

Sticky Fingers aspires to provide a safe, fun and welcoming environment for everyone. We offer children experiences to support their development. Empowering them to reach their full potential



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## 04 Health procedures

### 04.06 Oral health

#### Our Aims:

At Sticky Fingers Pre-school we promote oral hygiene through teaching and building independence for children to look after their own self-care, encouraging healthy eating and opportunities for the children to take part in tooth brushing daily, meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory requirements whilst following the Saving Smiles programme guidance.

We aim to engage our children in establishing good oral health care habits early on, improving tooth brushing skills to develop a habit for life as well as raising awareness, providing support and signposting for our families to create better outcomes.

#### Objectives

We ensure all children registered with our settings can gain good oral health by:

- Ensuring regular Supervised tooth brushing takes place each session allowing children to brush their teeth once a day within the setting
- Use age appropriate toothpaste and brushes. These are checked and provided by our local authority oral health champions
- Be confident in recognising and managing common mouth health related problems e.g. dental emergencies, teething, toothache or tooth decay
- Signposting families to local NHS dentists for regular care
- Regular engagement with parents and carers regarding their children's oral health and well-being
- Meeting requirements as set out in the EYFS through mouth health (physical, personal and social development)
- Supporting NHS and Government recommendations and sharing these with our families to promote oral health such as:

#### Dummies/pacifiers

- The NHS recommends that parents aim to stop using dummies by the time their baby is 6 to 12 months old as these can be a barrier to speech and language development.
- In our settings, we will discourage dummies while the child is in the setting unless they are within our toddler areas and/or it is required for settling or comfort when all other methods have been ineffective or they are being used for sleep. Dummies that are brought into the

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setting that are damaged are disposed of and parents are told that this has happened.

## Bottles, drinks and food

- The UK government recommends that by the time a baby is one, they should have stopped using a bottle for all drinks. This includes sippy cups and non-spill cups. In partnership with parents, children are discouraged from using a bottle.
- In our settings, children are encouraged to drink from an open topped cup and in partnership with parents, children are discouraged from using a bottle.
- Children are also not required to bring their own drinks into the setting and parents will be asked to take them home. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and easily accessible, sugary drinks are not served. Only milk and water are served with morning and afternoon snacks.
- We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition guidance and our **03.03 Menu Planning and nutrition** policy ensuring that children are given healthy, nutritious snacks with no added sugar in the setting and parents are discouraged from sending in confectionery as a snack or treat.

## Our Pre-school Commitments

Each setting has a Healthy Mouth Lead and information about their role will be sent to families in a letter. They are also named within the setting. For GDPR reasons we do not name them within this policy. Families can ask any staff member for advice and who the champion is.

Our Healthy Mouth Lead will engage regularly with staff, parents/carers and children alike by:

- Engaging with children, parents/carers and staff on the importance of a balanced diet and good oral health at the setting and at home
- Engaging with parents/carers before and after implementation of the policy and answering any questions/concerns they may have
- Highlight the importance of registration and regular visits with the dentist as soon as the first tooth appears
- Integrate oral health on new starter forms by asking if a child has a dentist when first registering and supporting those families whose children don't have a dentist to find one
- Recognising and appropriately treating mouth problems which may present in the setting e.g a child knocking out a tooth or toothache.
- Leading supervised tooth brushing within the setting or training those involved

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- Work towards the Southampton Healthy Early Years Award (HEYA) Healthy mouth gold award.

## **Implementing Toothbrushing in our settings**

We use the dry brushing method following the Government recommendations. We also take into account the Southampton Healthy Early Years award requirements and Saving Smiles programme guidance which set out the following standards.

- As part of the child's enrollment process, we will discuss our toothbrushing procedures and consent forms are signed in agreement by parents/carers.
- The Healthy Mouth Procedures will apply to all children registered within our settings, unless written information is given by a parent or carer stating they do not want their child to be part of it.
- We acknowledge and address potential cultural and religious barriers as well as parental concerns around supervised toothbrushing.

### **1. Organisation of supervised brushing**

- Each setting has a named Healthy Mouth Lead who is trained by a local oral health practitioner, who is responsible for running the tooth brushing programme.
- All staff are required to read the Saving Smiles -Supervised Toothbrushing programme handbook and Hand sanitising instructions alongside this policy during their induction process. They will also receive appropriate training in tooth brushing and infection control procedures by the Healthy Mouth Lead and/or the oral health practitioner delivering the supervising tooth brushing programme.
- We discuss our tooth brushing procedures and gain consent from parents/carers during the child's enrolment process.
- We provide support to our families to promote oral health and signpost to dentists and emergency dental care.
- Children with consent are encouraged to brush their teeth (once a day in the setting only) as part of the daily routine.
- A Local Oral Health Practitioner visits each setting twice a year to review the supervised tooth brushing programme.

