



Tooth Brushing at the Table



Group activity in circle

1 Sitting at a table in a circle, brush teeth as a group activity every day.

- Ensure the table is washed and sanitized before brushing.
- No need to wash and sanitize tables if tooth brushing is done directly following a meal or snack.



You will need . . .

2 Give each child a small disposable cup, a small napkin, and a soft-bristled child-sized toothbrush.

- Each toothbrush should be labeled with the child's name.



Apply . . .

3 Apply a small dab of fluoridated toothpaste on the inside rim of each cup. Have children use their toothbrushes to pick up the dabs of toothpaste.

- Use a rice-sized amount of toothpaste for children under 3 years old and a pea-sized amount for over 3 years old.



Brush together

4 Children and providers should brush together for about 2 minutes.

- Some ideas for brushing include using a timer or singing a song.



Set an example

5 Providers should brush their teeth with the children to set an example. Remind the children to brush teeth in front, back and both sides and the tongue.

- See backside of this handout for details on "How to Brush".



Spit, wipe, throw

6 After 2 minutes, instruct children to spit any extra toothpaste into their cups, wipe their mouths, and throw the cups and napkins away.

- Rinsing after spitting is not necessary.



Gather toothbrushes

7 Children Should NOT rinse or put away their toothbrushes on their own.

- Children should set down their toothbrushes for provider to pick up or directly hand to them.
- Providers should wear gloves when handling children's toothbrushes.



Sanitize the holder

8 Sanitize the toothbrush holder before replacing toothbrushes.

- Spray the holders with sanitizer, let them air dry for at least 2 minutes, replace the toothbrushes.



Rinse each toothbrush

9 Providers rinse each toothbrush at the sink, one at a time.

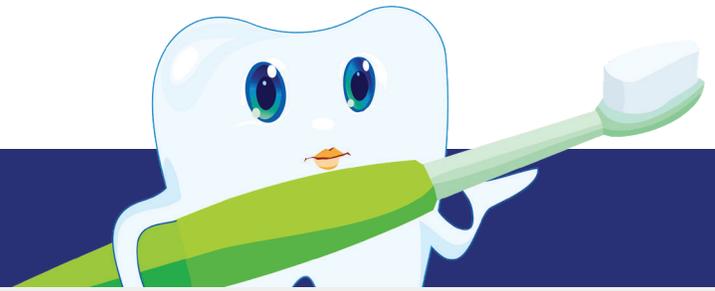
- Acquire water for rinsing brushes from a food prep sink.
- Place each toothbrush into the holder, taking care to keep bristles from touching.



Wash hands, sanitize

10 Children need to wash their hands after brushing.

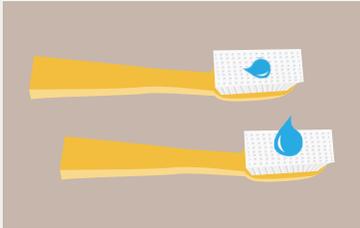
Tables should also be washed, rinsed, and sanitized.



How to Brush

To get the most from your tooth brushing routine, follow these simple modeling guidelines.

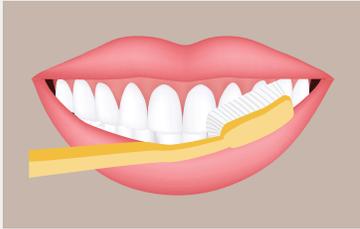
Mouth models are a useful teaching tool. These models are great for formal instruction. However, provider modeling (actually doing the activity with the children) is the most effective approach for day-to-day practice.



1 USE

Use a soft bristle toothbrush and fluoridated toothpaste. (fluoride strengthens teeth)

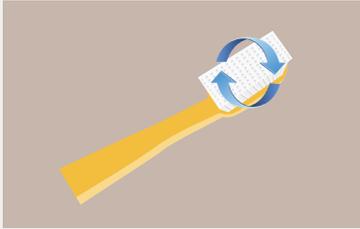
- For children under 3 years old, use a rice-sized amount of toothpaste.
- For children over 3 years old, use a pea sized amount of toothpaste.



2 PLACE

Place the toothbrush where the gum meets the tooth, holding it at an angle.

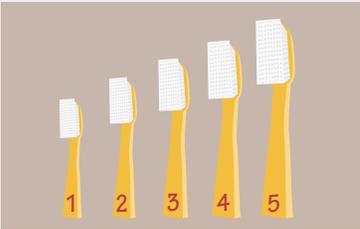
- Food and germs tend to stick here.



3 MOVE

Move the toothbrush in small circles, in a pattern inside, outside, top & bottom.

- "Make tiny, tickly, wiggly circles" that cover every surface of every tooth.



4 COUNT

Count to 5 before moving the brush to another spot. Count out loud with them.

- This ensures that each tooth gets a good cleaning. It also helps reach the 2 minute mark.



5 REMEMBER

Remember to brush the biting surfaces & backsides. Brush all sides of teeth!

- Food and germs collect behind teeth and may easily be missed when brushing. Molars have bumps and grooves where food gets stuck and germs hide.



6 FINALLY

Finally, don't forget to brush the tongue too.

- Get rid of the germs that like to hang out there.