

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Top tips: Top teeth tips

Tooth decay is currently a significant concern, with almost a quarter of all under-fives in the UK affected by this preventable condition. Practitioners play a crucial role in shaping healthy habits, including those around oral health. Here are some tips to support you:

- Remind children and parents that teeth should be brushed twice a day – once before bed and one other time
- Make toothbrushing fun – play music, make up toothbrushing songs, brush teeth together
- Share stories, videos and use props to teach children about a good toothbrushing routine, going to the dentist, etc.
- Provide and promote water as the main drink and avoid fruit juice or cordial
- Visit a local dentist or invite someone in to talk to the children about keeping their mouths and smiles healthy
- Eliminate the use of processed sugar in the setting - or at least reduce its use and only provide it in foods eaten as part of a meal
- Serve a variety of nutritious food, encouraging children to eat raw and crunchy foods to encourage bite and jaw strength
- Provide parents with information about oral health, tooth brushing and healthy food choices. Signpost them to resources that encourage teeth brushing, for example, see Brush - the [supervised toothbrushing toolkit](#) or [The Dental Wellness Trust](#), a charity dedicated to tackling tooth decay in children
- Arrange an oral health workshop with a professional to speak to parents and, where possible, provide all children with a toothbrush
- Lead by example and model toothbrushing and good habits.



NDNA products to support you with these tips

- Factsheet – [Healthy eating](#)
- [Physical Activity and Nutrition Coordinator qualification](#)

And more resources at www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna