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1963

## Healthy teeth... a happier school child (1963)

American Dental Association

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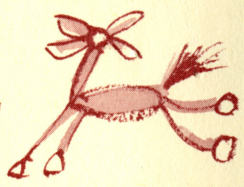
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1963

Healthy  
teeth ...  
a happier  
school  
child



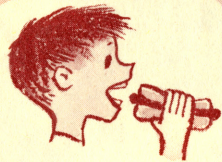




**W**HEN YOUR CHILD

is getting ready to start school, it is important that he have a dental, as well as a medical, checkup. In fact, dental care should be started before the child reaches school age. Good health habits established early are likely to be continued throughout life.

The primary teeth should have the same care as permanent teeth. Your child needs his first teeth



1. for chewing

2. to preserve space for the permanent teeth



3. for good speech habits



4. for appearance

and for better health.

*Here are the "ABC's" of good dental health:*

- A** Avoid too many sweets.
- B** Brush your teeth correctly.
- C** See your dentist regularly.

## **A** Food

Foods that supply the essentials for general health are adequate for dental health. It might almost be said that what your child doesn't eat is more important for his dental health than what he does eat. Eating many sweets, especially between meals, encourages decay. Bacteria always present in the mouth act quickly on fermentable carbohydrates, especially sugar, to form acids. These acids begin to dissolve some of the enamel of the teeth in a few minutes. This is the beginning of tooth decay. Just as a child learns to eat sweet desserts and snacks, he can learn instead to eat such foods as fresh fruit, nuts or carrot and celery sticks which are healthful and will not lead to tooth decay.

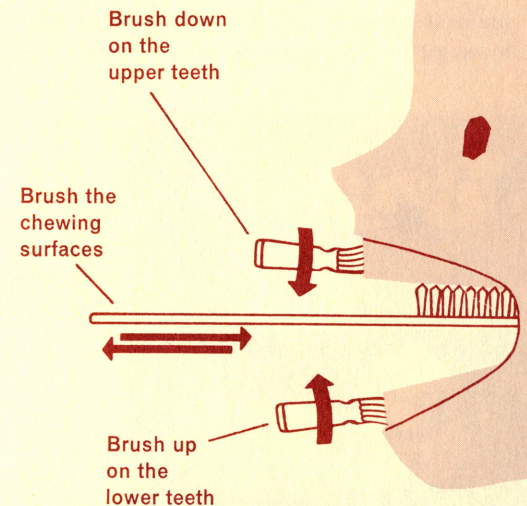
## **B** Toothbrushing

Proper and regular toothbrushing immediately after eating helps prevent tooth decay and gum diseases. The brush should have a flat brushing surface with

firm bristles and should be the right size for the child. A dentifrice aids the brush in cleaning the teeth and makes the mouth feel fresh. Your dentist can advise you about the value of any particular dentifrice for preventing decay.

A mother should start brushing her child's teeth as soon as the child will accept it. At first the parent will have to do most of the brushing. By the time the child has all of his first teeth he will be used to the idea and can do much of the brushing himself under your supervision.

The dentist will suggest the best toothbrushing method for your child. One frequently recommended method is this: Brush down on the upper teeth. Brush up on the lower teeth. Brush the chewing surfaces with a scrubbing motion.





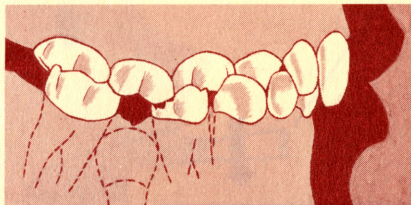
## **G** *The Dentist*

A child should go to the dentist when all of his primary (or first) teeth have erupted. Usually this is when the child is between 2 and 3 years of age. He may need only to have his teeth examined, x-rayed and cleaned. However, an alarming number of pre-school children have decayed teeth that need attention.

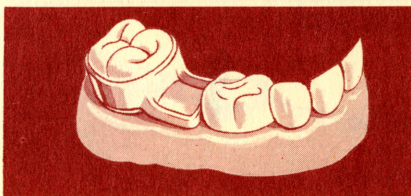
This is the time to start the habit of seeing the dentist regularly.

If a child has regular dental check-ups, the dentist can help him keep his primary teeth as long as they are needed. If a primary tooth is lost prematurely, the dentist may suggest that a space maintainer be inserted so that space will be preserved for the permanent tooth. Occasionally a primary tooth is retained too long. Then the dentist may have to remove it.

Regular care by a dentist helps to make it possible for the permanent teeth to erupt in the proper position. Often the



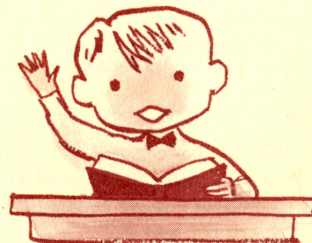
Result of loss of primary molar



The space maintainer

dentist can take measures to prevent the development of problems that would, a few years later, require extensive orthodontic treatment.

Your dentist may advise fluoride treatments, especially if your child has not had the benefit of drinking fluoridated water since birth.



*To assure the best possible dental health for your child:*

**Teach** him to eat healthful, protective foods.

**Help** him to start the brushing habit early.

**Provide** his teeth with the benefits of fluorides.

**Remember** that early and regular dental care saves teeth and money.

*Produced with the cooperation of  
the American Society of Dentistry for Children*

**AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION**

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