



Lesson 6

Many People Can Help Me Take Good Care of My Teeth

Main Lesson Plan

Learning Objectives

After this lesson children will be able to

- Identify the most important person (“tooth helper”) who can help them keep their teeth healthy.
- Identify other important tooth helpers who can help them keep their teeth healthy.
- Describe what job each tooth helper does.

Background Information for Teachers

There are many people who can help children keep their teeth healthy. These “tooth helpers” include parents, grandparents, baby-sitters, teachers, dentists, dental hygienists, and other dental office staff. Each tooth helper has an important job.

Three- and four-year-olds do not have the fine motor skills they need to clean every part of every tooth in their mouth. They also often forget to brush their teeth. Parents, grandparents, baby-sitters, and teachers can remind children when it’s time to brush. They should also check children’s teeth and brush the teeth children may have missed, such as the inside of the back teeth. Parents, grandparents, baby-sitters, and teachers should decide what and when young children eat and drink.

Dentists, dental hygienists, and other dental office staff are important tooth helpers, too. They check for cavities and provide care to prevent tooth decay.

Source: Casamassimo P, Holt K, eds. 2004. *Bright Futures in Practice: Oral Health—Pocket Guide*. Washington, DC: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center. <http://www.mchoralhealth.org/pocket.html>.

Head Start Domains and Elements

Head Start Domains	Head Start Domain Elements
Language Development	Expressive Language Receptive Language
Literacy Knowledge and Skills	Book Appreciation Print Concepts and Conventions
Social Studies Knowledge and Skills	Family and Community

Special instructions: The main lesson plan is to be held during circle time.

Description: Through discussion and reading, children will learn that there are many people who can help them keep their teeth clean and healthy. These people include parents, grandparents, baby-sitters, teachers, dentists, dental hygienists, and dental office staff.

Materials (included in curriculum): *My Dental Pals* (book); *Teeth Talk: A Newsletter for Parents of Children Enrolled in Maryland's Head Start Programs* (Lesson 6: Many People Help Me Take Care of My Teeth)

Instructions

TELL the children: Today we're going to talk about people who are tooth helpers. Tooth helpers are people who help you keep your teeth clean and healthy.

ASK the children: Who do you think is your most important tooth helper? **LISTEN** to their answers.

ASK the children: What things can you do to keep your teeth clean and healthy? **LISTEN** to their answers.

TELL the children: There are many things that you can do to keep your teeth from getting cavities in them.

- You can eat healthy foods and drinks that don't have a lot of sugar.
- You can eat smart by saving foods and drinks high in sugar for a mealtime.
- You can use toothpaste with fluoride when you brush your teeth to turn your teeth into super teeth!

That means that you're a tooth helper. In fact, you're the most important tooth helper of all. You're the most important tooth helper because you can do these things every single day.

There are many other important tooth helpers. Some you see every day and some you don't see every day. All of these tooth helpers have very important jobs that help you keep your teeth clean and healthy. Let's meet them.

READ *My Dental Pals* to the children.

ASK the children: Can you think of some other things that the book talked about that these tooth helpers can do to help you keep your teeth healthy? **LISTEN** to their answers.



TELL the children:

- They can give you foods and drinks that don't have a lot of sugar.
- They can remind you when it's time to brush your teeth so you don't forget.
- They can check after you brush your teeth to see if you brushed every single tooth. They can also help you by brushing the hard spots that you missed with your toothbrush.

Source: Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Oral Health; Head Start Oral Health Workgroup. 2002. *Head Start Oral Health Awareness Lesson Plans: A Teacher's Guide for Creating Healthy Smiles*. Baltimore, MD: Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Oral Health. <http://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/HSLessonPlans.pdf>.

GIVE *Teeth Talk: A Newsletter for Parents of Children Enrolled in Maryland's Head Start Programs* (Lesson 6: Many People Help Me Take Care of My Teeth) to each child's parent and encourage the parent to reinforce the lesson plan concepts with suggested activities the family can do at home.

Check for Knowledge and Understanding

- Ask the children to name their most important tooth helper who can help them keep their teeth clean and healthy.
- Ask the children to name other important tooth helpers that they see every day, almost every day, or once in awhile, who can help them keep their teeth clean and healthy.
- Ask the children to describe what each tooth helper does.



Small Group Supplemental/ Enrichment Activities

Head Start Domains	Head Start Domain Elements
Creative Arts Expression	Dramatic Play Music
Physical Development and Health	Fine Motor Skills Health Knowledge and Practice Physical Health Status
Social and Emotional Development	Social Relationships Self-concept and Self-efficacy
Social Studies Knowledge and Skills	Family and Community

Visit the Dentist Role Play

Domains: Creative Arts Expression, Physical Development and Health, Social and Emotional Development, Social Studies Knowledge and Skills

Materials (included in curriculum): Picture cards of a mouth mirror, dental explorer, X-rays, dental appointment book, dental appointment clocks, dentist chart

Materials (not included in curriculum): Two white shirts (to serve as lab coats for the dentist and dental hygienist), paper napkins (to serve as patient bibs for the patients), magazines, storybooks, games

Instructions:

1. Tell the **children** to set up a dental office.
2. Select a child to play the patient, a receptionist, a dental hygienist, and a dentist.
3. Make sure the children do not put anything into their own or each other's mouths.

Source: Adapted with permission from Alabama Medicaid Agency. 2004. *Smile Alabama! Celebrate Healthy Teeth, Healthy Mouth, Healthy You!* Montgomery, AL: Alabama Medicaid Agency.





The Dentist Is My Pal

Domain: Creative Arts Expression

Instructions: Sign to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell.”

The Dentist Is My Pal

The dentist is my pal
The dentist is my pal
His chair goes up (arms in the air)
His chair goes down (touch the ground)
The dentist is my pal.

He has a waiting room
With lots of things to do
Books and toys for boys and girls
Are waiting there for you.

Chorus (repeat)

He has me open wide
And then he looks inside
Carefully he checks my teeth
And keeps them shining bright.

Chorus (repeat)

Source: Adapted from “The Farmer in the Dell.”

Lesson Plan Sources

Alabama Medicaid Agency. 2004. *Smile Alabama!: Celebrate Healthy Teeth, Healthy Mouth, Healthy You!* Montgomery, AL: Alabama Medicaid Agency.

Casamassimo P, Holt K, eds. 2004. *Bright Futures in Practice: Oral Health—Pocket Guide*. Washington, DC: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center. <http://www.mchoralhealth.org/pocket.html>.

“The Farmer in the Dell.”

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Oral Health; Head Start Oral Health Workgroup. 2002. *Head Start Oral Health Awareness Lesson Plans: A Teacher’s Guide for Creating Healthy Smiles*. Baltimore, MD: Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Oral Health. <http://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/HSLessonPlans.pdf>.

