



**Community  
Dental Center**  
*We Care for Kids*

# Healthy Smiles



## *Why are we concerned about dental care for children?*

Poor dental health can affect the overall health of children and influence their ability to learn and grow.

## *What are the risks of poor dental health in children?*

Failure to prevent dental problems may have long-term effects on children including:

- Problems chewing—may not be able to eat a diet needed for healthy growth
- Reduced self esteem—may not smile if self conscious about teeth
- Trouble sleeping due to pain
- Problems speaking and concentrating

## *What can you do to keep your children's teeth healthy?*

Children should start seeing the dentist after their first tooth appears or no later than one year of age. Besides regular checkups, good dental health also includes:

- **Brushing**—Use a fluoride toothpaste and brush twice a day; use a soft tooth brush made for young children
- **Foods**—Drink water and eat fruit, veggies, grains, and dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt) instead of sweet snacks and drinks
- **Preventing Tooth Decay**—Do not put children to sleep with a bottle; do not dip pacifiers in honey or anything sweet
- **Safety**—Prevent injuries by not letting children carry bottles/sippy cups while walking around

*For more information go to:* [www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/topics/child.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/topics/child.htm)

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