

# Why is oral health so important?

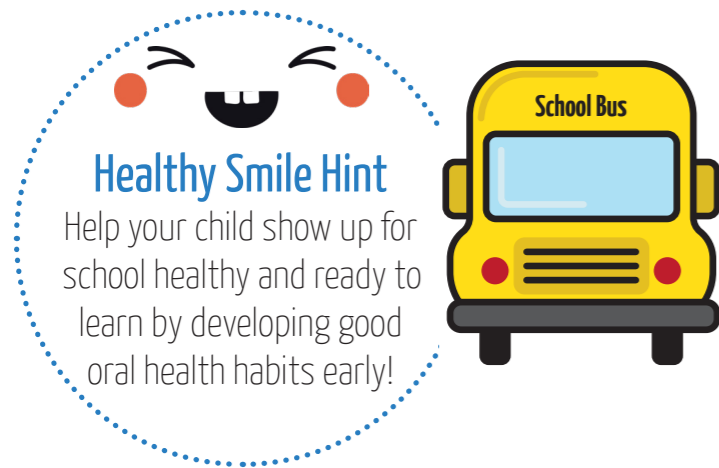
## Oral health and school success are connected!

Tooth decay is the most chronic childhood disease.

Kids miss 51 million hours of school every year due to oral health problems (most of which could have been prevented).

When kids are absent from school because of dental problems, they may have a harder time learning to read and may get lower grades than kids with healthy teeth.

Kids with dental problems may have more trouble smiling, speaking, sleeping and learning at school.



# Help Finding Dental Care

## Find a dentist:

### Michigan

<https://www.deltadentalmi.com/Find-a-Dentist>

### Indiana

<https://www.deltadentalin.com/Find-a-Dentist>

### Ohio

<https://www.deltadentaloh.com/Find-a-Dentist>

### North Carolina

<https://northcarolina.deltadental.com/en/dentist-near-me.html>

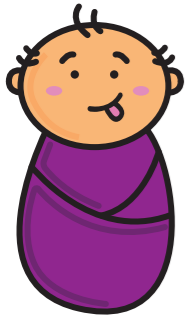
# From Drool to School

Caring for your child's oral health from the drool years to the school years.



## Drool Years

Newborns and infants



### ✓ Keep baby's gums healthy

Gently wipe gums twice a day with a damp washcloth to keep them clean.

### ✓ Visit the dentist no later than baby's first birthday

Babies should have a first dental checkup when their first tooth comes in or by their first birthday.

### ✓ Don't share cups, silverware, etc., with your child

Stop the spread of germs and cavity-causing bacteria.

### ✓ Teething can cause sore gums

Try offering your baby something cool like a cold teething ring (never frozen) or wet washcloth to ease soreness.



### Healthy Smile Hint

No bottles in bed! Milk, juice and formula contain sugars that can lead to decay.

## Preschool Years

Toddlers and preschoolers

### ✓ Visit the dentist regularly

Your child should visit the dentist at least once a year.

### ✓ Kick the habit

Wean your child off the bottle at around 12 to 18 months. Try to end thumb sucking and pacifier use before age 3.

### ✓ Sip all day, and the teeth will pay

Don't let your child carry around or nap with a sippy cup that contains juice, milk or other sweetened drinks, as it may lead to cavities.

### ✓ Drink tap water

Drinking fluoridated water is a great way to fight tooth decay and cavities. Most bottled water does not have fluoride.



Under 3 - use rice sized amount of toothpaste



Over 3 - use pea sized amount of toothpaste



### Healthy Smile Hint

Brush 2 times a day for 2 minutes each time, and floss once a day as soon as teeth start to touch.

## School Years

Elementary-aged children



### ✓ Healthy school lunch

Pack fruits, veggies and protein such as peanut butter, cheese, or turkey. Avoid juice, sports drinks or soda pop - water and milk are best.

### ✓ Protect teeth and keep the dentist's phone number handy

Kids who play sports should wear mouthguards. Dental emergencies are very common among active kids.

### ✓ Sealants help prevent cavities

Ask your dentist about them when you visit.

### ✓ Get ready for the Tooth Fairy

Kids usually lose their baby teeth between the ages of 6 - 12.



### Healthy Smile Hint

Get your child's smile school-ready by making a dental visit part of your back-to-school routine.