

LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE HEAD START/EHS/ECEAP

Toothbrushing Procedure

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends that children begin using a fluoride toothpaste as soon as the first tooth is in their mouth.

Toothbrushes, that touch each other or are washed in the same solution, can become cross contaminated. Cross-contamination is the transferring of germs from one object to another through direct contact. This procedure has been created to minimize the risk of cross- contamination and to ensure that each child uses his/her own toothbrush.

1. Each toothbrush and toothbrush rack must be labeled with a child's name.
2. Toddlers and Preschoolers: Small group toothbrushing sessions will be held each day in conjunction with a meal. If standing, each group will be comprised of 3 to 6 children. If toothbrushing is done at tables, all students can brush at once when 2 or 3 adults are supervising the toothbrushing.
3. For children under 3, provide a grain of rice size amount of fluoride toothpaste, and for children 2 and older place a small pea size amount of fluoride toothpaste on a small disposable cup.
4. Remove toothbrushes from the toothbrush rack one at a time. Hand toothbrushes directly to each child or dispense inside the cup. **MONITORING IMPORTANT**
5. Watch, assist and teach children to ensure proper toothbrushing techniques. *Teach the children to brush in a pattern (inside and outside, top and bottom) around the mouth. Finish with the top of the teeth. Brush for a total of 2 minutes.* **MONITORING IMPORTANT**
6. It is beneficial for the toothpaste to remain on the children's teeth. Therefore, rinsing is not necessary. The small cups are to be used for spitting.
7. For modeling purposes, adults are to brush their teeth with the children. *(Staff can choose to use tooth models and a separate toothbrush for this purpose.)*
8. Each preschool age child rinses their toothbrush at the classroom sink and then hands it directly to the adult assisting. Toddlers will rinse their own toothbrush when developmentally appropriate. The adult then places each toothbrush, individually, back on the toothbrush rack.
9. Air dry toothbrushes. *(Toothbrushes will be replaced at least every 3-4 months, or sooner if the Toothbrush becomes damaged or soiled.)*
10. Each week and more frequently as needed, the Direct Service Team cleans and disinfects the toothbrush rack with a bleach/water solution *(not the toothbrushes)*.
11. Infants with no teeth: Gums will be cleaned with gauze or a finger brush at least once each day following a meal.

Toddler/Preschool Classroom Toothbrushing Lesson Plan: *Turn in completed copy to Supervisor*

1. Adults who will assist with toothbrushing: _____
(Staff Titles and/or Volunteers)
2. Volunteers will be trained by: _____.
3. Toothbrushing groups will consist of: _____ children.
4. Toddler/Preschool: Use Cavity Free Kids Curriculum to support toothbrushing and dental care.

This procedure complies with Head Start Performance Standard: 1303.23(b)(3)

Distribution: Original – Area Manager & Post in Classroom

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