



Derby City Council



Join The Smile Squad.

Are you unsure about how to care for your baby and toddler's teeth ?

Do you want help on how to develop a good tooth brushing routine?

You can get support, advice and tips around children's oral health online.

[derbyshire.gov.uk/oralhealth](https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/oralhealth)

Tips for keeping your tot's teeth in great shape.

1. Get into a good routine.

Start brushing your baby's teeth as soon as they start to come through. First teeth usually appear between **4 - 6 months**, but they can arrive sooner or later.

Use a toothpaste that contains at least 1,000ppm (parts per million) of fluoride. You can check this on the ingredients list on the tube.

For children **under 3 years old** use a grain of rice sized amount of toothpaste. For children **over 3 years old** use a pea-sized amount.

By around the age of three, children should have all 20 baby teeth. It is important to brush for at least **2 minutes twice a day**. This should be last thing before bed and another time in the day.

Brush all the tooth's surfaces and make sure to brush where the gum joins the tooth as this can often get missed.

Encourage your child to spit the toothpaste out afterwards.

Do not rinse your child's mouth out with water after brushing as this will wash away the fluoride.

Make sure children don't eat or lick toothpaste from the tube.



2. Make it a fun, normal part of your day.

Help your child brush their teeth until they are at least **7 years old** and you are sure they can brush properly.

For babies, sit them on your knee, facing away from you and rest their head against your chest while you brush their teeth.

When they're older, stand behind them and tilt their head backwards.

Make it into a game or brush your own teeth at the same time. Your child can copy you – this can work from a really young age and sets a good example.

Stickers, star charts and plenty of praise can all help them become proud, independent brushers

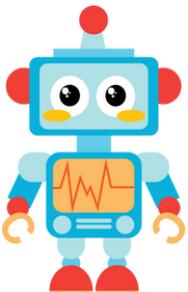
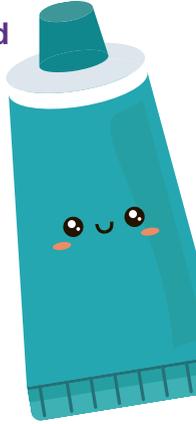
Phone timers or music can help teach children how long to brush for.

There are also phone apps that you can download too. **We recommend Brush DJ and Oral B.**

Bring in a favourite teddy or toy and let your child brush its teeth while you brush your child's teeth.

A manual or electric brush is fine to use. Just be sure that all tooth surfaces are clean and that your child feels confident with a manual brush before introducing an electric one.

However if you want to switch to using an electric toothbrush with your child, then wait until your child is at **least three years old** for safety reasons.



3. Heathy diets

What your child eats, and drinks is very important for keeping their teeth and gums healthy.

Sugary food and drinks cause tooth decay and pain, which affects your child's health and wellbeing.

When bottle or cup feeding babies, do not add anything else (including sugar, honey, cereals, baby rice or chocolate powder) to the feed.

Limit sugary foods to mealtimes only and avoid fizzy drinks including diet drinks

Limit fruit juice or smoothies to one 150ml portion a day as they are acidic and can damage your child's teeth.

Stick to healthy snacks such as vegetable sticks, cheese, crackers and plain wholemeal toast.



4. Visiting the dentist

NHS dental treatment for children is free so take your child for their first appointment as soon as their first tooth comes through. Then take them for regular check ups as advised.

When you visit the dentist, be positive and try to make the trip fun. How you react will affect your child, so try not to appear worried or nervous.

You can find your nearest NHS dentist by searching online at www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist

Try not to worry if you find toothbrushing with your child a challenge. If at first you don't succeed, don't give up - keep on trying!

The important thing is that you stick at it and help them to make good oral health a part of their daily routine.

derbyshire.gov.uk/oralhealth