

## Dentistry For Kids...

Kids teeth are important! Despite the fact that they fall out, those baby choppers should be taken care of and nurtured just like adult teeth. Beginning at twelve months of age, children should receive regular dental check-ups and care, just like the rest of us. Here's why.

Anyone who has tried to brush and floss the teeth of a screaming two year old can tell you it is not always easy. And yes, those baby teeth need flossing too. Regular dental check-ups and professional cleanings help to remove plaque that Mom cannot. Also, a few relaxed and fun cleaning visits help relieve anxiety if any treatment ever needs to be done.

If a child receives regular dental care, growth and development can be monitored and assessed. There are a variety of both medical and dental conditions that can first manifest in the mouth. For some problems, catching them early and intervening can be a key to long term health.

Dental sealants help to keep kids from getting tooth decay by eliminating the nooks and crannies where cavities start. For most kids, it is a good idea to seal out decay on the six and twelve year molars when they first erupt into the mouth. Sometimes, sealants are a good idea on baby teeth with deep pits and grooves that can decay easily. Once a cavity has started, more extensive treatment is required.

Baby teeth are more porous than adult teeth and, therefore, more prone to decay. Catching small cavities and treating them before they abscess is important. I still remember when my brother had to receive emergency treatment for an abscessed tooth. He still avoids the dentist to this day...and I'm his dentist.

Many orthodontic (crooked tooth) problems are caused by early loss of baby teeth. It is important to maintain baby teeth in their correct position until the permanent teeth come in. Early loss of primary teeth can cause all sorts of shifting and crowding. Also, many orthodontic problems can be corrected at an early age, making braces less complicated and less costly if needed in the future.

Remember, if we all make it fun, kids can have good dental experiences their whole life.

Until next week, keep smiling.

-Please send comments to Drs. Parrish at [www.ParrishDental.com](http://www.ParrishDental.com).