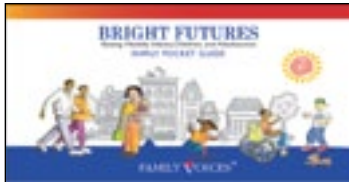


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ORAL HEALTH



The information in this issue is taken from the new Bright Futures Family Pocket Guide, developed by Family Voices IMPACT. To order a copy, go to: <http://bit.ly/BrightFuturesFamilyPocketGuideorders>

With an Improving Understanding of MCH grant, Family Voices IMPACT works to develop ways to improve health and wellness for all children and families, and to encourage partnerships between families and professionals for children's good health. www.familyvoices.org and www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org. This digest is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Health Resources and Services Administration—Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Division of Child, Adolescent, and Family Health UCMC21535.

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Healthy Smiles!

A key part of child's overall health, oral health is more than teeth. It includes gums, lips, mouth, and face. It also includes chewing and swallowing, because these motions impact a child's nutrition and well-being. Oral health may also affect children's self-confidence—how they feel about their overall appearance. A dental home is important for all children.

INFANTS: Start Oral Care Early

Your baby's teeth are growing long before you see them peek through the gums. Around the middle of the first year, you'll see that first toothy grin!

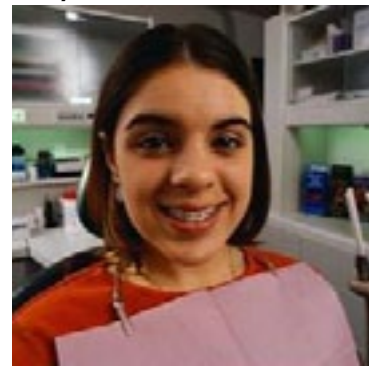


Oral health care should start even before teeth appear. Use water and a small, soft-bristled toothbrush or clean cloth to wipe baby's gums after feedings.

ADOLESCENCE (11-14 years): Taking Charge--and Responsibility

Your teen should be in charge of daily tooth care. Teens often eat more sugary snacks and drinks that

can lead to cavities. Some teens may be involved in activities that



may lead to tooth injury (like sports) and decay (like chewing tobacco).

Help create a daily routine for flossing and brushing with fluoridated toothpaste. Teach by example: Floss, brush, and go for regular dental visits.

Work with your family dentist to develop an emergency plan before it is needed. This way, you and your teen will know who to call and what to do in case of an accident.

RESOURCES:

- www.mchoralhealth.org/
- www.bcdha.bc.ca/content/dental_health_information/tips_for_parents.asp#firstteeth
- www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/Caring-for-a-Young-Childs-Teeth.aspx
- www.nidcr.nih.gov/OralHealth/OralHealthInformation/SpecialNeeds/