



National Center on  
Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety



February 2023 | Issue No. 24

## National Children's Dental Health Month

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, expectant parents, 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.

### February Is National Children's Dental Health Month



Developing good oral health habits at an early age and visiting the dentist regularly give children a great start for a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums. It's always important for parents to take care of their child's and their own oral health to prevent disease.

February is National Children's Dental Health Month and a great time to promote good oral health practices in Head Start programs. Head Start staff can share the following messages during February and throughout the year to raise children's and parents' awareness about what they can do to keep their mouths healthy:

- Brush with fluoride toothpaste twice a day.
- Drink water throughout the day.
- Limit foods and drinks with added sugar.
- Visit a dentist by age 1.

## Resources for Staff

### [Fluoride](#)

Learn why using fluoride is one of the safest and best ways to prevent tooth decay. Discover how people can receive fluoride and learn tips to help families better understand the benefits of fluoride. Use this information when discussing with parents the benefits of brushing with fluoride toothpaste twice a day.

### [Brush Up on Oral Health](#)

Explore these tip sheets to learn more about the importance of brushing with fluoride toothpaste, drinking water throughout the day, limiting foods and drinks with added sugars, and visiting the dentist by age 1:

- [Encouraging Children to Drink Water](#)
- [Promoting the Age 1 Dental Visit](#)
- [Understanding How Sugar Contributes to Tooth Decay](#)

### [Happiness Begins with a Healthy Smile](#)

Feb. 22, 2023, from 1–2 p.m. ET

Join this webinar to hear from Sesame Street in Communities and an oral health expert about four key messages to share with families to keep children healthy and ready to learn. This webinar will be presented in [Spanish](#) on Feb. 23, 2023, 1–2 p.m. ET.

## Resources for Parents

### [Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles](#)

Share these handouts with parents to reinforce key strategies they can use to keep their child's mouth healthy:

- [Brushing Your Child's Teeth](#)
- [Encouraging Your Child to Drink Water](#)
- [Giving Your Child Healthy Snacks](#)
- [Visiting the Dentist by Age 1](#)

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## Cook's Corner Recipe: Strawberry Hearts with Yogurt Dip

### Ingredients

1 pint fresh strawberries  
½ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt

## Directions

1. Wash and dry the strawberries.
2. Cut each strawberry in half.
3. Use the tip of the knife to cut the top of the strawberry in half in a V-shape, and remove the stem and leaves.
4. Put the yogurt in a bowl for dipping.



**Makes 6 to 8 servings**

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

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## 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](mailto:health@ecetta.info) or (toll-free) 888-227-5125.

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