Childsmile community and practice

Here to help you look after your child's teeth



NHS SCOTLAND

Public Health Scotland

Public Health Scotland wishes to acknowledge the Scottish Dental Clinical Effectiveness Programme for advice and permission to adapt the dental advice table.

What is Childsmile?

Childsmile is a national programme to improve the oral health of children in Scotland.

Healthy teeth for your child

You may not be able to see any teeth yet, but your child's teeth have started growing. The things you do now will help to give your child healthy teeth for life.



Who will I meet?

There is a team of people ready to help you on your way.

You have already met your:

- health visitor
- midwife.

Others you may meet are:

- dental health support worker
- dental nurse
- dentist
- dental hygienist
- dental therapist
- receptionist.

Dental advice

At home, remember to keep your child's mouth healthy:

- Brush teeth and gums at least twice daily, in the morning and last thing at night.
- For children under 3 years of age use a smear of toothpaste on the brush. For children aged 3 years and above, use a pea-sized amount. Use toothpaste containing at least 1,000 parts per million (ppm) fluoride.
- Children should be supervised and encouraged not to swallow toothpaste while brushing.
- 'Spit, don't rinse' after brushing – this gives the toothpaste time to work to protect teeth.
- Keep food and drinks containing sugar to mealtimes only.
- Plain milk and tap water are the safest drinks for teeth.
- Register with a dentist and visit as advised.

Remember, your child is an individual and their teeth will develop at different rates as they grow. If you have concerns, ask a dental health professional or your health visitor.



How do I get involved?

You may have already heard about Childsmile from your midwife or health visitor. If you need some help your health visitor will arrange for a dental health support worker to contact you, or direct you to a dental practice.

Your dental health support worker

With their support and advice your child can grow up with healthy teeth and a confident smile. They do this by:

- giving you practical advice and support on toothbrushing and the use of fluoride toothpaste
- helping you to find a local dental practice and, if required, supporting you on your first visit to the practice
- supporting you with helpful advice about healthy foods and drinks as your baby develops.

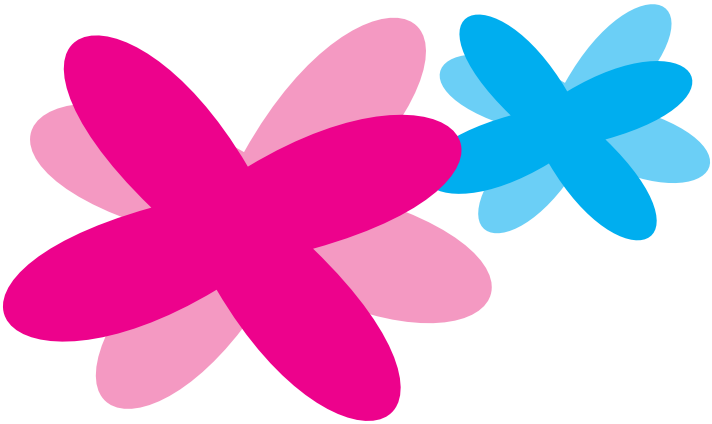


Childsmile and the wider community

Your dental health support worker will tailor the help they give to meet your needs.

They can help you to access other local services and activities which can contribute to maintaining your child's oral health, such as:

- weaning groups
- breastfeeding support services
- financial inclusion help
- registering with a minor ailment service at your local pharmacy.



First visit to the dental practice

You need to attend an appointment at the dental practice to register your child. On your first visit you will meet members of the dental team. They will talk to you about how to care for your child's oral health, including:

- teething
- tooth-friendly drinks and healthy food
- toothbrushing, and the importance of having a toothbrushing routine
- future visits to the dental practice.

Do not worry if your baby has not started teething, you can still attend their appointment and learn how to look after their oral health.

We suggest that you first take your baby to the dental practice when they are about 6 months old.





Future visits

At future visits to the dental practice, a member of the dental team will:

- look at your child's teeth
- explain other ways of protecting your child's teeth (for example, fluoride varnish application from the age of 2)
- give you practical advice on food and drinks for children and demonstrate correct toothbrushing skills
- advise you on when you should make your next appointment. This may vary.



Your appointments

You will be given a personal child health record (the 'red book') by your health visitor soon after the birth of your child. This will be the main record of your child's health, growth and development, including their dental information.

All future appointments with the Childsmile dental team will be recorded in the red book. Please remember to bring this with you to dental visits and ask staff to fill it in.



Age	What starts to happen	Usual number of teeth by this age
Around 6 months	Front teeth begin to appear	0–4
Around 1 year	Top and bottom front teeth may be obvious	4–8
Around 18 months	Some back teeth will be in, others will start to come through	8–14
Around 2 years	The very back teeth will be starting to come in	12–16
Around 2 ½ years	Most of the baby teeth will be through	16–20
Around 3 years	All baby teeth should be through	20

What you should do

- **Register** and attend a dental practice
- **Seek** advice on teething, toothbrushing and healthy foods and drinks
- **Use** the Childsmile dental pack and free-flow cup

- **Make** an appointment at the dental practice
- **Seek** advice on toothbrushing (for example, when and how) and healthy foods and drinks

- **Make** an appointment for a dental check
- **Seek** advice on toothbrushing (including back teeth) and healthy foods and drinks

- **Make** an appointment at the dental practice
- **Ask** for the first application of fluoride varnish
- **Seek** advice on toothbrushing and healthy foods and drinks

- **Make** an appointment at the dental practice
- **Ask** for the next application of fluoride varnish
- **Seek** advice on toothbrushing and healthy foods and drinks

- **Make** an appointment at the dental practice
- **Ask** for the next application of fluoride varnish
- **Seek** advice on toothbrushing and check that you are doing all you can to keep your child's teeth healthy
- **Use** the Childsmile dental pack given out in nursery
- **Enrol** your child for toothbrushing and fluoride varnish programmes (if offered) in the nursery

Translations | Easy read | BSL | Audio | Large print | Braille

Translations and other formats are available on request at:

phs.otherformats@phs.scot

0131 314 5300

Scan me

Public Health Scotland is Scotland's national agency for improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of Scotland's people.

© Public Health Scotland 2022

OGL

This publication is licensed for re-use under the Open Government Licence v3.0. For more information, visit **www.publichealthscotland.scot/ogl**

Corporate member of Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication
489

For more information on the Childsmile programme, please talk to your health visitor or Childsmile contact.

Local contact details:

Visit **www.child-smile.org.uk**

0620 3/2022