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## Top tips: Promoting children's oral health

**In an oral health survey carried out in 2022 across England, dental decay was already apparent in more than one in four children by the age of five-years-old and almost half of children living in areas of deprivation.**

To celebrate World Smile Day, support children in your setting to develop a healthy smile by following our top tips to promote their oral health:

1. Provide children with fresh drinking water and milk, no fruit juices or smoothies
2. To reduce the risk of tooth decay, reduce the amount of food children have that contain sugar and limit these to mealtimes
3. From 12 months old onwards, provide and encourage children to use an open top cup
4. Invite an oral health professional into your setting to talk to children about brushing their teeth or arrange a visit to a local dental practice where possible
5. Use stories and props to teach children about a good tooth brushing routine
6. Introduce supervised tooth brushing in your setting. Brushing teeth once a day in day-care can significantly support children's oral health. Access Public Health England's 'Improving oral health: supervised tooth brushing programme toolkit' which is aimed at supporting supervised tooth brushing programmes in early years settings and schools
7. Promote oral health to parents by providing information about tooth brushing and healthy choices, for example encouraging parents to provide a calcium rich diet for their child including milk, yoghurt, cheese and leafy greens which is essential for strengthening tooth enamel
8. Arrange for an oral health workshop where a professional can speak to parents and where possible provide all children with a toothbrush



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9. Display oral health posters and leaflets on parent notice boards
10. Signpost parents to their local dentist, advising that children should go to the dentist when they get their first tooth or from 1 year old, whichever comes first.

### **NDNA products to support you with these tips**

- [Oral health](#) – blog
- [Healthy eating](#) – factsheet.

**And more resources at [www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna](http://www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna)**