

Dental Talking Points

Resource

- Decay can occur when a child consumes a diet high in sugary, sticky foods, when poor dental hygiene is practiced and when there is a lack of fluoride source.
- Sugary, sticky foods should be limited.
- Start good dental hygiene while children are young. Tooth brushing is a good example of a time when parent modeling is important. Parents should supervise their child's brushing until age 7 or 8.
- Talk to children about tooth decay and cavities. Help them understand that germs hide in their mouths and on their teeth. If these germs stay there long enough, they begin to eat away at the teeth causing decay or cavities.
- Fluoride is found in water and toothpaste. If water is purchased (as opposed to tap water), fluoride may not be added. Encourage parents to use toothpaste with fluoride and talk to their dentist about other sources.
- Baby bottle use can cause dental concerns. Encourage an infant to drink from a cup beginning at nine months of age. If an early learning child is using a bottle, provide resources and education to the family.