Dear parent or caregiver,

Just as the new year brings hope and thoughts of making healthy choices, these warmer months also bring a feeling of starting fresh. Finally, we are able to get outside and enjoy the weather without layers of clothes. It’s a fresh start when nature begins to bloom and grow.

We want to help our children bloom and grow, as well. A key part of good general health is good dental health. In fact, February was Children’s Dental Health Awareness Month so we are focusing on dental health in this issue. As a role model in your household, we encourage you to talk to your kids about their teeth, remind them to brush after meals and make sure that you also brush and floss daily.

In this issue, there are some activities and information related to dental hygiene and a message from Tonya K. Fuqua, D.D.S., Save a Smile program director led by Cook Children’s. There is a kids’ activity that your child can mail back for the opportunity to win a prize. Please remember to put your name and address on the envelope and on the pages you return. Last time, two were returned without a name or address. We believe in the honor system, so if that was your child, let us know and we’ll get something in the mail to you. Happy spring!

Best wishes,

Larry Tubb  Jackie Meeks
Executive Director  Director of Community Health Research
The Center for Children’s Health  The Center for Children’s Health

Our Promise
Knowing that every child’s life is sacred, it is the Promise of Cook Children’s to improve the health of every child in our region through the prevention and treatment of illness, disease and injury.

To subscribe to this newsletter electronically, please send an email to thecenter@cookchildrens.org with the subject line “Subscribe to Health links.”
Preparation your child for a dental visit

Visiting the dentist, especially for the first time, can sometimes be a scary thing for a child. We’ve compiled some tips on how you can better prepare your child and, hopefully, relieve some of the anxiety.

1. Choose the best time of day for your child when making their dental appointment. Avoid your child’s usual nap time or close to lunch or snack time.

2. Go to the dentist with your child instead of another family member. Your child most likely will trust you the most.

3. Children pick up on parental fears. Don’t talk about being worried about the dentist in front of your child.

4. Tell your child what is expected of him/her at the dentist. “Your job is to hold still and open wide.”

5. Practice going to the dentist at home before your child’s visit. Allow your child to look at a doll’s mouth in the same way a dentist would do.

6. Never use a dental visit as a punishment or threat.

7. Avoid bribing your child to go to the dentist.
Parents – Pull this section out and give it to your kids.

Kids, this section just for you!

Taking care of your mouth and teeth is very important to keeping you healthy. Not only will it keep you from getting cavities, but taking care of your mouth and teeth also can help keep your whole body healthy.

**SUPER SMILE SECRET MESSAGE!**

Help Gen learn the Super Smile secret by decoding the message below!

Add up the numbers represented by each set of symbols and replace them with the corresponding letter.

For example, the first letter in the message is R.

A spiral counts for 10, a star counts for 5, and each dot counts for 1, so 10+5+3=18 and the 18th letter of the alphabet is R.

\[
1 = \bigstar \quad 5 = \bigstar \quad 10 = \bigcirc
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YOU COULD WIN A PRIZE!

Complete the Super Smile secret message activity and the dental health word found in this insert and mail it to this address to be entered to win a cool prize:

Cook Children’s
The Center for Children’s Health
801 7th Ave.
Fort Worth, TX 76104
DENTAL HEALTH WORD FIND

Time yourself and see how long it takes to find all the words!

Name: __________________________ Age: ____________________________
Address: _________________________

BRISTLES  DENTIST  MOUTH  PLAQUE  SWISH  TOOTHBRUSH
BRUSHING  FLOSS  OPENWIDE  RINSE  TEETH  TOOTHDECAY
CAVITIES  HYGIENIST  ORAL  STARTEARY  TONGUE  TOOTHPASTE
Cut this calendar out and tape it on your bathroom mirror to keep track of your brushing.

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Brush Your Teeth Calendar
Put a happy face in the box when you brush twice each day.

Provided for educational purposes only by the Children’s Oral Health Coalition led by Cook Children’s.

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Cheddar bacon muffins recipe

These muffins are a great snack for any time of the day!
And who doesn’t love cheese and bacon?

Ingredients
• 1 cup whole wheat flour
• 3/4 cup yellow cornmeal
• 1 tsp baking powder
• 1 tsp baking soda
• 1/4 tsp ground cumin
• 1/8 tsp salt
• 1/2 cup (2 oz) shredded reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese
• 2 slices turkey bacon, cooked, drained and crumbled
• 2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and minced, optional
• 2 tbsp chopped scallions
• 1 1/4 cups low-fat buttermilk
• 1/4 cup canola oil
• 1 large egg, lightly beaten

Nutrition facts*
Serving size: 1 muffin
Calories: 148
Fat: 7g
Saturated fat: 2g
Cholesterol: 24mg
Sodium: 113mg
Carbohydrates: 16g
Fiber: 2g
Protein: 5g

* Nutritional information is based on ingredients listed and serving size; any additions or substitutions to ingredients may alter the recipe’s nutritional content

Preparation
1. Preheat oven to 375°. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper liners and lightly coat with nonstick cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda, cumin and salt. Stir in Cheddar cheese, bacon, jalapeños and scallions; make a well in center of mixture.

3. In a small bowl, whisk buttermilk, oil and egg until combined. Add buttermilk mixture to flour mixture, stirring just until moist.

4. Divide batter evenly among muffin cups. Bake for 15 minutes, or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool for five minutes in pan on a wire rack.

Yield: 12 muffins

Nut allergy: If you have an allergy to nuts or nut products, read the packaging, labels, warnings and directions for all ingredients in this recipe to determine whether the non-nut ingredients in this recipe were manufactured in a plant that processes nut products. We recommend that you do not solely rely on our information. For additional information about a product, please contact the manufacturer.

For more healthy eating ideas, visit cookchildrens.org/checkup and look for the link to our Checkup kitchen.
We’ve also compiled a checklist to help your prepare, as well as make the most out of your child’s dental visit. Be sure to tear this out and check it before you go.

Before the visit
- Does the dental office see children of your child’s age?
- Does the dental office accept your dental insurance/Medicaid/CHIP?
- Can you take a tour of the dental office before you schedule your child’s appointment?
- Is the office located near your home or child’s school?
- What do you need to bring on the day of your child’s appointment?

During and after the visit
- Were you asked to fill out a medical and dental history for your child?
- Was the dentist gentle, but thorough, when looking at your child’s teeth?
- Did the dentist or staff talk to your child about how to care for their teeth?
- Did the dentist explain how your child’s teeth are doing how your child’s head, neck and jaw are growing, and how to prevent tooth decay?
- Did the dentist explain what type of treatment your child will need to fix their teeth if there are cavities (tooth decay)?
- Did the dentist explain what will happen if you do not get your child’s cavities (tooth decay) fixed?
- Was the visit a positive experience for your child?
- Were your questions addressed with concern and respect?
- Do you feel comfortable taking your child back to this dentist for future appointments?
- Are you comfortable with how the dentist will manage your child’s behavior during the appointment to get their teeth fixed?
Your child’s teeth are an important part of proper growth and development and can truly affect their overall health if not cared for properly. Protect your child from dental disease with daily brushing, regular dental visits and good nutrition. Children with tooth pain cannot eat, sleep or think properly and may miss out of learning in school. The good news is tooth decay (cavities) is preventable with good oral care. So, be a good role model and teach your child good teeth cleaning habits. We want your child to have a healthy start in life, so follow all the tips and information in this newsletter to set you and your child up for success.

Wishing you a lifetime of smiles,

Tonya K. Fuqua, D.D.S.
Program Director, Save a Smile led by Cook Children’s