Presentations to Children:

Pre-School to Grade 12

- ★ **Tips for targeted audiences**
- ★ **Presentation outlines**

ADA
American Dental Association
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National Children's Dental Access Day

Healthy Smiles 2010
Crest

Presentations

Talking with children about their oral health can be a rewarding activity for both you and your young audience. In addition to school classrooms, there are other sites that serve children who could benefit from oral health education activities. Examples include:

- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Head Start programs
- Faith-based youth groups
- YMCA/YWCA

Here are some sample speech outlines that may be helpful in preparing your presentation. They provide a basic presentation geared toward a variety of age ranges. Use the outlines as a guide and tailor your speech to fit your style and comfort level. Also, adjust the content based on the needs and background of the children.

- **Talking About Teeth** (preschool and grade 1)
- **There's Magic in Your Smile** (grades 2-4)
- **Smile Power** (grades 4-6)
- **Smile Appeal** (grades 7-12)

Hands-on activities and oral health displays can be effective ways of getting across your oral health messages. Activities like those listed below can add to an oral presentation and leave lasting impressions.

Disclose invisible plaque.

Mix three or four drops of red food color with a few tablespoons of water in a paper cup. Ask a volunteer to swish the colored water around in his/her mouth for ten seconds and carefully spit it out into a second cup or nearby sink. Have the volunteer look in a magnifying mirror and identify the red areas indicating plaque. Ask the volunteer to brush their teeth with toothpaste and a new toothbrush. Then repeat the disclosing procedure. See how much of the plaque is gone and discuss the areas where plaque hides.

Perform a flossing demonstration.

Discuss dental floss and flossing with children. Show them floss, then have two students demonstrate flossing using yarn. One child holds hands together with fingers straight up and tight against each other.

These are the teeth. The other child uses yarn to floss between the fingers. A variation is to smear tempera paint representing plaque between the fingers of the child representing the teeth. In this way, the children will see the floss cleaning between the teeth.

Discuss the importance of eating healthy foods.

Show a food guide pyramid chart to children. Explain/review the food groups and why each is important for healthy bodies and teeth. List the five main food groups on a chalkboard or easel (grain, fruit, vegetable, milk, and meat). Have children discuss some of their favorite foods and write them under the appropriate group. Bring enough healthy snacks to share with children and ask them to identify that snack's food group. Free reproducible food guide pyramids for children are available on the United States Department of Agriculture's Web site:

www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html

Demonstrate how dental sealants protect chewing surfaces of teeth.

Assemble: two antacid tablets, vinegar, two small paper cups and a small piece of plastic wrap. This is a test to see how the plastic coating (dental sealant) protects a pretend tooth (antacid tablet) from the vinegar acid (plaque plus sugar). Wrap one antacid tablet in plastic wrap; leave the other tablet unwrapped. Place each tablet in a separate paper cup. Cover both with vinegar. Wait five minutes and pour off the vinegar. The acid in the vinegar has begun to dissolve the unwrapped antacid tablet (tooth without dental sealant). Unwrap the plastic from the other antacid tablet. The plastic wrap protected it from the acid, just like a dental sealant.

Set up an oral health display or bulletin board in a school or community center. Reinforce your oral health messages through a brief oral health article for the school newsletter or web site.

Bring supplies and have children help you set up an oral health display that can be kept on exhibit for a few months. Use posters, simple dental messages, photos of children receiving dental health checkups, dental equipment, dental care products, photographs of healthy foods and models or charts of the mouth for educational displays. Incorporate some of your messages about the importance of good oral hygiene, regular dental visits, use of mouthguards and avoidance of tobacco in a short article for the newspaper or web site.

Target Audience:
Pre-School/Grade 1

Talking About Teeth

Note: *This presentation is divided into three parts. They can be used together or as separate presentations, depending on the time available and the abilities of the children with whom you are working. Children in this age range (3-6 years) have fairly short attention spans. The most important concepts to get across are:* ***1*** *- our teeth are important and we need to take good care of them;* ***2*** *- the dentist is a friendly doctor who helps you take good care of your teeth.*

I. Why Teeth Are Important

Display pictures from magazines that show people smiling, eating, talking.

