

## ORAL HEALTH PROCEDURES

### **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.

### **Fluoride**

Head Start/ Early Head Start/ECEAP supports and promotes fluoride as effective prevention against tooth decay.

Fluoride is discussed at enrollment interview and noted on both Well Child Exam and Dental Exam forms.

Parents/guardians whose home water supplies are not fluoridated are encouraged to obtain supplemental fluoride for their children after six month of age.

Parents/guardians are provided information about fluoride benefits and how and where to obtain fluoride.

Staff follow-up with parents/guardians on all fluoride recommendations.

### **Tooth Brushing**

Tooth brushing is always supervised by an adult.

- When possible adults provide a good model by brushing their own teeth with children.

All children brush teeth daily.

- Allow unhurried time for tooth brushing.
- When possible if children do not brush after a meal, teach children to swish with water to rid their mouths of debris.

Fluoridated toothpaste is used after tooth eruption.

- Early Head Start classrooms dispense no more than a smear of toothpaste in a manner that prevents cross contamination. An adult is always supervising and assisting as needed.
- Head Start/ECEAP classrooms dispense less than a pea sized amount of toothpaste in a manner that prevents cross contamination. An adult is always supervising and assisting as needed.

- The head of the UW Pediatric Dentistry Clinic reports that, since preschoolers do not yet have the coordination to do a terrific job of brushing, the real value of tooth brushing may be in getting a topical application of fluoride.

Children pick up and return their toothbrush to the holder. (Toothbrushes are never gathered up altogether and allowed to touch - even if they are about to be sanitized.)

Toothbrushes are rinsed until toothpaste is removed from bristles.

To sanitize toothbrushes, hot water is carefully run over them and they are air-dried.

- Where sinks are deep/wide enough, water can be run over brushes while they are in the holder.
- Brushes are air dried—preferably in an airy cabinet with doors. Avoid using nets or coverings that can touch toothbrushes or make them difficult to extract.
- No bleach or mouthwash is used on toothbrushes.

**Do not use dishwasher to sanitize toothbrushes.**

Toothbrushes are replaced as soon as bristles are splayed and at least every three months.

- Replacing toothbrushes more often with children who seem to get sick more often than usual.