

NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release.

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February is National Children's Dental Health Month

To celebrate National Children's Dental Health Month, Panhandle Public Health District's Dental Health Program is offering free, fun, and interactive dental health presentations for school age children. Learning how to brush your teeth is the most important step to keeping teeth healthy! Here are some other tips to keep your child's teeth cavity-free!

1. **Brush.** Young children still need help brushing! Make sure your child is brushing his or her teeth 2 times per day. Angle the bristles towards the gumline and move the brush in small circles. Set the timer for 2 minutes and don't forget to brush the tongue!
2. **Floss.** Are those teeth touching each other? If they are, you need to floss – this includes baby teeth, too! This is a difficult task for children so help them help floss between the teeth. There are several options for floss, so find what works best for you.
3. **Nutrition.** What a child eats will impact his or her oral health. Diets high in sugars and starches increase the risk of dental decay or cavities. Limit sugary foods. Snack on nutritious foods like veggies. Drink plenty of water. Sipping on drinks other than water throughout the day can increase the risk of dental decay.
4. **Fluoride.** Fluoride is nature's cavity fighter. It can help prevent cavities in children by strengthening their teeth. Always use toothpaste with fluoride in it. There are also fluoride rinses available as another source of fluoride.
5. **Regular Dental Care.** Find a dental provider. This is an essential step in long term dental health. Children have unique needs, and your dental provider can provide an individualized care plan for your child.

PPHD offers school-based dental health programs. These programs allow every child to receive preventive dental services such as dental screenings, fluoride treatments, and sealants. All these preventive steps help prevent cavities. Take advantage of the added benefits these programs offer! To have PPHD come to your preschool or school classroom, contact Kendra Lauruhn at klauruhn@pphd.ne.gov.

For additional dental health basics visit http://www.pphd.org/Pages/dental_program.htm, <http://www.mouthhealthy.org> or call Kendra Lauruhn, Public Health Dental Hygienist, at Panhandle Public Health District at 308-633-2866 ext 206 or toll free at 877-218-2490. Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community.