Ask the children: What are these people doing with their mouths?

Possible Responses: Eating, talking, smiling, chewing

Ask: Could you smile without a mouth? What do your teeth do for your smile?

Possible Responses: Teeth make your smile look nice; make you look happy

Have children pronounce the words 'teeth' and 'toothbrush.' Then have them try to say these words without their tongues touching their teeth.

Ask them to say the word 'smile.' Then ask them to try to say 'smile' without their upper and lower teeth touching.

Ask: What other words would be hard to say if you didn't have teeth? (Examples are words beginning with S, L, and D.)

Ask: What is your favorite food -or- What do you like to eat for dinner? Make a list of some of these.

Ask: Which of these foods could be easily eaten without teeth. Which ones must be chewed?

Ask: How many of you have baby brothers and sisters? How many teeth do they have? Is a baby's food different from the food you eat? Talk about this.

II. Keeping Teeth Clean

Ask: What are some of the things you do to keep yourself clean?

Possible Responses: Take a bath; wash hair; wash hands

Ask: Why do we need to clean our teeth?

Possible Responses: To get rid of germs; so we don't get cavities; because it feels better to have a clean mouth

Explain: Some germs in our mouth stick to the teeth. This is called plaque. We can't see plaque. It's 'invisible.'

Plaque can cause a cavity (a little hole in the tooth). So we want to clean plaque away.

Ask: How can we clean teeth?

Answer: Brush them. Floss.

Show how to brush teeth (using large toothbrush and mouth model): How we brush our teeth: gently, back and forth, getting to all sides of our teeth.

Use just a tiny bit of toothpaste. Spit it out after brushing. Brush 2 times each day.

Note: *Pre-school children are not yet capable of safe and effective flossing. If you choose to talk about flossing and show how it is done, be sure to stress that this is something to do only with the help of their parents. Brushing should be supervised also because an adult should discourage the child from swallowing the fluoride toothpaste.*

III. The Dentist and the Dental Helpers

Ask: How many of you have visited the dentist? What things did you see when you went there? (As the children identify these things, incorporate information about what each of these is used for.)

Possible Responses: Chair that moves up and down (so people of different sizes can sit in it and the dentist can look in the mouths more easily); special light (so the dentist can see your mouth

better); small round mirror (to see the backs and sides of teeth); the X-ray machine (to take pictures of teeth); the explorer, or 'tooth feeler' (helps dentist count your teeth and helps find decay).

Ask: Who else (besides the dentist) did you see at the office?

Possible Responses: Dental hygienist, dental assistant, receptionist. Talk briefly about how they help the dentist.

Ask: Why is it important to visit the dentist?

Possible Responses: The dentist helps you keep your teeth healthy. The dentist will see if you have a cavity and if you do, may fix it with a filling. To see if we are cleaning our teeth properly, if they are growing properly.

Possible Activities: Have the children sing along with you, to the tune "Row, Row, Row Your Boat":

Brush, brush, brush your teeth, brush them every day.
Right, left, up, down, clean the plaque away.
Brush. brush, brush your teeth, brush them every day.
Front, back, take off the plaque, now we smile all day.

Show the ADA video "Dudley Visits the Dentist." Talk to the children about their own visit to the dentist.

Target Audience:
Grades 2-4

There's Magic in Your Smile

I. Why is it important to have healthy teeth?

A. You have a nicer smile. You make other people happy and feel happy yourself when you can give them a big bright smile. (Ask children to smile at one another or two other children in the room.)

B. Eating is easier and more fun. Can you imagine settling down to watch your favorite T. V. show with a big bowl of popcorn and not having teeth to chew with? Or having a big, juicy, red apple but no teeth?

C. Talking is easier, too. Say, "There's magic in a healthy smile." Now, say it again, only this time don't let your tongue touch your teeth. Pretty tough talk! Your teeth help other people understand you, whether you are giving an answer in class, telling your moms and dads about school, or playing with your friends.

