



National Center on
Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety



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Healthy Bedtime Routines

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 families, 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.

Oral Health and Bedtime Routines



Having a regular bedtime routine helps children know what to expect at the end of the day. In addition to establishing a calm approach for putting a child to bed, Head Start staff can help parents understand the benefits of a structured nighttime routine that includes:

- Preventing tooth decay by brushing their child's teeth with fluoride toothpaste.
- Improving language development by reading aloud to their child.
- Promoting positive social and emotional development by spending time with their child while reading.

Resources for Staff

Read [Incorporating Toothbrushing into Bedtime Routines](#) for ideas on how to encourage parents and children to form good oral health habits at bedtime. The tip sheet is part of the Brush Up on Oral Health series that includes practical tips to promote good oral health.

Use the American Academy of Pediatrics' [Brush, Book, Bed: How to Structure Your Child's Nighttime Routine](#) for instructions on how to implement the Brush, Book, Bed

program. The webpage also has information and resources in Arabic, Cambodian, English, French, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Taiwanese to share with families.

Resources for Parents

Share these [Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles](#) handouts with parents to suggest ideas for how they can promote good oral health at home.

- [Brushing Your Child's Teeth](#)
- [Establishing a Bedtime Routine for Your Child](#)

Give the [Sleep and Your Child: How You Can Build Healthy Sleep Routines](#) handout to parents for ideas on establishing good bedtime routines.

Encourage parents to watch these [Sesame Street](#) videos with their child to help them better understand how to take care of their teeth and why it is important to brush with fluoride toothpaste.

- [Brushy Book Nighty Night](#)
- [How Much Toothpaste?](#)

Cook's Corner Recipe: Sweet Potato Fries

Ingredients

2 large sweet potatoes
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
¼ teaspoon paprika



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425° F.
2. Peel sweet potatoes and cut into sticks that are 1 inch wide.
3. Put sweet potato sticks and vegetable oil in a large bowl and toss.
4. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, garlic powder, and paprika.
5. Place the potato sticks in a single layer on a baking sheet.
6. Bake 18–20 minutes, turning occasionally, until tender and golden brown.
7. Cool 5 minutes before serving.

Makes 4-6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice the ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

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.

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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.

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