

This information sheet has been put together by the Occupational Therapists working within the Early Years Team to share some useful information resources and suggestions with you to help in the care of your child's teeth.

Why Does Good Oral Care Matter?

Good oral care is important for everyone, but it is additionally important for children and youngsters who have medical, sensory, physical or learning disabilities.

Causes of Poor Oral Health

The two main dental diseases are tooth decay and gum disease. Frequent and/or high intakes of sugar, in the form of both food and drinks, are the main causes of tooth decay. The more often sugar is taken, the greater the risk of tooth decay. Gum disease is mainly caused by the build-up of dental plaque and food debris around the teeth.

Children with disabilities are at greater risk of tooth decay and gum disease:

- ✚ They may be taking medicines that contain sugar, which can cause tooth decay
- ✚ Some medicines cause a dry mouth, which can put the teeth at greater risk of decay
- ✚ Some children may not tolerate having a toothbrush in their mouth or may have a gag/choking reflex
- ✚ Some children may tend to keep food in their mouth for a long time. They may have difficulty clearing leftover food from around their teeth and gums
- ✚ Some children have a strong preference for sweet food and drinks, or food of a particular colour or texture, and will eat little else
- ✚ Drooling can cause skin irritation and mouth infections
- ✚ Some children can suffer from gastric reflux, which can then in turn cause erosion of the tooth enamel



Ora Nurse toothpaste is a range of non-Flavoured toothpaste for children who are

Sensitive to strong flavours.
www.oranurse.co.uk



A soft 100% silicone fingertip toothbrush. A gentle way to clean tiny teeth and massage tender gums. It can be cleaned in a dishwasher or in sterilising fluid. LATEX FREE www.oranurse.co.uk

Additional Information

- ✚ www.publichealth.hsci.net **Teeth Matter! Caring for Your Children's Teeth** Advice for Parents and Carers of children with Special
- ✚ www.livingmadeeasy.co.uk impartial website giving information on all types of daily living equipment.
- ✚ www.healthyteethdevon.nhs.uk **Looking After Teeth for Children with Extra Needs** leaflet
- ✚ www.goodhealth-manchester.nhs.uk **The Good Teeth Guide for Parents and Carers of Children with Extra Needs**
- ✚ **Sheffield Special Care Dental Services.** Referral for your child to the **Community and Special Care Dentistry** can be made by a health care or social care professional who knows your child.



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Telephone: **0114 271 7610** if you have any queries about any of this information.

Early Years Therapy Service Ryegate Children's Centre

Teeth Care for Children with Special Needs

For further advice contact:

Main hospital number: 0114 271 7000

Patient Advice & Liaison Team (PALS)

The Children's Hospital

Western Bank

Sheffield

S10 2TH

PALS office: 0114 271 7594

www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk

Our young patients are at the centre of everything we do and all our work is focused on providing them with the best facilities, equipment and experience possible, helping to provide a world-class facility that is positioned at the very forefront of paediatric care.



www.tchc.org.uk

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Providing dental care for children with disabilities can be difficult:

- ✚ They may find it hard to accept dental treatment and may find the dental surgery quite a frightening place
- ✚ They may have difficulty tolerating the noise produced by the dental equipment
- ✚ It may be necessary to provide dental treatment under general anaesthetic
- ✚ Sitting in the dental chair may prove difficult for some children
- ✚ Your child may not be able to let you know if they are in pain or where the pain is coming from
- ✚ Teeth brushing for children who are tube-fed is still important. It makes the mouth feel comfortable and clean, plaque bacteria can cause chest infections, and if the feeding tube is temporary, the good habit is already in place when oral feeding starts again

For all these reasons, it is very important to try to prevent the need for complex dental treatment. .

Prevention is best carried out from a very early age

Special Dental Services in Sheffield

In Sheffield the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust operates the **Sheffield Special Care Dental Services – Community and Special Care Dentistry.**

This service provides care for people with differing needs. There is a specific section of the service which is geared towards meeting the needs of children with special needs.

They operate clinics in a number of the special schools around the city (such as Woolley Wood, Norfolk Park, Mossbrook), in addition to running community satellite clinics.

The Sheffield Children's Hospital provides treatment for children up to the age of 16 with a range of different dental needs, including those who may require dental surgery.

Some Practical Ideas for Teeth Cleaning

- ✚ Enlarged handles on a tooth brush may help with a weak grip. Handles can be lengthened /angled to assist with access to your child's mouth and teeth.
- ✚ Some children may find using an electric toothbrush easier. There are a wide range of products available, with varying price depending on functions.
- ✚ It may help to carry out dental care with your child if they are sitting down on a stable chair/seat.
- ✚ Standing beside or slightly behind your child, using a "hand over hand" technique to assist your child to hold the tooth brush, giving them an idea of the fine motor movements maybe helpful
- ✚ Plastazote tubing is foam tubing which comes in a choice of bore size to fit a range of utensils. Supplied in in a range of lengths, it can be cut as required, and can fit over tooth brush handles. Supplier: NRS Healthcare

www.waysandmeans.co.uk Tel: 0845 606 091



Grippit 2000 is an implement holder. It will hold pens, pencils, toothbrushes etc. Made from plastic, with short cylinder, circular grip, 3 sizes. Supplier Saracen Products Ltd
www.thrgrippit.com Tel: 0141 336 2200



Etac Ergonomic Multi Purpose Grip Handle is a contoured rubber handle with a slot at narrower end for the insertion of a nail file and a slot at wider end for then insertion of a toothbrush. Supplier: Nordic Care Services Ltd

www.nordiccare.co.uk Tel: 01495 723 20