HEALTHY BABY TEETH ARE IMPORTANT!

- Baby teeth are needed for:
  - chewing and nutrition
  - self-esteem
  - growth of adult teeth
  - speech
- Some “baby” teeth must last until 11 or 12 years of age
- Cavities in baby teeth can mean more cavities all his life

In Arizona ...
1/3 of three year olds have tooth decay

- Prevention has to begin early
- Child care providers can play a big role in helping reduce tooth decay in Arizona’s babies

Arizona 3rd Graders

- 75% of Arizona 3rd graders have experienced tooth decay.
Role of Child Care Providers

Child care providers can be a valuable source of support and information for parents when it comes to children’s oral health.

Good or bad health habits are formed early and can last a lifetime.

How baby teeth affect adult teeth

- The most common disease of childhood
- Five times more common than asthma
- An infectious disease

Cavities in baby teeth are serious

- Affect eating
- Cause pain
- An infection anywhere in your body means you are not truly healthy
- Affect adult teeth
Cavities in baby teeth cause:

- An infection that can spread throughout the body
- Complicated, costly treatment
- Poor self-esteem, behavior problems
- Learning problems

Bacteria is not present at birth
Bacteria is transmitted (passed) to baby usually by the age of three
Bacteria is transmitted from mother or anyone who regularly cares for a baby 8 hours a day or longer AND has or has had tooth decay

Avoid transmitting (passing) bacteria

- Bacteria can be passed by:
  - using a baby’s spoon to test food
  - licking a pacifier to clean it
  - what else can you think of...?
- Visit your dentist. Be sure your mouth is healthy!!

Bacteria + Sugar + Tooth = Decay

Transmitting (passing) bacteria

- Counsel parents to:
  - see their dentist
  - avoid the following:
    - tasting food from baby’s spoon
    - licking pacifier to clean it
    - letting baby put her hand in your mouth
    - chewing food for baby

Bacteria + Sugar + Tooth = Decay

The Sugar Connection

- Bacteria need sugar to cause tooth decay
- More frequent use of sugar causes more decay
- When sugar is eaten makes a difference
- Formula and breast milk contain sugar
- Naptime and all-night bottles or breast feeding keep sugar in the mouth for long periods of time

Infant feeding

- Only formula or breast milk in the bottle (never juice)
- Hold the baby when bottle feeding - propping or bottles in bed are habits that will be hard to break
- Introduce cup at 6 months
- Breast is best

Stop bottle by first birthday
SNACKS

Snacks to avoid:
• Raisins why…?
• Sports drinks…why?
• Potato chips…why?
• Fruit roll-ups…why

Snacks to serve:
• Yogurt
• Cheese
• Crackers check label for sugar
• Dry cereal check label for sugar
• Orange slices
• Raw fruit and vegetables (when child is old enough to chew properly)

Best feeding practices for toddlers
• Serve planned snacks at regular times
• When snack time is over, put the food away
• “Walking” bottles or cups with water only
• Water or milk only between meals and snacks

How to brush baby teeth

The child can lie in adult’s lap or stand in front of adult, both facing same direction.

First dental visit by first birthday

Encourage parents to take their children to the dentist by age one.
• Preventive services
• Early detection of any problems
• Early visits make dental appointments acceptable?

Which families are likely to have children with tooth decay?
• Families whose parents have untreated tooth decay
• Families who drink a lot of soda and eat sugary snacks
• Families who do not go to the dentist
• Families who do not brush their teeth regularly
• Families who have lower incomes

Educating Parents
• How can you talk to parents about this?
• Do you think they will be willing to listen?
• Do you feel comfortable talking about this with parents?
• Would you rather give them written information?
Child Care Providers and parents working together can help **KRUNCH OUT** the most common disease of childhood: **TOOTH DECAY**

Questions? Comments?

THANK YOU

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