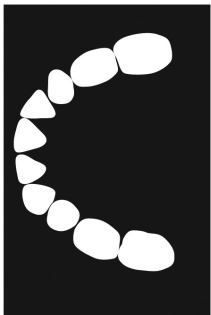




For more information, contact
Cook Children's Community
Health Outreach at 682-885-4162.



**Children's
Oral Health
Coalition**

led by
Cook Children's

prevent tooth decay in young children

Tooth decay is one of the most common chronic childhood diseases and one of the top reasons children visit their school nurses. More than 51 million school hours are lost each year due to dental-related illness. Many children with cavities and pain in their mouth can not concentrate in school and are frequently absent due to dental pain.

Children with cavities have difficulty chewing, which affects the child's nutrition and overall health. Children with severe oral health disease also can suffer the social and psychological problems related to the appearance of their mouth. Young children can be hospitalized to undergo complex and expensive procedures to treat their dental problems.

Cook Children's is the lead organization for The Children's Oral Health Coalition (COHC), a collaboration of more than 35 local organizations with a common goal to improve the oral health of children in our county and to prevent oral health disease. Since it was organized in 1999, the coalition has distributed 27,000 toothbrushes, 18,000 tubes of toothpaste and 20,000 oral health resource brochures. These brochures help guide underserved families to local dental clinics in Tarrant County.

how to care for children's teeth (ages 0-4):*

1. Wipe baby's mouth twice a day with a clean, wet cloth.
2. Do not put babies to bed with bottles filled with anything other than water. Stop using bottles after age 1.
3. Visit the dentist and establish a dental home for children by age 1.
4. To avoid passing a bacteria that causes cavities, don't share cups, straws or spoons with small children or lick pacifiers to clean them.
5. Brush teeth twice a day with a small, soft brush once teeth erupt. Use fluoride toothpaste after age 2 and supervise brushing until the child is 8 or 9 years old.
6. Floss between teeth twice a day. Children can't floss alone until they are 10 years old.
7. Feed children a balanced diet; limit snacks between meals and juice consumption.

* Taken from the Train the Trainer curriculum module developed by the COHC Community Awareness Subcommittee.