

POINTERS FOR PARENTS

Keep Your Child's Smile In Shape This Summer

(NAPSA)—All children look forward to summer vacation, but the change in routine can make it difficult for them to keep up with a proper oral care regimen. Also, summertime delights such as lemonade and ice cream can put them at high risk for tooth decay—the single most common chronic childhood disease, according to the U.S. Surgeon General. By following these tips from Crest Healthy Smiles, a national outreach program designed to combat the nation's oral health epidemic, children can keep their smiles healthy all summer long.

- Play hide and seek...but don't let soda find its way into your fridge! After playing outside, kids come home thirsty and usually reach for a soda. It's best to "hide" carbonated beverages, which contain very high levels of acid and dissolve calcium from tooth enamel. Instead, keep low-sugar drinks like natural fruit juice or water on hand so kids will "seek" out a healthier way to quench their thirst.

- Read your child's way to a healthy smile. Reading with your child is a way to bring the family together during the summer, while learning valuable lessons at the same time. Pick a book that encourages healthy habits, like "Ricky and Andrea's Healthy Beautiful Smiles," co-authored by celebrity mom Dayanara Torres. This story, about a brother and sister as they take their first trip to the dentist and learn valuable oral care habits, is available for free by calling (866) 989-9968



Two minutes of brushing after a sweet treat can help keep tooth decay at bay.

(while supplies last).

- Plan a field trip to the dentist. To ward off gum disease and tooth decay, it is important to visit the dentist twice a year. To get your children excited for the occasion, treat them to a trip to the zoo or a picnic in the park after the appointment. Having something fun to look forward to after the dentist makes it feel more like a field trip.

- Keep pesky caries away! Ice cream and popsicles are popular ways to keep cool during the summer. However, occasional sugary treats don't have to ruin healthy teeth and gums. Afterwards, just make sure your child brushes for a full two minutes with cavity-repellent toothpaste with fluoride to keep that smile healthy! To make brushing more flavorful, stock up on toothpaste flavors like lemon or bubble gum.

For more information on proper oral care, visit www.CrestHealthySmiles.com.