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How Smoking Affects Oral Health

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.

Smoking and Oral Health



Smoking can lead to disease and disability, harming nearly every bodily organ. More than 16 million Americans are living with a disease caused by smoking. Secondhand smoke is also dangerous to both adults and children.

Smoking traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes

have tooth decay, gum disease, oral cancer, and poor birth outcomes. It can also cause stained teeth, bad breath, and reduced ability to taste and smell.

Not smoking or quitting smoking is important for overall health, including oral health. When a smoker quits, it improves their health and quality of life. It also improves the health and quality of life of those around them, especially young children.

Resources for Staff

[Understanding How Smoking Impacts Oral Health](#)

Learn how to help parents and pregnant people stop smoking and other ways to help them improve their oral health. This tip sheet is part of the [Brush Up on Oral Health](#) series that offers up-to-date practices and practical tips to promote good oral health among children and pregnant people enrolled in Head Start programs and their families

[Smokefree.gov](#)

Explore this website to find out about different [ways to quit smoking](#). It also offers tools and tips specific to [veterans](#), [women](#), [teens](#), and [adults ages 60 and over](#).

Resources for Parents

Share these resources with parents to reinforce positive oral health messages.

[Untreated Cavities in Adults Who Smoke](#)

This infographic shows that people who smoke cigarettes are more likely to have tooth decay than former smokers or people who have never smoked.

[Smoking, Gum Disease, and Tooth Loss](#)

This website explains gum disease and ways to prevent it, including by not smoking. It's also available in [Spanish](#).

Cook's Corner Recipe: Hummus Gobbler

1 black bean, cut in half (black olive pieces can be used as a substitute)

1 teaspoon hummus

Directions

1. Use a round cookie cutter to cut the bread into two 1-inch circles.
2. Cut the pepper into strips.
3. Cut the carrot into long and short sticks.
4. Cut the bean in half.
5. Spread the hummus onto one bread circle, and cover with the other circle.
6. Put the bell pepper strips around the top of the sandwich for feathers.
7. Put two long carrot sticks on the bottom of the sandwich for legs.
8. Put one short carrot stick on either side of each long carrot stick for feet.
9. Put a small piece of bread crust and a strip of bell pepper on the sandwich for the wattle.
10. Put the black bean halves on the sandwich for eyes.



Makes 1 serving

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients. To prevent choking, do not give children under age 3 foods that may cause choking (e.g., whole grapes, raw carrots, raisins). For children ages 3 to 5, modify these foods (e.g., chopping raw carrots finely or into thin strips).

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).

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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](#)

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