

Pointers For Parents

Five Ways To Encourage Children To Brush Their Teeth

(NAPSA)—Brushing up on a few dental basics can help parents start their child on a lifetime of good dental care.

Teeth should be cleaned as soon as they appear. Use a soft cotton cloth and gently wipe the teeth after feeding. Start using a toothbrush when baby's molars appear. With meals, snacks and bottles, toddlers can eat between seven and ten times a day. Pack the toothbrush with you and use it whenever you can, especially before going to bed.

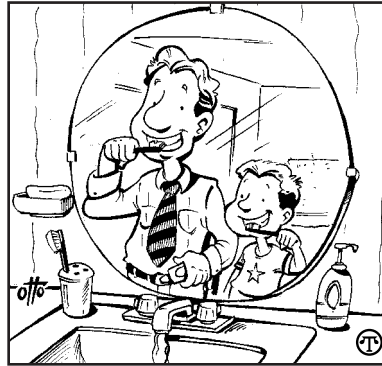
Until a child is about six, it would be a good idea to dispense the toothpaste—just a dab.

If a child is reluctant to brush, you can try five tips:

1. Praise the child for the effort.
2. Reward the child for brushing teeth by reading a favorite story or singing a song.
3. Encourage children to brush their teeth at the same time as you do. Young children like to imitate what their parents do.
4. Make it fun. A new toothbrush known as the BOLT MAX has a light-up head that lets kids see inside their mouths.

The light up feature not only encourages kids to brush regularly, properly and longer, but it acts as an early warning system. Dentists recommend that you change your toothbrush every three months (and after every cold and illness). When the BOLT MAX light goes out (approximately three months), it's time to get a new toothbrush.

The bathroom is a place where germs are often spread. Dentists



Children may require a parent's help to clean their teeth until they are 8 or 9 years old.

recommend that for better oral hygiene, toothbrushes should be left out to air dry, rather than be placed in a drawer, medicine cabinet, or left lying on the counter.

BOLT MAX has a power suction cup base that promotes air drying by keeping the toothbrush affixed to the counter and away from direct contact with germs.

There are four designs available to suit every age group, ranging from a first toothbrush to an adult model.

5. Last but not least, don't forget to make the importance of regular brushing part of a talk about healthy habits such as eating vegetables. Children should see a dentist by their first birthday. The first visit usually includes oral hygiene and dietary tips to improve dental health.

Teaching children the basics of good dental care can help encourage healthy smiles for years to come.