

# Teeth Talk

A Newsletter for Parents of Children Enrolled in Maryland's Head Start Programs

## Things You Can Do at Home to Support Today's Lesson

- Ask your child to tell you what they learned about teeth today.
- After your child brushes their teeth, you should brush them again to clean the places they may have missed.
- Make sure your child uses a pea-size amount of toothpaste with fluoride when they brush.
- Have a dentist check your child's teeth for cavities at least once a year.



## Today We Learned That Many People Can Help Us Keep Our Teeth Healthy

Today your child learned that many people can help them keep their teeth clean and healthy. These "tooth helpers" include:

- Parents and grandparents
- Baby-sitters
- Teachers
- Dentists, dental hygienists, and other dental office staff

Your child, like other 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 often forget to brush, too.

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.

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



## A Song to Sing at Home

### The Dentist Is My Pal

(Sing to the tune of "Farmer in the Dell")

Chorus

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)

## Did You Know?

Children become afraid of going to the dentist when they hear stories about bad experiences from parents, other adults, and older brothers and sisters.

Help prepare your child for their first dental visit by not making a big deal out of it. Dentists and dental hygienists want a first visit to be easy and fun for the child.

During a child's first dental visit, they usually have their teeth checked by counting the number of teeth. Sometimes pictures (X-rays) are taken. A dental hygienist may clean the child's teeth. In many offices, the child can touch everything before it goes into their mouth.

