



CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Your Smile Matters!

February 4, 2019 – District Health Department #10, in partnership with local dentists, remind you that every smile matters, and you need to help your child keep their smile for a lifetime. February is National Children's Dental Health Month, sponsored by the American Dental Association (ADA), which aims to raise awareness about the importance of oral health.

Prevention costs less money and takes less time than treatment of cavities. Make dental hygiene, and regular dentist visits a priority for your family; the sooner a cavity is detected, the less damage it does to the teeth. Tooth decay (cavities) is one of the most common chronic conditions of childhood in the United States. Untreated tooth decay can cause pain and infections that may lead to problems with eating, speaking, playing, and learning.

Here are some ways that parents can help their child keep a healthy smile for a lifetime:

Brush 2 times per day for 2 minutes with a fluoride toothpaste.

- Set a timer to help your child make sure they are brushing for two full minutes.
- Brushing at bedtime is very important to remove plaque and bacteria from the teeth. The body automatically reduces its flow of saliva at night; this means that bacteria is not continually being washed away in the same way that it is during the day.

Floss once a day at bedtime.

- Flossing removes plaque and food between your teeth and keeps your gums healthy.
- Brushing alone only cleans part of the tooth, flossing once each day at bedtime cleans between the teeth.

Avoid drinking sugar and carbonated beverages.

- Drinking sugar-sweetened or carbonated beverages can break down tooth enamel and increase the risk of tooth decay.

Encourage children to drink from a cup by their first birthday.

- Limit a sippy cup to only water between meals and on-the-go.

Limit the frequency of snacking between meals.

- Starchy, refined carbohydrates break down into simple sugars, which can lead to cavities.

Visit the dentist every 6 months for a check-up.

- Start when the first tooth erupts but no later than age 1.
- Parents and caregivers should also take good care of their own teeth. Studies have shown that cavity-causing bacteria can be "shared" with children when sharing straws or eating utensils.



MEDIA CONTACT

Jeannine Taylor
Public Information Officer
O: 231-876-3823
C: 231-920-4998
E: jtaylor@dhd10.org



COUNTIES SERVED:

Crawford
Kalkaska
Lake
Manistee
Mason
Mecosta
Missaukee
Newaygo
Oceana
Wexford



www.dhd10.org



www.facebook.com/DHD10

Children with healthy teeth chew food easily, are better able to learn to speak clearly, and smile with confidence. Brush, floss, eat healthy, and visit the dentist. Start children now on a lifetime of good dental habits.

If you are looking for more information about dental health, please visit <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en>.

About DHD #10

District Health Department #10 (DHD #10) is Michigan's largest geographical health department, mandated to promote and protect the public from unsafe and hazardous conditions and provide methods of promoting good health and disease prevention. Some of the vital programs provided by DHD #10 include Immunizations, Infectious Disease Control, STI Testing and Counseling, WIC, Maternal Infant Health Program, Healthy Families Northern Michigan, Children's Special Health Services, Hearing and Vision Screening, Family Planning, Cancer Screening, Worksite Wellness, Smoking Cessation, Substance Use Prevention, Chronic Disease Prevention, and Environmental Health Services. DHD #10 serves Crawford, Kalkaska, Lake, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Missaukee, Newaygo, Oceana, and Wexford counties. For more information, visit www.dhd10.org.

###