

MID-DAY TOOTHBRUSHING

POLICY: Staff will assist children with brushing their teeth after lunch, snack, or the time that works best for staff.
Toothbrushes will be stored in a hygienic manner.
Permission will be obtained from parents/guardians for children to participate in midday toothbrushing.

PURPOSE: To protect the health of the children, including their dental health.
To prevent dental caries and disease.
To teach children the importance of dental care.

PROCEDURE:

1. Contact CCHP for training and resources on implementing midday toothbrushing at your childcare site.
2. On enrollment, parents should sign a Midday Toothbrushing Permission Form, which will be kept in the child's health file.
3. Toothbrushing for infants should begin at the eruption of the first tooth.
4. Each child will have an individual toothbrush that is never shared with others.
5. Children's toothbrushes should not touch each other while stored. Toothpaste should be stored out of children's reach to avoid accidental ingestion.
6. Toothbrushes should be replaced every 3 months, or sooner if the brush becomes contaminated (e.g. falls on the floor), or the bristles appear frayed or damaged.
7. Toothpaste should contain fluoride, per the [American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Recommendation](#) and [American Academy of Pediatrics Fluoride Recommendation](#). Abundant research has established that fluoride in toothpaste (in the amounts specified above) has been found to be very **safe** for children and highly effective at preventing dental cavities.
8. **Use a rice-grain-size smear of toothpaste for children younger than 3 years old. Use a pea-size amount of toothpaste for children ages 3 years and older.**
9. Teach children to spit when they are developmentally ready. Otherwise, swallowing a small amount of toothpaste will not be harmful. If more than the above recommended amount of toothpaste is swallowed, contact the Poison Control Center for guidance.