

# Talking about teeth

## Social Media Kit For Facebook

Choose a post, cut and paste the text, download a high-quality image from DHSVs social media kit webpage and share in your social media channels. In some posts we have linked to a YouTube video, so we haven't provided an image, because when you share the link on Facebook, it will automatically bring up a preview image. You can access all the images here [www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-programs/social-media-kit](http://www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-programs/social-media-kit)



## Talking with kids about teeth

To help kids learn about teeth and why it's important to brush, here's some fun activities.

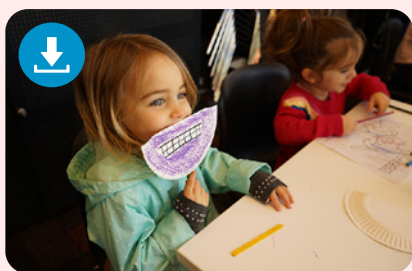
### BIG TOOTHY SMILE

Have fun with your little ones by making a BIGTOOTHY SMILE! Cut a paper plate in half and invite children to colour the mouth and draw teeth.

Use this time together to help children learn more about their teeth.

- Our teeth do important jobs, so we need to take care of them and keep them healthy so that they don't get sick.
- Brushing our teeth is the best way to keep our teeth strong, clean and healthy.

Share your Big Toothy Smile with us – and help put a smile on our face!



### SAY CHEESE!

Little ones love looking at themselves. Next time you take a photo, or are looking in the mirror, talk about teeth – healthy, happy teeth CHOMP the foods we love, give us a gorgeous SMILE and help us ROAR like a lion! Turn this ordinary moment into a game to help your child learn about their teeth.

It's important to eat lots of healthy foods, keep sweet foods for special occasions and brush twice a day to keep a super smile.



### TOOTH-TASTIC ACTIVITY

Here's a quick and easy craft activity – draw around your child's head on a piece of paper. Get them to add parts of the face – ears, nose, eyes, hair, mouth and teeth by painting, drawing or sticking on objects. Take the opportunity to talk about their teeth. Our teeth have important jobs – they help us smile, talk, chew and eat. It's important to brush our teeth to keep them strong, clean, healthy and happy.

Share your finished faces with us, we'd love to see your mini-masterpieces!



### WHY DO I HAVE TO BRUSH MY TEETH?

Young children love to find out about how the world works. To help your little one understand why it's important we brush our teeth, explain tooth decay in a very simple way:



"Inside everyone's mouth there are tiny little sugar bugs. They are so tiny you can't even see them! These sugar bugs love to eat the little bits of food that get stuck in your teeth. And they especially loooooove sweet, sugary foods and drinks. When you brush your teeth, you brush away the away the sugar bugs and keep your teeth healthy. If you don't brush your teeth the sugar bugs can make holes in them – ouch!"



# Videos and read-alouds

## DR SEUSS – THE TOOTH BOOK

Have fun together reading this silly book about teeth. After the story, keep the conversation going:

- How many teeth do you have? Let's count them!
- Will you get some more teeth?
- What are some things you can do with your teeth?
- What are some things you can do to take care of your teeth?
- What did you like most about the story?

Your library might have a copy, otherwise here's an online read-aloud.



## TALK, EAT, SMILE!

Watch Elmo sing about how he would take care of his teeth... if he had any! After the video, talk to children about their teeth.

- Why do you think we have teeth?" To talk, eat and smile.
- I wonder how we would eat if we didn't have teeth?
- How many teeth do you have?" Let's count together. You will have 20 teeth by the time you are 3 or 4 years old.
- What are some things you can do to take care of your teeth?

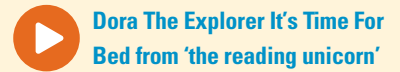


## DORA THE EXPLORER GETS READY FOR BED

Brushing teeth every night, keeps your teeth nice and bright!

How do you get ready for a good night's sleep? Find out how Dora The Explorer gets ready for bed.

After the story, talk to children about their bedtime routine. It's good to do the same things, at the same time to get ready for bed. This is called a 'routine'. Our bedtime routine helps our body get ready for sleep. Brushing our teeth is something we do every night at bedtime. Good night sleepy head, sweet dreams.



## ELMO'S MORNING ROUTINE

Moring sunshine! What are some of the things you do in the morning? Find out what Elmo does as part of his morning routine. After the video, talk to children about their routines – when we do the same things, at the same time. Our morning routine is something we do everyday. It helps our body get ready for the day. Make a list together, like Elmo's list, of the things your child does in the morning. Share your list with us.



# Practical tips to help with toothbrushing

We understand how hard it is to get kids to brush their teeth. Try these tips to help make toothbrushing fun.

## TOOTHBRUSHING BATTLES? YOU'RE NOT ALONE!

We have all been there – tears and meltdowns when it comes to toothbrushing time (and that's just the parents haha!). We understand how hard it is to get kids to brush their teeth. The fact is, many children don't like brushing their teeth at the start. So, what can you do?

- 1 If you're having a tough time, take a break and try again later
- 2 Try to keep it fun and avoid the pressure to 'just get it done'
- 3 Take your time – it may take a bit of trial and error to find what works for you both
- 4 Think of toothbrushing as a part of your child's routine, just like eating, sleeping and washing

We'd love to hear what has worked for you. Share your tips with us!

