

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

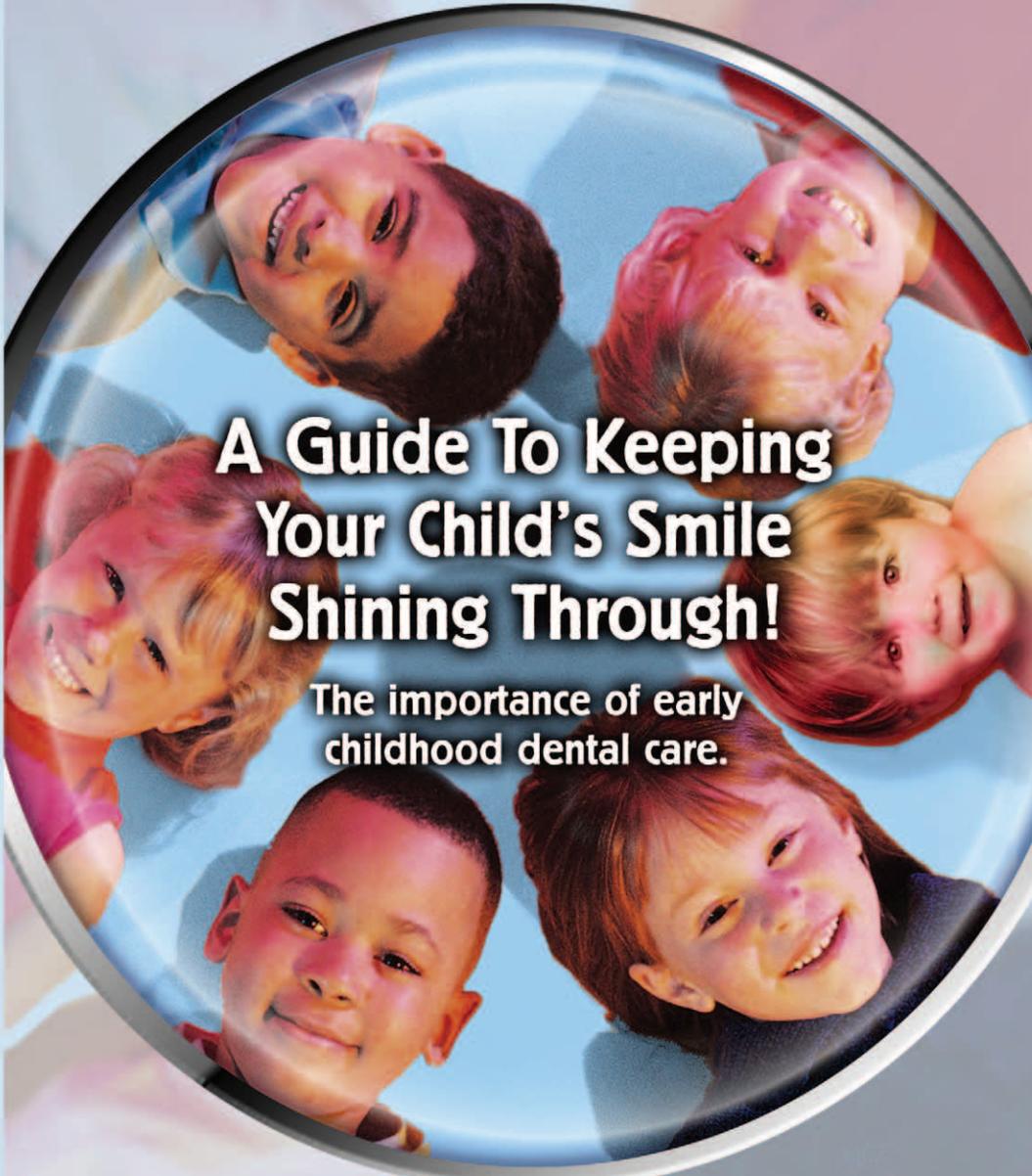
Keeping Connecticut Healthy
www.dph.state.ct.us



For more information, contact:
CT Department of Public Health
Bureau of Community Health
Family Health Division
Oral Health Unit

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In collaboration with the Connecticut
Department of Social Services



A Guide To Keeping Your Child's Smile Shining Through!

The importance of early
childhood dental care.

Produced by the Connecticut Department of Public Health

Take Good Care of Your Child's Smile to Keep it Shining Through!



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A HEALTHY MOUTH FOR HEALTHY LIVING



Help Your Child Keep That Beautiful Smile a Lifetime. Baby Teeth are SO IMPORTANT!

- They help your child eat and grow properly
- They help your child speak properly
- They help the adult (permanent) teeth grow and come into the mouth properly
- They help your child to have a beautiful smile and feel good about themselves.

Tooth decay – even in baby teeth – can be very serious

- Tooth decay is an infection that can spread to the face and rest of the body
- Tooth decay can be very painful
- Tooth decay can make serious medical problems even worse
- Tooth decay in baby teeth can damage the adult (permanent) teeth growing beneath them
- Rotten teeth can make your child feel bad about how they look, stop them from being with other kids, and make it hard for them to learn in school.



