



**COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO**  
**PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**POLICY**

**NO. 01 HS ISSUE 2**

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**EFFECTIVE: 11-15-13**  
Updated

**SUBJECT:**

**TOOTH BRUSHING AND ORAL HYGIENE**

**APPROVED: 11-15-13**

**BY: Diana Alexander, Director**

**PURPOSE**

To reinforce oral health, prevent gingivitis and tooth decay.

**POLICY**

Teachers/ Home visitors should promote tooth brushing. All children should brush their teeth after the first meal at the center. Staff serves as role models by brushing their own teeth after meals.

**REFERENCE**

Head Start Performance Standards 1304.23(b) (3) Staff must promote effective dental hygiene among children in conjunction with meals.

**PROCEDURE**

**Gum Cleaning for Infants to 12 Months**

- Teachers wash their hands, and wear disposable gloves before and after gum cleaning.
- Before the baby has teeth, wipe the infant gums after each feeding using a wet gauze pad.
- Beginning with the eruption of the first tooth (5-6 months of age), brush the baby's teeth with a moist soft brush **without toothpaste**.

**Tooth Brushing One to Five Year Old**

1. Each child should have his/her own toothbrush, labeled by name, so that toothbrushes are never shared.
2. Dispense fluoride toothpaste onto a paper cup for each child. Do not dispense directly on the tooth brush.
  - **For one to two year olds** use a rice grain smear of fluoride toothpaste and a soft toothbrush
  - **For three to five year olds** use a pea size smear of fluoride toothpaste and a soft brush
  - Children with disabilities should be supported with any needed adaptation.
3. Teachers wash hands and wear disposable gloves to assist children with brushing.  
**Wash hands before and after assisting each child.**

4. The tooth brushing technique: (Take 1-2 minutes to brush well)
  - Place the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the gums.
  - Move the brush back and forth gently in short strokes
  
  - Brush the outer surfaces, the inside surfaces and the chewing surfaces of all teeth.
  - Clean the inside surface of the front teeth by tilting the brush vertically and make several up-and down strokes.
  - Brush tongue to remove bacteria and keep fresh breath
5. Have the children spit toothpaste all out in the sink after brushing.
6. Have each child thoroughly rinse his/her own toothbrush and mouth with water after brushing. Each child should use his/her own paper cups.
7. Sanitize the sink between uses to reduce the risk of infection.
8. Offer children drinking water when brushing teeth after meals is not possible (field trip). Rinsing with water helps to remove particles from teeth, and prevent cavities.

**Storage of toothbrushes:**

- Toothbrushes should be stored upright with bristle end of toothbrush up in a toothbrush holder to air dry. Each toothbrush should be labeled with the child name.
- The bristles of one toothbrush should not touch or drip on any surface, including another toothbrush.
- Store away from bathrooms/ diaper changing area.

**Replacement of toothbrushes:**

- Every 3-4 months
- When bristles look frayed and worn
- If it falls on floor, or touches any other surfaces( sink or another toothbrush)
- After a child has been ill with a cold, flu, or bacterial infection.