

# Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles



## Visiting the Dental Clinic with Your Child

Children need to visit the dental clinic to keep their teeth and mouth healthy. If children have regular dental visits, the dentist and dental hygienist can take care of their teeth and find oral health problems early. Having regular dental visits also teaches children to value good oral health.



*School readiness begins with health!*

## At the Dental Clinic, the Dental Team Will:

- Check your child's teeth and mouth.
- Talk to you about the best way to take care of your child's teeth. For example, brushing your child's teeth with fluoride toothpaste after breakfast and before bed.
- Share other ways to help prevent tooth decay (cavities). For example, putting fluoride varnish on children's teeth.

## Tips for Visiting the Dental Clinic

- If your child asks what will happen at the dental clinic, give a simple answer. For example, say:
  - "They may count how many teeth you have."
  - "They may clean your teeth to make them shiny and bright!"
- If you don't like going to the dental clinic, don't tell your child. That might make your child worry about going, too.
- Set up a pretend dental chair. Pretend to be the dentist or dental hygienist. Look in your child's mouth and count her teeth; then talk to her about brushing her teeth.
- Read books or watch videos with your child about visiting the dental clinic. Don't use books or videos that have words like hurt, pain, shot, drill, afraid, or any other words that might scare your child.
- Let your child bring his favorite toy or blanket to the clinic.
- If you find out that your child will receive a small toy or new toothbrush at the end of the visit, remind your child of this reward.
- Plan a fun activity for after the clinic visit.



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