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BRUSH TEETH TWICE A DAY

How Can You Help Your Child Have a Healthy And Cute Smile?

- Tooth decay can be caused by sugary foods, such as soda, juice, and cookies—so, be sure to limit how much sugary foods your child eats as well as the number of times a day your child eats sugary foods
- Never put an infant to bed with a bottle filled with juice, milk, or other drinks that contain sugar
- Start to brush your child's teeth as soon as the first baby tooth comes into the mouth
- Help your child brush until they are 6 or 7 years old
- Brush your child's teeth at least twice a day—before bedtime is the most important time to brush
- Use a small pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste on a child-size soft nylon toothbrush
- Stand or sit behind your child, face the mirror or sink
- Lift your child's lip to brush at the gum line and behind the teeth
- Brush the teeth for 2 full minutes, then have your child spit out the toothpaste—do not rinse with water.

**The Good News is Tooth Decay
Can be Prevented!**

AVOID SWEETS AND SUGAR

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Take This Helpful Reminder Checklist With You to Your Dental Visit



BEFORE Your Dental Appointment

- ✓ Let the dental office know if you need someone to help translate
- ✓ If you need help with transportation and have HUSKY insurance call 1.877.284.8759, or Medicaid call 1.888.248.9895
- ✓ Let the dental office know if your child has any special needs
- ✓ Help your child brush their teeth

AT The Dental Office

- ✓ Talk to the dentist about any fears or questions you or your child may have
- ✓ Ask the dentist about your child's dental treatment plan
- ✓ Ask the dentist if your child needs a cleaning and fluoride
- ✓ Make an appointment for the next visit

A DENTAL VISIT CAN BE A GREAT EXPERIENCE

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How to Get The Most Out of Your Dental Visit

If you have Medicaid or HUSKY A insurance your child has the right...

- Be seen and treated by a good dentist
- Get regular follow-up dental visits for treatment, to prevent tooth and gum disease, and to help keep the mouth healthy
- Get transportation and someone to translate for you if you do not speak or understand the English language.

You and your child also have the right to...

- Be called by your proper name and treated with respect
- Know the names of the dentist and other office staff who are taking care of your child
- Know ahead of time what the dentist feels is the best treatment plan for your child
- Ask questions of the dentist and other dental staff, and get clear answers that help you understand your child's dental health and treatment, and future plans for dental care
- Ask the dentist to change the treatment plan to help with any of your concerns, such as finances or time
- Have special arrangements made to help your child with any special needs because of health and disability
- Take back your consent and stop your child's dental treatment at any time

- Get help from your dentist for any dental emergencies.



How You Can Help Your Children Feel Good About Their Smiles

Find a dentist

- You should try to bring your child to the dentist by his/her first birthday
- If your child is a HUSKY member, you can find a dentist by calling the member services number on the back of your insurance card, or call 1.800.CT HUSKY (1.877.284.8759) and ask for a list of dentists in your plan
- If you have Medicaid, but are not a HUSKY member, you can call 1.888.248.9895 and ask for a list of dentists in your plan
- If you have other dental insurance, you can call your insurance provider and ask for a list of dentists in your plan.

Make a dental appointment

- At the same time you make an appointment with the dentist for your child, let the dental staff know if you would like them to have someone to help translate during your visit
- If you have Medicaid or HUSKY insurance and need someone to help translate, call the number on the back of your insurance card at least 2 days before your dental appointment
- If you cannot keep your appointment let the dental office know as soon as you can that you need to make a new appointment for your child.



How to Make it Happen

By getting a ride

- If you have Medicaid or HUSKY insurance and need a ride to the dentist, call the number on the back of your insurance card—at least 2 days before your dental appointment
...or, for HUSKY call **1.877.CT HUSKY, or (1.877.284.8759)**
...or for Medicaid insurance call **1.888.248.9895**
- If you do not have HUSKY or Medicaid, call your local or regional Department of Social Services—you can find the number in the blue pages of your phonebook
- Have the name of your dentist and the phone number of dentist's office ready when you call for help with transportation.

By making the dental visit a great experience

- Help your child brush his/her teeth before you leave for your appointment
- Say only pleasant things about the dental visit to help your child feel good about going
- Try to get to the dental appointment 15 minutes early to fill out forms and help keep everyone on time
- Once you get to the dental office, ask the dentist if

your child needs a dental cleaning.



How to Work With Your Dentist

- ... Ask the dentist if your child needs extra fluoride
- ... Ask the dentist about scheduling cleaning appointments every 6 months
- Talk to the dentist or hygienist about any fears or questions you or your child may have
- Talk to the dentist about any medicine your child is taking, and any physical, general health, or behavior problems they may have
- Let the dentist or hygienist tell your child what to expect during the appointment
- To protect your child's health, be sure to review and follow any home-care instructions the dentist or dental hygienist may give you—such as the best way to brush your child's teeth, or how to take any medicine the dentist prescribes.

**If your child is a HUSKY member,
CALL 1-800-CT-HUSKY (1.877.284.8759):**

- ✓ **If you need help finding a dentist.**
- ✓ **If you need someone to help you translate.**
- ✓ **If you need transportation to the dentist's office.**

