there are no cross infection issues.

3) What to do if toothpaste has hardened on bristles?

Rinse brush under warm water to loosen toothpaste and then rinse in cold water.

4) How do we clean the BrushBox?

Clean the BrushBox once a week with soapy water ensuring all surfaces are washed, rinsed and dried thoroughly.

5) Should brushes be drained or wiped before going back in the trolley?

When the brushes are rinsed, place them on a paper towel ensuring they don’t touch each other (top and tail toothbrushes with a gap of at least 2 inches between them) to ensure no cross infection. By placing the toothbrushes onto the paper towel this will soak up excess water on the brushes.

6) What to do if a child has bleeding gums?

Follow the same policy that you would use to discard any bloody tissues following nose bleeds and inform the parent so they may contact their dentist for review.

7) How can I prevent the names rubbing off brushes?

We would recommend the names should be written on brushes with a permanent pen such as a Staedtler Lumocolor permanent - 0.6mm F.
Tooth brushing songs

Are your teeth clean and white (Tune – ‘Do your ears hang low’)
Are your teeth clean and white?
Do you brush them left and right?
Do you brush them in the morning?
Do you brush them every night?
Do you brush them up and down?
Do you brush them round and round?
Are your teeth clean and white?

Brush, brush, brush your teeth (Tune ‘Row, row, row your boat’) Version 2
Brush, brush, brush your teeth
Brush them every day
We put toothpaste on our brush
To help stop tooth decay
Clean, clean, clean your teeth
Clean them every day
Your teeth will sparkle for years to come
In the most beautiful way
Brush, brush, brush your teeth
Brush them every day
Happy, healthy teeth you’ll have
If its done this way

Wiggle-Jiggle tooth (Tune – ‘Old Macdonald’) 
In my mouth, I have some teeth
E i e i o
And in my mouth I put my brush
E i e i o
With a wiggle-jiggle here and a wiggle-jiggle there
Here a wiggle, there a jiggle
Everywhere a wiggle-jiggle
In my mouth I’ll keep my teeth
E i e i o

Brushing teeth (Tune – ‘Twinkle twinkle little star’)
Here’s my toothpaste
Here’s my brush
I won’t hurry, I won’t rush
Working hard to keep teeth clean
Front and back and in between
When I brush for quite a while
I will have a happy smile
Resources required

**Storage System**
The BrushBox storage system is designed by The British Dental Health Foundation and holds up to 12 tooth brushes. Manufactured from a high quality durable acrylic outer with a removable colour insert, this system allows for effective and easy cleaning and makes it possible to lift the tooth brushes clear of the outer without the need to touch the brushes. The hinged lid provides natural air drying and the BrushBox is self-stacking. Available in Red, Green, Yellow, Blue. Slots hold plain manual handle brushes such as the TePe brushes pictured. If you wish to write the child’s name on the space for each toothbrush then a An Edding 751 paint marker has been found to be best and will not come off with soap and water.

**Toothbrushes**
A small soft headed toothbrush is best. The TePe Select Compact Tooth Brush can be supplied with the BrushBox in 12 different colour handles. A permanent pen such as the Staedtler Lumocolor permanent - 0.6mm F can be used to write a symbol or a child’s name on the handle if required. Toothbrushes should be replaced every 3 months, or sooner if the bristles become splayed, or following a period of sickness.

**Toothpaste**
Fluoride toothpaste has been proven to prevent decay.
- 0 – 3 years – toothpaste containing 1000ppm fluoride should be used
- 3+ years - toothpaste containing 1350–1500ppm fluoride should be used
A good all round total family toothpaste is fine and available from supermarkets and chemists. It is not necessary to use a specialist children’s toothpaste. List supplied at the end of this document and found in Delivering Better Oral Health, 3rd Edition, 2014.
Resources continued

Motivators

**Reward Charts** can be used to record brushing and help create good habits  
**Stickers** can be given to children to encourage them to keep brushing  
**Certificates** could be given to acknowledge achievement

![Reward Chart](image1)

Demonstrators

**Huge Sand Timer**  
Large 2 minute sand timer helps make sure that a perfect amount of tooth brushing time is achieved.

![Huge Sand Timer](image2)

**Giant teeth puppet model**  
For tooth brushing demonstrations with individuals and groups. Hardwearing and durable puppet style model.