II. What keeps teeth from being healthy?

A. Sticky, colorless PLAQUE is always forming on your teeth.

B. Plaque contains bacteria, or germs.

C. When you eat sugary, sweet foods, the bacteria mix with the sugar and make acid.

D. The acid attacks your teeth, and makes teeth decay. This acid attack lasts 20 minutes unless you stop it!

E. The decay doesn't get better by itself. Only your dentist can get rid of the decay, and place a filling. If you don't go to a dentist, the decay can spread to the rest of the tooth.

III. What can we do to stop the attack? How can we fight the enemy, plaque, and keep our teeth healthy?

A. Brush your teeth twice every day.

B. Floss every day. Brushing and flossing will break up the bacteria and sugar team so they cannot attack your teeth. Your parents may need to help you floss now, but when you're older, you'll be able to floss by yourself every day.

C. Eat nutritious foods from the 5 main food groups --grains, fruits, vegetables, meat/poultry; and dairy products -everyday.

1. Cut down on snacks and sugary beverages.
2. The more often you eat snacks and drink sugary beverages, the more acid attacks you have.
3. Eat and drink sweets with meals.

4. If you must snack, instead of soda, candy, cake or cookies, ask for some nutritious foods like milk, fresh vegetables, fruit or cheese.

Suggested Activities:

- Use disclosing tablets to demonstrate plaque build-up. (optional)
- Give each child a toothbrush to practice the correct brushing technique.
- Give each child a piece of yarn 18 inches long. Have children get a partner and illustrate flossing by using yarn and the partner's hand. One student holds hands together with fingers straight and held tightly together. The other student flosses between the fingers.
- Ask students to draw a picture of bacteria and the weapons to fight them (toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, etc.)
- Ask children to name foods from the 5 main food groups (vegetables, fruits, grains, meats/poultry, dairy).

Conclusion

Remember our five simple rules: Brush, floss, eat nutritious foods and limit snacks. Last but just as important: visit your dentist. He or she is your partner in good dental health, and will help you keep your smile power. Now, what questions do you have?

Target Audience:
Grades 4-6

Smile Power

Suggested Introductory Activities:

1. Involve the students in a "Dental Health Quiz." Each student will need paper and pen or pencil.
    - If you brushed after breakfast this morning, give yourself two points.
    - If you visited your dentist in the last year, give yourself two points.
    - If you had no cavities at your last visit to the dentist, give yourself two points.
    - If your toothbrush is less than four months old, give yourself two points.
    - If you haven't had a soda pop, candy bar or other sweet snacks today, give yourself two points.
    - If you have 8 or 10 points, you're a winner! These are important things to do to protect your smile. Today you will find out why.
2. Ask: But first, what would you like to know about dental health? List their questions on the chalkboard. Refer to the questions as you answer them during the talk; any questions not addressed

during your speech can be used as a starting point for the question-and-answer session.

I. Why is it important to have healthy teeth?

A. You have a nicer smile. You look better, and feel better about yourself, when your smile is attractive. (Ask students to smile at one or two other students.)

B. You enjoy your meals more. Remember what it was like trying to bite into an apple or corn on the cob when your front teeth were missing?

C. Talking is easier, too. Say "Teeth are for Keeping." Notice how different parts of your mouth work together to form different sounds. Now, say it again, only this time, don't let your tongue touch your teeth. It's difficult to speak clearly! The ability to be understood by others is important, whether you are giving the right answer in class, calling a friend on the phone, or telling a parent about your last game.

D. Healthy teeth are part of being in top physical shape. Did you know that the United States Olympics Team has a program to assist athletes in keeping their mouths healthy? Obviously, an athlete with a dental problem may not play well for the team.

II. What keeps teeth from being healthy?

A. Sticky, colorless PLAQUE is always forming on your teeth.

B. Plaque contains bacteria.

C. When you drink sugary liquids or eat sugary or starchy foods, the bacteria in plaque make acid. This "acid attack" can last 20 minutes.

D. The acid causes dental decay (cavities) by making holes in the enamel of the tooth.

E. Your body cannot repair all the damage by itself. The dentist must remove the decay and place a "filling." If not treated by a dentist, decay can spread through the tooth.

Suggested Activities:

- Bring a few extracted teeth to the class, and soak them in a 5 percent solution of sulphuric acid. The teeth will start to dissolve immediately.
- Bring a diagram of the parts of the tooth to discuss with the class.

