

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Among the many important preparations for the school day is maintaining a healthy mouth. Dental decay remains the most common chronic disease among children. Children experience unnecessary pain and suffering from tooth decay. The good news about tooth decay is that it is preventable when eating a healthy diet, having good oral hygiene habits and maintaining routine dental care with fluoride and sealants. It is important for your child in their elementary years to learn about how a cavity forms and healthy food choices to maintain a healthy mouth and body.

The Tooth Decay Process

- Plaque (mouth bacteria) around teeth use food particles to make acid.
- Frequent eating or snacking causes too many acid attacks.
- Acid attacks break down the enamel structure of the tooth leading to tooth decay
- Decay will continue to spread deep into the tooth structure and cause a cavity (hole) if the decay process goes unchecked by a dentist.
- Foods are divided into sticky or crunchy for their effect on teeth, when in the mouth do they clean teeth or do they stick on teeth and feed the plaque, encouraging a cavity?
- Rinse with water after eating when you do not have a brush. This washes away food and plaque.

Brushing and Flossing both the baby and permanent teeth is important to protect and maintain healthy teeth. Flossing helps remove food and bacteria from between the teeth and places the toothbrush cannot reach. Good oral health means brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste before school and before bedtime. Please encourage your child to make brushing and flossing a daily habit. Good oral care will aid your child in germ prevention.

The above topics are important to discuss at home as well as in school. Please encourage your child to make brushing and flossing a daily habit. It is recommended that your child see a dentist for an oral exam and cleaning twice a year to prevent dental problems that would not allow your student to learn to his or her fullest capacity.

The Healthy Smiles program hopes all of our students strive for good oral hygiene which will contribute to a successful school year.

Thank you,

Marlena Wilson, RDH, BS
Healthy Smiles Program
In-School Oral Health Education

