

American Dental Association

**ADACommons**

---

Patient Dental Health Education Brochures

Special Collections

---

1965

## Space (1965)

American Dental Association

American Society of Dentistry for Children

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.ada.org/patientbrochures>



Part of the [History of Science, Technology, and Medicine Commons](#), [Orthodontics and Orthodontology Commons](#), and the [Pediatric Dentistry and Pedodontics Commons](#)

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

---

### Recommended Citation

American Dental Association and American Society of Dentistry for Children, "Space (1965)" (1965). *Patient Dental Health Education Brochures*. 256.  
<https://commons.ada.org/patientbrochures/256>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections at ADACommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Patient Dental Health Education Brochures by an authorized administrator of ADACommons. For more information, please contact [commons@ada.org](mailto:commons@ada.org).



51B:2  
1965  
3

## CHILDREN NEED THEIR TEETH

They need them, just as adults do, for chewing, for speaking and for appearance. Also, a full set of healthy deciduous, or primary, teeth is necessary for the proper development of the child's jaws, and these first teeth hold the space for the permanent teeth.

It is unfortunate that the term "baby teeth" is so commonly used. All too often problems with first teeth are blithely dismissed with the remark, "After all, they are only baby teeth."

True, a child is a baby when the first of his primary teeth erupts—usually around the age of six months. But he should not, in most cases, lose the last of his primary teeth until he is 11 or 12 years old.

At the age of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  or 3, a child should be taken to the dentist. Then he should return for checkups as often as the dentist suggests.

If a child does lose a primary tooth too soon, because of decay or because of an accident, the dentist may recommend replacing it with a space maintainer. This appliance will hold the space so that the permanent tooth can erupt in the proper position.

What happens if the space maintainer is not inserted? Over a period of time, the teeth on either side tend to drift into the empty space. Then, when it is time for the permanent tooth to erupt, there is not sufficient

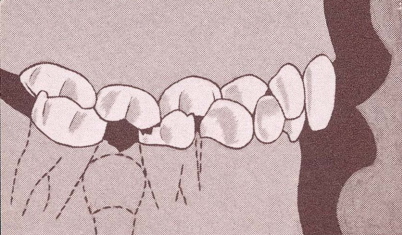
space for it. Therefore, it comes in out of its proper position. This is one cause of malocclusion, or "crooked teeth."

Prevention of malocclusion caused by the too early loss of a primary tooth is simple. Cure, once the malocclusion has developed, may require long and complicated orthodontic treatment.

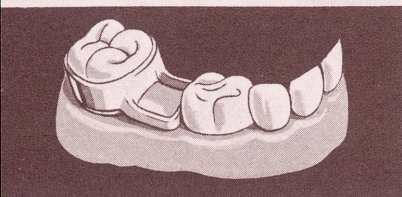
The drifting of the teeth may also have other ill effects. Food is more likely to impact in the spaces between the teeth. This may result in more tooth decay and also may be a cause of periodontal, or gum, disease.

Another reason for the insertion of a space maintainer, particularly if more than one tooth has been lost, is to keep the other teeth





*Result  
of loss  
of primary  
molar.*



*The space  
maintainer*

in their proper positions so that the child can chew his food properly. Otherwise he may not chew food sufficiently and may tend to choose only foods that require little chewing.

Remember, if a primary tooth is lost before nature intended it to be shed, consult your dentist for his advice.



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

**AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION**  
211 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago 60611