III. What can we do to fight plaque and keep our teeth healthy?

A. Brush your teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste. Just put a pea-sized amount of toothpaste on your brush.

B. Floss every day. Brushing and flossing will break up the bacteria and sugar team so they cannot attack your teeth and fluoride in toothpaste strengthens the tooth enamel and makes teeth less likely to decay.

Suggested Activities:

- Use disclosing tablets to demonstrate plaque build-up. (optional)
- Give each child a toothbrush to practice the correct brushing technique.
- Show students how to floss. Give them floss and allow them to practice. (For younger children, give them a piece of yarn 18 inches long. Have children get a partner and illustrate flossing by using yarn and the partner's hand. One student holds hands together with fingers straight and held tightly together. The other student flosses between the fingers.)

C. Cut down on snacks.

1. The more often you drink sugary beverages or eat snacks, the more "acid attacks" you have.
2. If you drink or eat sweets, do so with meals.
3. If you need a snack, choose nutritious foods like fresh vegetables or fruit or cheese.

Suggested Activities:

- Ask children to name foods from the 5 main food groups (vegetables, fruits, meat/poultry, grains, dairy).
- Ask students to make a list of everything they have eaten during the day and the day before, if possible.

IV. What else can we do to protect our teeth?

A. Learn what to do in a dental emergency. (Discuss when dental injuries are most likely to occur.) If a tooth is broken or loose, see the dentist immediately. If a tooth is knocked out, find it but don't clean it. Put it in a cup of milk, and get to the dentist right away.

B. Wear a mouthguard when playing sports.

C. Don't chew pencils or similar objects, or hold them in your mouth.

D. Don't smoke or use smokeless tobacco.

E. Ask your dentist about sealants, an invisible film a dentist can paint on your teeth to prevent decay.

Suggested Activities:

- Have students make posters about safety to place in the classroom or hall.
- Ask several students to "act out" a dental emergency involving a knocked-out tooth.

- Bring in a mouthguard and show students how it works.
- Ask students to make a list or a display of objects people frequently bite, chew, or hold in the mouth which are potentially harmful to the teeth or gums.

Conclusion

Remember these simple rules: Brush, floss, eat nutritious foods, limit between meal snacks, wear a mouthguard, get sealants, don't chew pencils or other objects, and don't smoke or chew tobacco. Most important, visit your dentist. These rules lead the way to a big, bright, healthy smile, which will make you feel better, look better, work better, and play better. Now, what questions do you have?

Suggested ADA Brochures:

- Dental Emergency Procedures Reference Card **(W260)**
- Dudley and Friends Activity Book **(W144)**
- Seal Out Decay **(W191)**
- Mouthguards: A Cool Thing! **(W245)**
- Diet and Tooth Decay **(W150)**

Target Audience:
Grades 7 –12

Smile Appeal: How To Get and Keep A Winning Smile

Introduction

I'm glad I could be here to talk about a subject as important as your teeth and your dental health. Already, I see a lot of skeptical smiles out there. You're probably asking yourself, "What's so important about my teeth?" Right? Well, just try to imagine what it would be like not to have any teeth, or to have teeth that were stained and dingy looking, or to have teeth that hurt all the time. Just think of how you'd look and feel if your teeth weren't healthy and you'll quickly understand how important it is to take good care of them.

When your friends look at you and talk with you, one of the first things they notice is your smile. Your smile says a lot about you. The shape of your teeth and gums has an awful lot to do with the quality of that smile. That's what I want to talk about today: That's getting and keeping a winning smile--healthy and bright--and a set of teeth that will stay with you forever.

When you think of what it means to be healthy, what comes to mind? You might think of exercise. It's Important to get a lot of exercise, to be active and play sports or take dance classes to keep your body in good shape.

You might also think of eating right. It's important to eat nutritious foods from the 5 main food groups and to drink milk or water and fewer sugary beverages. And of course, you've probably heard how unhealthy it is to smoke and drink. All of these things are key to good health. But do you ever think that good care of your teeth and gums is an important part of health? If you do everything else, but don't take care of your teeth and gums, then you can't be truly healthy person. Dental health is an important part of overall health.

