



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Children's Oral Health Initiative (COHI)

Teeth at Two



Some time around 2 years of age children enter what some parents call "The Terrible Twos". During this stage of their development children want to do things themselves. They like to dress themselves, feed themselves and brush their teeth themselves.

If a child wears different coloured socks or has their shoes on the wrong feet or their shirt on backward it doesn't really matter and they are proud of what they've done by themselves. ***But, brushing teeth well is a difficult task and poorly brushed teeth can develop cavities.***

It takes time and a lot of practice for children to learn to brush thoroughly. When children are very young, parents must do all of the brushing to keep teeth healthy. As children start to brush their own teeth, parents teach and encourage careful brushing. As your child grows they will do more and more of the brushing themselves. Most children can brush well by 8 years of age but until then they need your help to keep their smile beautiful!

There are many ways a parent and child can work together to keep teeth healthy.

Some examples are:

- Child brushes first then parent goes searching for "sugar bugs" and brushes them off.
- Child brushes in the morning and a parent does the brushing at bedtime.
- Take turns doing top teeth one day and bottom teeth the next day.
- Count to 20 or sing a song (children need to know when something will end).

Make it fun!

- Find a toothpaste flavor your child likes.
- Use a timer or electric toothbrush.
- Reward your child with a sticker and a smile.

What's important is that:

1. Teeth are brushed twice a day with a rice grain amount of fluoridated toothpaste.
2. A parent or other adult is helping with the brushing.



Healthy Baby Teeth = Healthy Teeth For A Lifetime