



National Center on
Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety



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Ensuring Children Are Up to Date on Oral Health Care

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.

Oral Exams



The Head Start Program Performance Standards (the Performance Standards) require programs to obtain a determination from an oral health professional about whether a child is up to date on their oral health care (45 CFR §1302.42(b)(1)(i)). This determination is based on the dental periodicity schedule prescribed by the [Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment \(EPSDT\)](#) benefit of each state's Medicaid agency.

Oral exams conducted during the program year can identify problems that require timely and appropriate care. Head Start staff, as well as oral health professionals providing care, can also encourage parents to establish an accessible and ongoing source of oral health care for their child to help keep them [healthy and ready to learn](#).

Resources for Head Start Staff

[Ensuring Children Are Up to Date on Oral Health Services](#)

Learn more about the Performance Standard that addresses EPSDT and the dental periodicity schedule, [Child health status and care, 45 CFR §1302.42\(b\)\(1\)\(i\)](#). This [Brush Up on Oral Health](#) tip sheet also discusses how Head Start programs can find and use the dental periodicity schedule for their state.

[A Guide to the Dental Periodicity Schedule and Oral Exam](#)

Read this guide to learn the difference between a dental periodicity schedule and a well-child periodicity schedule. Discover when a child's first oral exam should occur, who can perform one, and what is included in an oral exam.

Resources for Parents

Share these [Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles](#) handouts after individual meetings or group trainings with parents to provide information about the importance of preventing and treating tooth decay, the timing of a child's first dental visit, and what to expect during the visit:

- [Getting Oral Health Treatment Is Important](#)
 - [Visiting the Dental Clinic with Your Child](#)
 - [Visiting the Dentist by Age 1](#)
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Cook's Corner Recipe: Monster Open-face Cheese Sandwich

Ingredients

4 slices whole wheat bread
4 slices hard yellow cheese (e.g., cheddar, Colby)
2-3 slices hard white cheese (e.g., Monterey Jack, provolone)
4 black olives, cut width-wise into thirds

Directions

1. Place each bread slice on a plate.
2. Cover bread with a slice of hard yellow cheese.
3. Use a round cookie cutter or jar to cut the hard white cheese into small circles.
4. Place 3 circles of hard white cheese over each slice of hard yellow cheese to form eyes.
5. Place 1 black olive slice on each cheese circle to form eyeballs.
6. Cut the remaining hard white cheese into teeth or other shapes and place below the eyes to form a mouth.



Makes 1 serving

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.

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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.

