

# Tooth Brushing Programme



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## Introduction

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published guidelines encouraging schools and nurseries to help children brush their teeth, particularly in disadvantaged areas of England.

Tooth decay and gum disease are the two of the most common and entirely preventable dental problems. Recently released statistics have identified that one in eight three year-olds and one in four five year-olds suffer from visible tooth decay, while more than 25,000 children aged five to nine have been admitted to hospital due to tooth decay.

Chief Executive of the Oral Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter OBE, said: "Tooth decay is entirely preventable through nothing more than a few very basic oral health messages. The Oral Health Foundation encourages everybody to brush their teeth last thing at night and at least one other time during the day using a fluoride toothpaste, cut down on how often they have sugary foods and drinks and visit the dentist regularly, as often as they recommend.

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.



## Need to know

### Toothpaste

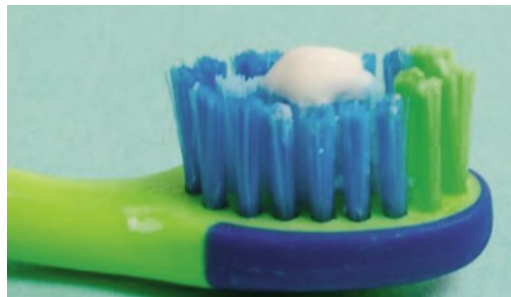
#### Under 3 years of age

A smear of toothpaste containing no less than 1000 parts per million (ppm) fluoride should be used for children under 3 years.



#### Over 3 years of age

A pea sized amount of toothpaste containing at least 1000 parts per million (ppm) fluoride should be used for children aged over 3 years.



### Toothbrushes

Toothbrushes should have a small head size (the toothbrush needs to be small enough to reach behind the back teeth and brush them easily). The bristles should be medium/soft so that they do not hurt the gums.

Toothbrushes should be replaced at least every 3 months, or sooner if required.

Toothbrushes should be 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.



Do this again, but on the inside surfaces of all your teeth. To clean the inside surfaces of your front teeth, tilt the brush vertically and make several small, circular strokes with the front part of the brush.



Brush the biting surfaces of your teeth.

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



## Daily Routine

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, last thing at night.
- 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 either in groups or individually, at a time most suitable.
- 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.*



Delivering Better Oral Health, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2014, Department of Health, oral health toolkit would be a recommended reference for all oral health prevention practice.

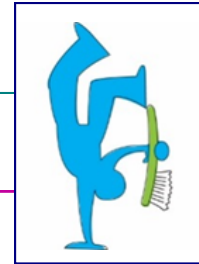


## Infection Control

### 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
- has covers and is 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 should be 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.



## Toothbrushing session

An example of how to run a group brushing session:

1. The child should be supervised at all times.
2. The supervisor or the child can be 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:
  - 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
  - rinsed at a designated sink area where each child is responsible for rinsing their own toothbrush under cold running water
  - 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. Sinks should be rinsed after tooth brushing.





## 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 toothbrushes with a permanent pen such as a Staedtler Lumocolor permanent - 0.6mm F.





# BRUSH TIME

## Toothbrushing 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?



**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

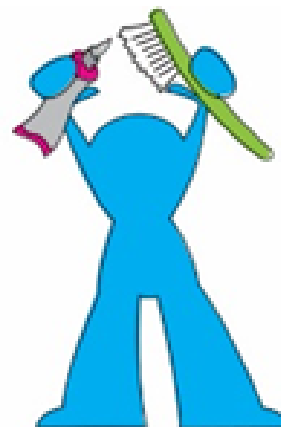
**Wiggle-Jiggle tooth**  
(Tune – ‘Old Macdonald’)

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

**Brush, brush, brush your teeth**  
(Tune ‘Row, row, row your boat’)

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 it’s done this way



# BRUSH TIME

## Resources

### Storage System

The BrushBox storage system is designed by the Oral 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 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. A list is supplied at the end of this document and found in Delivering Better Oral Health, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2014.



# BRUSH TIME

## Additional Resources

### 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



### Huge Sand Timer

Large 2 minute sand timer helps with make sure that a perfect amount of tooth brushing time is achieved.



### Giant teeth puppet model

For tooth brushing demonstrations individuals and groups. Hardwearing and durable puppet style model.



### Information Leaflets

The Oral 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:





## Shopping List

STORAGE	Quantity	Unit £	Total £
<b>Essentials</b>			
BrushBox Red		21.75	
Brushbox Yellow		21.75	
Brushbox Blue		21.75	
BrushBox Green		21.75	
Edging 751 Paint Marker Fine Tip White		2.50	
TePe Select Compact Toothbrush (3+ yrs)		0.90	
TePe Mini Toothbrush (0 - 3 yrs)		0.90	
Staedtler Lumocolor permanent pen—0.6mm F		2.50	
<b>Demonstration</b>			
Large 2 minute timer		9.95	
Giant teeth puppet model with brush		16.99	
<b>Motivation</b>			
Stickers (pack of 240)		4.99	
Reward Charts (pack of 50)		4.73	
Certificates (pack of 10)		1.97	
<b>Information Leaflets</b>			
Dental care for mother and baby		0.15	
Children's teeth (suitable for parents with under 7's)		0.15	
Diet		0.15	
My teeth (suitable for child under 7 years)		0.15	





## 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 .....





## 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 no less than 1000ppm of fluoride content

Children over 3 years of age should use no more than a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with at least 1000ppm 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 and biting surfaces.

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

Between meals, drink water or milk and try not to snack

Dental check ups are important, and everyone should have regular dental visits.  
To find a dentist visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### 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**

Dentist's choice

#### **Boots**

Essentials, Smile Kids 2-6

#### **Brush Baby**

Applemint

#### **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

#### **Wilkinsons**

Wilko Everyday value

### Toothpastes containing 1,000ppm – 1,500ppm Fluoride

#### **Arm and Hammer**

Original Coolmint

#### **Biotene**

Fluoride

#### **Boots**

Smile Fresh Stripe, Total care,  
Weekly clean , Smile Kids 6 +

#### **Brush Baby**

Tutti Frutti, Spearmint

#### **Colgate**

Fresh Minty Gel , Cool Stripe  
Max Beads Blue, Max Fresh Blue

#### **Co-operative**

Totalcare, Sensitive and totalcare

#### **Kingfisher**

Mint with Fluoride, Fennel with Fluoride

#### **Kokomo**

Peppa Pig

#### **Macleans**

Fresh Mint, Total Health

#### **Mentadent** , Mentadent SR

#### **Oral B**

Stages – Bubble gum, 1-2-3  
Complete Extra Fresh  
Pro Expert All Around Protection,  
Clean Mint, All Around

#### **Sainsbury's own**

Basics

Extracare Fresh, Kids Toothpaste 3-6

#### **Sensodyne**

Complete Protection, Extra Fresh Daily Care,  
Extra Fresh Mint

Pronamel Daily Toothpaste. Daily Fluoride  
Children 6 – 12 years. Extra Freshness,  
Total Care,

#### **Superdrug**

Procare

#### **Tesco's own**

Everyday Value

Kids Strawberry

Freshmint

Steps Toothpaste 0-2

Steps Toothpaste 3-, 6 +

All day protection complete, Freshmint

#### **Tom's of Maine**

Fennel and Spearmint

#### **Wilkinsons**

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 Oral Health Foundation

The Oral 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](http://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](http://www.dentalbuddy.org)



**Dental  
Helpline**

**01788 539780**

The Dental Helpline is a confidential service provided by the Oral 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](http://www.dentalhelpline.org)



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