![Giant teeth puppet model](image3)

Information Leaflets

The British Dental Health Foundation publishes information leaflets which are written in an easy to understand question and answer format. They are written by qualified dental staff and approved for plain English by the Word Centre. These titles would be recommended as useful additional information for parents:

![Information Leaflets](image4)
Shopping list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STORAGE</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BrushBox Green</td>
<td>£21.75</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BrushBox Red</td>
<td>£21.75</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BrushBox Yellow</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BrushBox Blue</td>
<td>£21.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edding 751 Paint Marker Fine Tip White</td>
<td>£2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOOTH BRUSH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TePe Select Compact Tooth Brush (3 years)</td>
<td>£0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TePe Mini Tooth Brush (0-3 years)</td>
<td>£1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staedtler Lumocolor permanent pen - 0.6mm F</td>
<td>£2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEMONSTRATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Large 2 minute sand timer</td>
<td>£9.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Huge 2 minute sand timer</td>
<td>£29.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Large brushing demonstration model with brush</td>
<td>£16.99</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MOTIVATORS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stickers (pack of 240)</td>
<td>£4.99</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reward Charts (pack of 50)</td>
<td>£4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificates (pack of 10)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LEAFLETS</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dental care for mother &amp; baby (each)</td>
<td>£0.15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children’s teeth (each)</td>
<td>£0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diet (each)</td>
<td>£0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My teeth (each)</td>
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A full list of educational resources can be found at www.educatingsmiles.org
Sample permission form

School Address

Toothbrushing Programme

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In partnership with your children’s school, we are hoping to involve your child in tooth brushing once a day with fluoride toothpaste at nursery. This has been shown to improve children’s dental health. The children will be brushing their own teeth under the supervision of the nursery staff.

You can withdraw your child at any time from the programme but please inform the teaching staff.

Please sign below to give your permission, and return the slip as soon as possible to the school.

Yours faithfully

________________________________________________________________________

I give/do not give my permission for

................................................................................................................. (Child’s name)
to take part in tooth brushing at nursery.

Does your child have special fluoride drops/tablets/toothpaste from your dentist?
Please write here and speak with the nursery staff.

..............................................................................................................................

Does your child have any allergies? Please list here

..............................................................................................................................

Signed.................................................parent/guardian

Date .................................

Registered Charity No: 263198 www.dentalhealth.org
Sample letter to parents/guardians

Dear Parent/Guardian.

Your child will be brushing their teeth with fluoride toothpaste, every day at nursery/school/group.

Top tips for brushing with your child

Brush teeth and gums thoroughly last thing at night and at least one other time during the day, with a fluoride toothpaste

Children under 3 years should have no more than a smear of toothpaste with 1000ppm of fluoride content

Children over 3 years of age should use no more than a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with 1350 – 1500ppm of fluoride content

Put toothpaste onto a dry brush

Brush for 2 minutes

Brush both top and bottom teeth, outside and inside, back and front

Your child should spit out excess toothpaste, do not rinse after brushing

Children need help with brushing until they are at least 7 years old

Other tips to care for teeth

Sugary foods and drinks can damage teeth, keep these to a minimum and try to have at mealtimes only

Try not to snack between meals and drink water or milk

Dental check up’s are important, to find a dentist visit www.nhs.uk
Take your child for regular dental visits.

Important note

If your child is receiving treatment from your dentist which includes special fluoride drops/tablets or toothpaste then please advise nursery staff so that the correct toothpaste is used in nursery/school/group.
Toothpastes containing exactly 1,000ppm Fluoride

**ASDA**
Protect 0-3 Milk Teeth

**Aquafresh**
Milk Teeth 0-2 years

**Beverley Hills Formula**
Total protection whitening
Sensitive whitening
Dentist’s choice

**Boots**
Essentials
White Glo 2 in 1
White Glo Coffee & tea formula
White Glo Extra strength
Smile Kids 2-6

**Clinomyn**
Smoker’s

**Colgate**
Kids 0-3

**Dr Fresh**
Thomas the Tank Engine

**Kokomo**
Hello Kitty

**Sainsbury’s own**
Kids Toothpaste 0-3

**Tom’s of Maine**
Fennel and Spearmint

**Ultradex – was Retardex**
Low Abrasion
White Glo
Recalcifying & whitening

**Wilkinsons**
Wilko Everyday value
Toothpastes containing 1,000ppm – 1,500ppm Fluoride

Arm and Hammer
Advance White, Whitening, Whitening Sensitive
Brilliant Sparkle, Enamel Pro Repair Sensitive, Extra White, Original Coolmint

Beverley Hills Formula
Total enamel sensitive expert
Perfect White

Biotene
fluoride

Boots
Smile Fresh Stripe, Total care, Whitening, Sensitive
Expert Sensitive Whitening, Enamel Protection, weekly clean
Expert orthodontic
Smile Kids 6+

