



September 2022 | Issue No.19

Reducing Fear of Dental Visits

Welcome to Resources to Make You Smile! This monthly newsletter features information and tools Head Start staff can use to help families promote good oral health. These tips help Head Start staff support families, pregnant people, and children. The newsletter also includes a recipe for a healthy snack that children can make in a Head Start classroom or at home with their families.

Fear of Dental Visits



Parents' involvement in their child's oral health is key to the child's overall health and well-being. Parents who introduce, reinforce, and model good oral health behaviors and attitudes pass them on to their children. They can also help their children by promoting the importance of dental visits.

The first dental visit is a new and unfamiliar experience for young children, which means having their teeth and mouths examined can feel scary. What they hear from their families about dental visits can affect what they think a visit will be

like. If they're told bad things may happen during a dental visit, they may feel more afraid. Teaching young children what to expect during their dental visit helps set up a positive experience.

Resources for Head Start Staff

Read these [Brush Up on Oral Health](#) tip sheets to learn more about reasons families may fear dental visits and gather tips for teaching them how to overcome their fear. The tip sheets also explain why it's important for families to prepare children for dental visits and what their children can expect during dental visits.

- [Reducing Fear of Dental Visits](#)
- [Talking with Children About Dental Visits](#)

Resources for Parents

Share the following handouts from the [Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles](#) series with parents to learn about the importance of dental visits, follow-up oral health care, and how to make dental visits fun for children.

- [Getting Oral Health Treatment Is Important!](#)
- [Visiting the Dental Clinic with Your Child](#)

Cook's Corner Recipe: Pumpkin Hummus

Ingredients

1 cucumber, cut in half, sliced lengthwise, and peeled to make stripes
2 15-ounce cans of drained chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
1 15-ounce can pumpkin
2 tablespoons tahini
2 cloves garlic, peeled
1½ tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon ground cumin
¼ cup olive oil
¼ teaspoon paprika
Vegetable sticks or whole wheat crackers

Directions

1. Combine all the ingredients, except the cucumber, in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.
2. Add more olive oil if the mixture is thick.
3. Put the hummus on a plate or in a shallow bowl and use the back of a spoon to form a pumpkin shape.

4. Add the cucumber to make the pumpkin stem.
5. Serve with vegetable sticks or whole wheat crackers



Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Stay Connected!

Join [MyPeers](#) to connect with Head Start and early childhood colleagues around the country on this and other topics. Members of the **Health, Safety, and Wellness** community are currently networking, sharing, and learning from each other. Find it under "All Communities" and select the blue "Join" button.

Please share this issue with others who may be interested. Find past issues of [Resources to Make You Smile!](#) on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC).

Did someone forward you this newsletter? [Subscribe](#) to stay up to date!

We Want to Hear from You!

Send your questions or comments to the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety at health@ecetta.info or (toll-free) 888-227-5125.

Office of Head Start (OHS) | 330 C Street, SW | 4th Floor
Mary E. Switzer Building | Washington, DC 20201
| <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov> | 1-866-763-6481 | [Contact Us](#)

You are receiving this email because you are signed up for Office of Head Start communications. You may [modify your ECLKC email subscriptions](#). Recipients subscribed through the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) must be removed from HSES by their program or office. Please do not reply to this email. [Contact](#) customer service for additional support.

Head Start[®] and Early Head Start[®] word marks and logos are registered trademarks owned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).



[Unsubscribe](#)