I. The basics of home care

A. Brushing

1. Removes plaque, a sticky bacterial film that's always forming in your mouth. Plaque is not only a direct cause of cavities, it's also a major contributor to gum disease, a major cause of tooth loss in adults.
2. Keeps your teeth and mouth clean and bright, your breath fresh.
3. Frequency: Twice a day.

B. Flossing

1. Does what brushing can't-cleans spaces between teeth that toothbrushes can't reach.
2. Kinds of floss: Waxed or unwaxed, extra-fine, regular, ribbon, flavored. With help from your dentist, you can choose the type that's best for you.

3. As brushing's partner, flossing helps prevent gum disease. You may even have some early signs of gum disease already. Do you ever notice that your gums bleed when you brush? Do your gums ever feel tender or swollen? Flossing along with brushing can often reverse this condition called "gingivitis" or prevent it from getting worse.
4. Frequency: Daily

C. Fluorides

1. Always use fluoride toothpaste that has the American Dental Association Seal of Acceptance on it. The Seal on a product means it has met ADA criteria for safety and effectiveness.
2. Fluoride prevents cavities by strengthening and protecting the tooth enamel from acid.
3. Fluoride can be found in toothpastes, community water supplies, over-the-counter mouthrinses, gels and solutions applied by a dentist, drops and dietary supplements available from a dentist. (Discussion will hinge on fluoride level of your community's water supply.)

II. The basics of professional care.

A. See your dentist regularly.

B. Professional cleanings by a dentist or hygienist clean teeth more thoroughly than you can yourself.

C. A professional checkup also allows your dentist to examine your teeth, gums and mouth to make sure there are no problems or potential problems. The dentist will check for tooth decay and make sure any fillings you already have are in good condition. If the dentist thinks it's necessary, he or she might also take some x-rays of your mouth, which help in finding problems such as tooth decay. Dentists usually examine your neck and jaw as well to make sure all is in good working order.

D. If you get nervous before or during a dental checkup, tell your dentist. Your dentist has a variety of techniques to help you relax.

III. Sports protection: Athletic mouthguards

A. Wear some kind of mouthguard at all times while training and competing in sports, particularly contact sports such as football, basketball, hockey, wrestling or boxing.

B. Types of athletic mouth guards: Custom-fitted, mouth-formed, store-bought.

IV. Orthodontics or Braces

A. If your teeth are crooked, you may be curious about whether they can be straightened.

1. Braces can improve appearance: Straighter, more even looking teeth, look more pleasing.
2. Braces can improve your dental health and your overall health. Some orthodontic problems make it hard to bite and chew and can interfere with eating. Other problems can promote cavities or gum disease by making it hard to clean teeth.

B. Types of braces (describe each type)

1. Traditional metal braces
2. Transparent or tooth-colored plastic braces with thinner wires.
3. Removable braces that need to be worn only a certain number of hours each day or night.

V. Smokeless Tobacco

A. Can cause gum disease and tooth loss.

B. Can cause mouth cancer.

C. Is addictive.

VI. Oral Piercing

A. Gets in the way when talking and eating.

B. Can cause excessive drooling (something you won't see in hip fashion magazines).

C. Can cause damage to dental fillings and scar tissue.

D. Can cause infection, pain and swelling.

Conclusion

We've covered a lot of ground today. I hope that you'll remember to ask your dentist for more information. If you remember nothing else, I hope you'll remember to take good care of your teeth and gums by brushing and flossing every day, eating a balanced diet and limiting snacks. If you do snack, choose nutritious foods and beverages. Do these things, and see your dentist and your smile will be as attractive as it can be. You'll look good, you'll feel good and you'll have done everything to help keep your teeth a lifetime. What questions do you have?

Suggested ADA Brochures:

- Think Before You Chew **(W190)**
- Smart Choices for a Sharp Smile: Tips for Teens **(W256)**
- Watch Your Mouth **(W249)**
- Caring for Your Teeth and Gums **(W135)**
- Are Your Eating Habits Hurting Your Smile? **(W609)**
- Mouthguards: A Cool Thing **(W245)**
- Diet and Tooth Decay **(W150)**
- Oral Piercing: Is It Worth It? **(W284)**