

What Can I Do When My Child Won't Cooperate with Toothbrushing?

Set a positive tone by making it interesting and enjoyable. Try to be patient and relaxed.

Avoid brushing your child's teeth when he/she is tired or hungry. It will be harder for him/her to cooperate. Blaming, threatening, comparing or commanding only associates negative thoughts with brushing.

Have your child sit or lie comfortably in your lap, on the floor, on the change table or wherever it is convenient.

Make sure you can see into your child's mouth as you brush. Support his/her chin or neck gently, and use a light touch with the toothbrush.

Use your baby finger to *gently* pull out the corner of your child's mouth to see the back teeth while brushing them.

Use a soft baby toothbrush with a smear of fluoride toothpaste. Gently brush all surfaces of the teeth twice a day.

Singing to your child as you brush his/her teeth can help distract him/her and make it fun. See song ideas on the back of this page or make up your own!

Make a game of it. Play "Guess what I see on your teeth?" and make up a story as you brush.

Allow your child to spit or swallow often during brushing. Children have lots of saliva and need to be given frequent swallowing breaks so they don't feel like they are choking. Try this routine

- brush the outside of the top teeth; *spit/swallow*
- brush the inside of the top teeth; *spit/swallow*
- brush the chewing surfaces of the top teeth; *spit/swallow*
- brush the outside of the bottom teeth; *spit/swallow*
- brush the inside of the bottom teeth; *spit/swallow*
- brush the chewing surfaces of the bottom teeth; *spit/swallow*
- brush the tongue; *spit/swallow*

Routine is important. Pick a time for daily toothbrushing that works well for both you and your child. Make it a part of your child's daily routine, i.e. after breakfast and before bed, after bedtime stories.

Be a good role model. Make sure your child sees you brush and floss your own teeth daily.

Reinforce positive behaviour with stickers, stars and compliments. (Avoid sweet treats!)

**Don't give up!
It's worth the effort!**



Dental Health Programs

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Songs to Brush Along To!

Brush your Teeth

(as sung by Raffi)

When you wake up in the morning and it's quarter to one

And you want to have a little fun,

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

When you wake up in the morning and it's quarter to two

and you want to find something to do,

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

When you wake up in the morning and it's quarter to three

And your mind starts humming twiddle de dee,

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

When you wake up in the morning and it's quarter to four

And you think you hear a knock on the door,

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

When you wake up in the morning and it's quarter to five

And you just can't wait to come alive,

You brush your teeth: ch-ch-ch-ch ch-ch-ch-ch-ch

Bright Teeth, Bright Teeth

(to the tune o Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)

Bright teeth, bright teeth, see them gleam

When we keep them nice and clean.

We will brush them every day.

That will keep them from decay.

Bright teeth, bright teeth, see them gleam

When we keep them nice and clean.

Sing a Song of Clean Teeth

(to the tune of Sing a Song of Sixpence)

Sing a song of clean teeth

At morning or at night,

(number of child's teeth) healthy little teeth

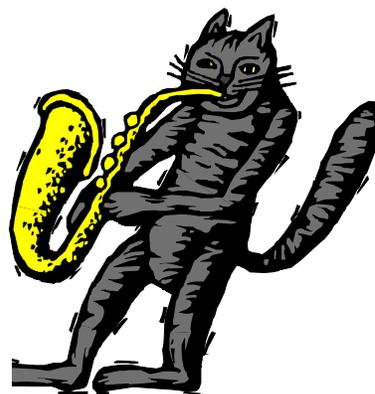
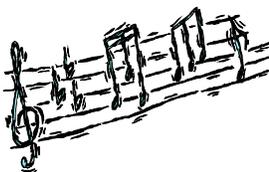
Strong and shining bright!

Every day we brush them

To keep them nice and clean,

Aren't they like a set of pearls

Fit for any queen/king?



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