The following pages provide instructions and all the graphics used in the bulletin board shown below. Pages are laminated to protect against wear and tear when clients lift the pages to read the answer to the questions.
February is Children’s Dental Health Month. This easy-to-assemble bulletin board is designed to teach parents and caregivers the basics of oral health care. Display this bulletin board in areas where parents and caregivers are likely to see it during February, or all year long.

This bulletin board is designed to work with whatever space is available!

The bulletin board consists of the following:

- Title page
- Eleven “interactive” question pages. When assembled, each question page is 5 1/2 inches wide x 8 1/2 inches long.
- One summary page with 10 key points about children’s oral health
- One half page about fluoride and one half page listing of fun oral health websites

If you have any questions or comments, please contact:

Venus Henriques, MS, CHES
vhenriques@dhmh.state.md.us
410-767-3081

Jennifer Istre Walker, BSN, MPH
jiwalker@dhmh.state.md.us
410-572-6276

Judy Gaston, RN, MS
jgaston@dhmh.state.md.us
410-221-2600

Christine B. Leo, BS, RDH
cleo@dhmh.state.md.us
410-572-6334

To make bulletin board pages:

1. Print pages 3-16 using a COLOR PRINTER.
2. Page 3 is the Title Page for the Bulletin Board.
3. Pages 4-14, cut these pages along the dotted line. Staple the question pages on top of the answer pages. Readers can lift the question page to discover the answer.
5. Page 16 summarizes 10 key points about children’s oral health care. Post this in a visible area where it will definitely be read!

Display as many questions as space allows
OR
Put up new questions every now and then to keep people guessing...ENJOY!
Should my baby go to bed with a bottle?

A. Absolutely
B. Your baby should not go to bed with a bottle
C. Sure, if my baby won’t stop crying

Lift Up for Answer

The correct answer is B.

- Your baby should NOT go to bed with a bottle. If your baby must go to bed with a bottle, make sure it is only filled with water.
When should I start brushing children’s teeth?

A. As soon as their first tooth appears
B. Once all the baby teeth come in (around 2-3 years)
C. Anytime

The correct answer is A.

- Start brushing your children’s teeth as soon as their first tooth appears.
- Before their first tooth appears, use a clean, damp cloth to wipe off their gums after feeding.
When should children have their first dental visit?

A. When they enter Kindergarten (around 4-5 years old)
B. By their first birthday
C. When they have their first cavity

Lift Up for Answer

The correct answer is B.

- Children should have their first dental visit by their first birthday.
- The first dental visit is a great time to learn about how to care for children’s teeth—before any problems develop.
Can I see early signs of tooth decay?

A. Maybe
B. No
C. Yes, by lifting the lip

Lift Up for Answer

Healthy Teeth

Can I see early signs of tooth decay?

The correct answer is C.

- Early signs of tooth decay can be seen **by lifting the lip** once a month.
- Look at the gum line for chalky white or brown spots.
- These spots may mean that the protective outer layer of the tooth is breaking down.
- Make an appointment to see the dentist very soon.
- Fluoride varnish may help repair damage and stop decay.
How many times a day should children’s teeth be brushed?

A. Once a day  
B. Twice a day  
C. Whenever  
D. Never  

Lift Up for Answer

The correct answer is B.

Children’s teeth should be brushed twice a day, especially before bedtime.

2 times per day  
+2 minutes  
4 a healthy mouth!
Don’t Rush!

How many minutes should children’s teeth be brushed?

A. 30 seconds
B. 1 minute
C. 2-3 minutes
D. 5 minutes

Lift Up for Answer

The correct answer is C.

Children’s teeth should be brushed for at least 2-3 minutes.

2 minutes +2 times per day 4 a healthy mouth!
What parts of the mouth should be brushed?

A. Teeth  
B. Tongue  
C. Front, back and chewing surfaces  
D. All of the above

Lift Up for Answer

The correct answer is D.