### **2. Ensuring an effective programme**

- The staff member supervising tooth brushing will encourage a few children at a time to come and brush their teeth to prevent overcrowding and supervising issues.

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- Each child has their own allocated toothbrush that is stored in the matching name slot of the brush holder.
- The storage unit should not be placed directly beside the children while brushing takes place to avoid contamination.
- The Healthy Mouth lead will regularly review stock levels of toothbrushes and toothpaste and contact the Local Oral Health Practitioner to replenish stock when it is running low.

### **3. Hygiene and safety**

- Tooth brushing storage systems comply with best practice to prevent cross contamination. All brushes are clearly labelled with children's names and the storage unit, so they can be placed back in the correct places.
- Care needs to be taken to ensure no cross contamination when removing toothbrushes from holders
- Toothbrushes dropped on to the floor needs to be discarded
- Toothbrushes must not be soaked in bleach or other cleaning equipment. They must always be rinsed under running water to remove the paste and placed back in the storage unit to air dry.
- Once a week the storage holder needs to be cleaned as well as the area the holders are stored. All brushes checked and rinsed again if required.
- Storage units need to be changed if they become cracked, scratched or rough surfaces appear
- Toothbrushes will be checked by the Healthy Mouth Champion and replaced every term.
- At the end of each half term the healthy mouth champion will review the checklist of children who have brushed their teeth and children will receive certificates to those who have kept it up.

### **Dry tooth brushing method**

- Children must be supervised throughout.
- Clean and prepare the area where the tooth brushing is going to take place using the appropriate coloured cloth to wipe down surfaces.
- Both the supervisor and the child should wash their hands following NHS guidance before the tooth brushing session to adhere to infection control procedures.
- In addition, the supervisor will tie their hair back, if applicable, and should wear appropriate personal protective equipment (disposable gloves and apron)

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- Each child will be given a piece of paper towel with the correct amount of toothpaste based on their age (a smear of toothpaste for under 3 year old's and a pea sized amount for 3 years and over)
- The children are encouraged to point out their own individual toothbrush in the holder, the supervisor will support the children and hand them their brush by the stem to prevent any cross contamination.
- Children should be seated while the tooth brushing takes place and be encouraged to brush up, down and all around. Staff will role model good tooth brushing techniques using the tooth brushing model and tooth brush.
- After the tooth brushing is completed, children should spit the excess toothpaste/saliva into their paper towel and be discouraged from rinsing their mouth. The paper towel will be put in the nearest bin and the child will wash their hands.
- The supervising staff member will mark that the child has brushed their teeth at pre-school on their key group form ready to reward at the end of the half term with a certificate.
- Toothbrushes should be taken to an identified sink area, which is clean and clutter-free, by the supervisor who is responsible for rinsing each toothbrush individually under cold running water; the toothbrushes should not come into contact with the sink or each other.
- After the rinsing of the toothbrushes is complete, the supervisor should dab them dry on an individual piece of paper towel.
- The supervisor should then return the brushes to their designated place in the toothbrush rack.
- Any visible drips on the racks should be mopped up using a paper towel.
- The storage lids should then be replaced on the racks and the racks returned to their safe storage location, out of the reach of children.
- The supervisor makes sure the sinks are clean before de-robing and disposing of their apron and gloves appropriately.
- Racks should be cleaned at least weekly with hot, soapy water, they will be cleaned immediately if they become soiled. The area where the racks are stored is also cleaned with antibacterial spray at least once a week.

### **The Commitment required from our parents/families**

- We require parents and carers to support our setting with implementing Healthy Mouth Policy and achieving our overall aims, giving consent to the supervised toothbrushing programme
- Parents will highlight any special needs to the setting as soon as possible that could

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present as barriers to toothbrushing such as if the child does not like flavoured toothpaste

- Being a positive role model to children at home and in the setting, ensuring that children brush twice daily at home in addition to brushing in the setting
- Communicate with pre-school if you have any concerns over your child's oral health.
- To follow advice from the setting to promote better oral health for their child especially involving bottles, dummies, food and drinks.