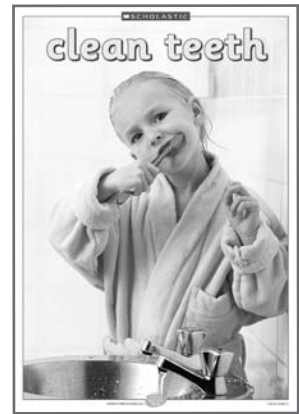


Clean teeth



Using the poster

Display the poster on the wall and talk with the children about the importance of cleaning our teeth. Encourage the children to consider issues that can be taken for granted, for example, 'Why do we use a toothbrush?', 'Why do we use clean water to rinse our mouth?', 'Why do we turn off the tap while brushing our teeth?', 'What can happen if we do not brush our teeth regularly?' and so on.

Personal, social and emotional development

- Ask the children to draw a simple picture of a toothbrush. Display the pictures on the wall with captions explaining when, where and why they brush their teeth, for example, 'I brush my teeth before I go to bed', 'I brush my teeth after eating sweet food' and so on.
- Place a range of brushes associated with healthy routines in a feely box, for example, a toothbrush, nailbrush, hairbrush and baby's hairbrush. Encourage the children to take turns to describe one of the brushes in the box for the rest of the group to identify.

Literacy

Communication and language

- Invite the children to recall and describe the taste, smell and sounds that are associated with brushing their teeth using words such as, bristles, frothy, fresh, mint, gargle and so on. Help the children to write the words to display around the poster.
- Encourage the children to draw or paint pictures of different-coloured toothbrushes. Help them to label the pictures with captions such as 'I'm a pink toothbrush', 'I'm a blue toothbrush', 'I'm a stripy toothbrush' and so on.

Mathematics

- Invite the children to look at their two front teeth to inspire the first verse of this 'clean teeth' song, sung to the traditional tune of 'Five Currant Buns': 'Two little teeth are ready for a clean, here's a brush to make them gleam, left and right and up and down, now three little teeth are ready for a clean. Three little teeth...'. Add one more tooth for each verse.
- Ask the children to draw ten large smiley faces on to ten large discs of card. Help them to create a

humorous counting frieze by attaching one white sticky label to the first smile to represent one tooth, two labels to the second smile and so on. Hang the toothy smiles on the wall in numerical order and ask questions such as 'Which smile has four teeth?', 'Which smile has the most/least teeth?'

Understanding the world

- Help the children to set up a role-play dental surgery. Create a 'Waiting room' using a row of chairs, magazines on a low table, posters about teeth on the wall and a box of toys for 'visiting toddlers'. Provide the 'dentist' with a white apron, a lounging chair and pretend dental equipment. Organise a reception desk with a notepad and pens, toy telephone and an appointments book.
- Encourage the children to draw or paint posters for the role-play area. If possible, collect a selection of real posters and leaflets from the local dentist to stimulate relevant ideas.

Physical development

- Invite the children to mime the actions of healthy routines for their peers to identify, for example, washing hair, brushing teeth or taking a shower.
- Encourage the children to make up actions to an adapted version of the rhyme, 'The Wheels on the Bus': 'My busy toothbrush goes up and down, up and down, up and down; my busy toothbrush goes up and down all day long. My busy nailbrush goes side to side... My busy hairbrush goes through my hair', and so on.

Expressive arts and design

- Look at the stripy pattern on the toothbrush in the poster. Provide the children with a toothbrush cut from cardboard and invite them to decorate it with a 'jazzy' pattern to create a funky toothbrush.
- Suggest that the children design a 'jazzy' toothbrush holder for their funky toothbrush.

Jenni Tavener is an early years teacher and writer.