- Brush **teeth plus tongue** every time you brush! **Front, back and chewing surfaces too.**
- Wiggle the bristles at the gum line, where teeth and gums come together.
Parents should supervise brushing until children are what age?

A. 3-4 years  
B. 5-6 years  
C. 7-8 years

The correct answer is C.

- 0-18 months: brush for children.
- 18 months to 5 years: teach children about brushing and diet.
- Parents should supervise brushing until children are 7-8 years old.
- Be a great role model: children want to brush their teeth when they see parents brush their own.
What kind of bristles should the toothbrush have?

A. Hard Bristles  
B. Medium Bristles  
C. Soft Bristles  
D. It doesn’t matter

Lift Up for Answer

The correct answer is C.

- Toothbrush should have **soft bristles**. Tooth enamel is very hard but it can be damaged and gradually worn away by brushing too hard.
- **Soft bristles** are gentler on the gums and tongue too.
- Change toothbrushes every three months.
How much toothpaste?

A. Use enough to cover all the bristles
B. It depends on the age of the child
C. It doesn’t matter

The correct answer is B. It depends on the age of the child

- Under age 1, use water only.
- Age 1-2, use a slight smear of toothpaste with fluoride.
- Age 3-5, use 1/2 of a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride.
- Age 6+, use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride.

NOTE: Make sure to store the toothpaste out of reach of children under 6 years of age.
How much juice should children drink?

A. It varies by age
B. As much as they want
C. No juice

The correct answer is A. It varies by age

- Under 6 months: No juice!
- Infants over 6 months and toddlers: 4 to 6 ounces a day with meals and or snacks. Children should sip water between meals.
- Older children and adolescents: two servings per day, 6 ounces per day.
- Limit how often children consume fruit juice, sweet drinks and snacks. Fruits and vegetables are better for children’s teeth.
Fluoride is one of the best ways to protect teeth from cavities. It strengthens the white outer layer (enamel) of the tooth. It is safe and highly effective.

People can receive the benefits of this naturally occurring mineral in several ways:

- Fluoride is present naturally in water. Call the local health department or water board to ask about the level of fluoride.
- Many community water supplies add fluoride to the water if the natural fluoride content is not high enough to prevent cavities.
- Dentists or physicians may prescribe fluoride supplements when the community’s fluoride level in the water is low.
- Fluoride can also be applied directly to the teeth at dental visits.
- Toothpaste and mouth rinses have fluoride. Be sure children spit out toothpaste and rinses. Swallowing too much fluoride can cause fluorosis—white to brown spots inside tooth enamel.

Fun Websites:

National Museum of Dentistry  
www.mouthpower.org  
The secret of a healthy smile is simple: taking good care of your teeth. And what’s the best way to find out how to do that? Let Mouthie take you into the MouthPower laboratory. Available in English and Spanish.

American Dental Association  
www.ada.org/public/games  
Animations show when teeth shed and how to brush. Children will enjoy the unexpected twists in the “Visit the Dentist” story.

External Links Disclaimer: These sites contain links to other Internet sites only for the convenience of World Wide Web users. DHMH is not responsible for the availability or content of these external sites, nor does DHMH endorse, warrant or guarantee the products, services or information described or offered at these other Internet sites.
Building a Healthy Mouth and Body

1. The germs that cause tooth decay spread from person to person. Avoid sharing toothbrushes, food, cups and eating utensils.

2. Frequent sipping on milk and juice leads to early childhood cavities.

3. Wipe baby’s gums with a soft, damp cloth after each feeding. Start brushing as soon as the first tooth appears.

4. Lift the lip once a month to look for chalky white or brown spots at the gum line.

5. Children should visit the dentist by their first birthday.

6. Brush at least 2 times a day for 2-3 minutes.

7. Brush all surfaces of the teeth plus tongue.

8. Parents should supervise brushing until children are 7-8 years old.

9. Use a brush with soft bristles. Change brushes every 3 months.

10. A child’s age determines the amount of toothpaste with fluoride that should be used.