## FUN AT BATH TIME BRUSHING

Playing with a toothbrush at bath time can be a great way to get your little one used to the toothbrush and brushing. Let them hold and chew the brush to explore how it feels. Pretend to brush your teeth with your own toothbrush – I bet they try and copy you!



# Brushalong songs & videos

## Q. HOW DO I MAKE BRUSHING FUN FOR MY CHILD?

Toothbrushing doesn't have to be boring. Make it fun with a song, music or a toothbrushing dance! Do you remember singing "Brush, brush, brush your teeth," to the tune of Row, Row, Row Your Boat?


If you're looking for a new favourite toothbrushing song, try one of these.

 [Toothbrushing Song](#)



## IT'S TIME TO BRUSH

I'm glad you're here. Let's do something different – I've got an idea! Make toothbrushing fun – sing a song, play music or make up a toothbrushing dance! Join Caitee from Super Simple Play and sing a song to help children brush

 [Brush Your Teeth - Nursery Rhymes from the Classroom!](#)


## SING A SONG

What song do you sing when you brush your teeth? Make it fun – sing a song, play music or make up a toothbrushing dance! Join Hogi, Pinkfong and friends and sing along while children learn how to brush their teeth

 [Brush Your Teeth, Pinkfong Songs for Children](#)

## MAKE IT FUN

Toothbrushing can feel like a chore for kids. Make it fun – sing a song, play music or make up a toothbrushing dance! This video has got it all! Grab your toothbrush and get ready for some Sesame Street hip-hop with 'Brushy-brush' with Elmo and friends!

 [Brushy Brush](#)

## BRUSHING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BORING!

Here are 6 tips to help make it fun and encourage kids to brush. What are your tips for getting kids to brush their teeth?



# Tash & Chomper help kids learn how to brush

Tash and 'Chomper' – our favourite smiley crocodile – are joined by our animal friends, monkey and lion, who know a trick or two when it comes to brushing our teeth.

## LET'S HAVE A BRUSHALONG!

Join our friends, Tash and 'Chomper' – our favourite smiley crocodile, as they show us how to have some fun when we brush our teeth.



Around ages 3 and 4 years, children can start to learn to brush their teeth themselves. These cues and images invite young children to learn the skills to brush and take an active role. Let your children participate in brushing their own teeth. Encourage children to brush first, before a grown-up helps with a final 'check' with the brush. Join our animal friends, monkey and lion, with a fun and playful guide to brushing teeth.

 [Lets Brush Video](#)

Monkey and his friend Lion are here to help! With a big cheeky SMILE and a ROAR they invite kids to take an active role in brushing their teeth. Encouraging independence with brushing helps build a child's sense of self as they begin to take responsibility in basic health routines.

- Talk about how important it is to remove all of the sticky substances from the teeth after we eat.
- Encourage children to brush first, and then a grown-up finishes, 'Your turn, my turn'.

Do you know any monkeys? Can you show me what they do? When it comes to brushing teeth, monkeys know a trick or two. Join our animal friends, monkey and lion, with fun and playful cues to help children learn to brush.

Listen. Can you hear? I thought I heard a lion roar! The lion's come to help us. It's okay – don't run and hide. You see, the lion is an expert when it comes to 'open wide'. "Give me a mighty ROAR!" he says. "Now, go on, brush inside." Join our animal friends, monkey and lion, with fun and playful cues to help children learn to brush.

# Toothbrushing FAQs - parents questions answered

## Q. WHAT AGE SHOULD I START BRUSHING MY CHILD'S TEETH?

You can start cleaning your child's gums even before teeth come through! Use a soft damp cloth to gently wipe the gums – switch to a small soft toothbrush once teeth appear.



## Q. WHICH TOOTHPASTE DO I USE?

Under 18 months - NO toothpaste – just use water

18 months to 6 years - low-fluoride toothpaste (the fine print on the back of the box should say "equivalent of 550ppm F")

Over 6 years - use regular adult toothpaste. You only need a little bit of toothpaste, about the size of a pea.

Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste once a day in the morning (after breakfast) and last thing at night

- Use a soft small toothbrush

If under 18 months	NO toothpaste
18 months to 6 years	Use a pea-sized amount of low-fluoride toothpaste
Over 6 years	Use a pea-sized amount of standard (adult) fluoride toothpaste

Kids under 7 years need a grown-up to help them brush. Take turns brushing.

Find more information on toothbrushing here: <https://dhev.link/toothbrushing>


## Q. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I BRUSH MY CHILD'S TEETH AND WHEN?

Brush two times a day – in the morning and before bed.



## Q. HOW LONG DO I BRUSH FOR?

Aim to brush for 2 minutes – to make sure you're brushing every side of every tooth.

 [Try this 2-minute toothbrushing song](#)

## Q: WHEN IS MY CHILD READY TO BRUSH THEIR TEETH ON THEIR OWN?

At around 7 or 8 years of age, kids have the manual skills to brush on their own. Until then it is difficult for young children to clean all their teeth properly.

The teeth at the back of the mouth are hard for children to reach. It's good to let them have a go brushing first, and then a grown-up can help with a final 'check' with the brush.



## Q. DO I RINSE AFTER BRUSHING?

The new advice for healthy teeth is to 'Spit, don't rinse! Spit out the toothpaste bubbles when you finish brushing – but don't rinse with water.

This way fluoride has time to protect your teeth. It strengthens teeth and helps prevent decay.

