

Supervised toothbrushing training fact sheet for staff

We have developed this information sheet to help support implementation of the toothbrushing programme.

The toothbrushing programme is a nationally recognised, evidence-based initiative designed to improve children's oral health, increase exposure to fluoride and promote behavioural and self-care skills.

It is vital that the following guidelines are strictly adhered to when undertaking the supervised toothbrushing programme;

- Only children with consent can take part
- Toothbrushing is organized in a safe and effective way
- Children should brush their own teeth
- Toothbrushes are stored in the racks provided
- Toothbrushes should not touch
- Toothbrushes are replaced each term
- Toothbrushes **MUST NOT** be soaked in bleach or disinfectant
- Toothpaste **MUST NOT** be applied directly to each brush; toothpaste must be applied to a paper towel or clean plastic plate then applied to the brush
- A pea-sized amount of toothpaste is provided for each child
- Children should be discouraged from rinsing after brushing
- Storage systems must not be kept in toilet areas and must be kept out of reach of children
- Storage system lids must be used
- Storage systems should be wiped daily to remove drips
- Storage systems should be cleaned weekly with warm water and household detergent

Although it is not recommended to brush straight after food or drink, it is acceptable for schools to fit in toothbrushing around routines and implement at a suitable time.

Suggested procedure

- Supervisor washes hands before toothbrushing
- Under supervision, child collects toothbrush from the rack, or the supervisor can hand the brushes out to each individual child
- Children sit or stand to brush teeth
- Toothpaste is dispensed onto paper towel/clean plastic plate and child applies to toothbrush (scoops it up from paper towel or plastic plate)
- Children brush for 2 minutes (use a timer or song)
- After brushing, any excess paste is wiped on paper towel
- Paper towel to be placed in bin
- Brushes are placed in rack to be rinsed by staff, or children rinse their own brush one at a time and return to the rack
- Children should not touch each other's brush
- Brushes are left in rack to air dry for 1 hour before the lid is placed back on the rack
- Paper towel to be used to wipe away any drips on the storage system
- After toothbrushing is complete, children and supervisor wash hands