Corsodyl
Extra Fresh Original, Whitening

Colgate
2 in 1 Whitening, icy Blast
Advanced White, Whitening, Whitening Go Pure
Fresh Minty Gel
Cavity Protection
Cool Stripe
Deep Clean Whitening
Sensitive Enamel Protect
Cavity Protection Great Regular
Max Beads Blue, Max Fresh Blue
Maxwhite, One, One Active, One Luminous, One Optic, Shine
Sensitive Enamel Protect, Sensitive and Whitening, multi-protection, Plus Whitening, Pro-relief, Pro-relief and whitening, pro-relief Enamel repair, Pro-relief Multi-protect
Kids 4-6
Kids 6 +
Total* Advanced, Clean*, Freshening*, Pro-Gum Health*, Pro-Gum Health Whitening*, Sensitive*, Whitening*, Interdental*
Triple Action
Whitening and Fresh breath

Co-operative
Freshmint Whitening and totalcare, Sensitive and totalcare

Fluoridine

Janina
Ultra White Extra strength, White Sensitive

Kingfisher
Mint with Fluoride, Fennel with Fluoride

Kokomo
Peppa Pig
Toothpastes containing 1,000ppm – 1,500ppm Fluoride continued…

**Macleans**
Fresh Mint
Ice Whitening Toothpaste
Total Health and Whitening
White ‘n’ Shine
Whitening, Whitening Fluoride

**Mentadent**
Mentadent P with zinc citrate, Mentadent SR

**Oral B**
Stages – Bubble gum
1-2-3
3D White Enamel Protect, White Brilliance, White Luxe Healthy Shine
Complete Extra Fresh, Extra White, mouthwash and whitening
Pro Expert All Around Protection Clean Mint, All Around, Enamel Shield, Premium Gum
Protection, Sensitive + Gentle Whitening, Whitening

**Pearl Drops**
Pro White, Instant White, Restore White, Ultimate White
Everyday white

**Sainsbury’s own**
Basics
Extracare Fresh and Whitening, Sensitive and Whitening
Freshmint
Gentle Whitening
Sensitive, Sensitive Enamel
Whitening
Kids Toothpaste 3-6

**Sensodyne**
Complete Protection, Extra Fresh
Daily Care
Extra Fresh
Gentle Whitening
Gum Protection
Iso Active Whitening
Mint
Pronamel Daily Toothpaste. Daily Fluoride Children 6 – 12 years. Extra Freshness, gentle
whitening
Rapid Relief Mint
Repair & Protect Extra Fresh, Whitening
Total Care, gentle whitening

**Smith Kline Beecham**
Corsodyl Daily Extra Paste, Daily Whitening

**Superdrug**
Procare
Toothpastes containing 1,000ppm – 1,500ppm Fluoride continued…

Tesco’s own
Everyday Value
Kids Strawberry
Freshmint
Sensitive
Whitening
Steps Toothpaste 0-2
Steps Toothpaste 3-, 6+
Pro-formula Daily protection sensitive. All day protection complete, sensitive, complete whitening. Daily protection enamel protect. Extreme whitening, freshmint

Tom’s of Maine
Fennel and Spearmint

Wilkinsons
Wilko whitening, Freshmint Fresh

Wisdom
Xtra clean
Zohar kosher toothpaste

Always read the label to look for the parts per million of fluoride (ppmF-) in the toothpaste.
Ref: Delivering better oral health: an evidence-based toolkit for prevention. March 2014
About the British Dental Health Foundation

The British Dental Health Foundation is dedicated to improving oral health and promotes three key messages:

1. Brush your teeth last thing at night and at least one other time during the day, with a fluoride toothpaste
2. Cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks
3. Visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend

FREE educational units for Early years and Primary years can be downloaded from www.dentalbuddy.org

Units available to download FREE:
- Early Years Foundation - Unit 1 (Brush our teeth)
- Early Years Foundation - Unit 2 (Visit the dentist)
- Key Stage One – Unit 1 (Looking after teeth)
- Key Stage One – Unit 2 (Bodies grow and change)
- Key Stage One – Unit 3 (Importance of diet)
- Key Stage Two – Unit 1 (Looking after teeth)
- Key Stage Two – Unit 2 (Teeth functions)
- Key Stage Two – Unit 3 (Tooth decay)

www.dentalbuddy.org

Dental Helpline
01788 539780

The Dental Helpline is a confidential service provided by the British Dental Health Foundation. Qualified dental professionals are available to answer your questions from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Or you can email from our website anytime: www.dentalhelpline.org

British Dental Health Foundation
British Dental Health Foundation, Smile House, 2 East Union Street, Rugby, CV22 6AJ
Tel: 01788 546365  |   Fax: 01788 541982  |   Email: info@dentalhealth.org