

Snohomish Health District, Child Care Health Outreach Program

TOOTHBRUSHING POLICY (this section is part of the [SHD CCHOP Health Policy](#))

Toothbrushing is _____ . (WAC 110-300-0180-2)

- *done once a day*
- *done after each meal*

Children are taught about oral health. (CFOC 3.1.5.3) Toothbrushing will be done in a safe, sanitary, and educational manner. (WAC 110-300-0180-2) It will be supervised to ensure: (CFOC 3.1.5.2)

- the establishment of a routine which enhances learning
- proper toothbrushing technique
- that toothbrushes are not shared and that they are handled properly
- that excess toothpaste is spit out

Toothpaste is:

- provided by _____ .
 - *child care center. Parents would be informed of the brand and type of toothpaste*
 - *the parent. Each child would have their own toothpaste*
- used only when parents sign an annual permission form allowing the use of fluoride toothpaste for children age 2 and older. (WAC 110-300-0215-3a-iv)
- used by children in the following amounts:
 - *under 3 years of age use a rice-size amount of fluoride toothpaste and children 3 and older use a pea-sized amount*
 - *under age 2 do not use toothpaste when brushing, children between age 2 and 3 use a rice-size amount of fluoride toothpaste, and children age 3 and over use a pea-sized amount*
 - *all children do not use toothpaste; they brush with water only*
 - *write your own*

Each child will have his/her own toothbrush that:

- is provided by
 - *the child care center*
 - *the parent*
 - *other – write your own*
- is stored properly to decrease cross contamination (including, open to air with bristles up, unable to drip on one another, not in contact each other or any other thing, and without toothbrush caps)
- is clearly marked with the child's name on the handle with a non-toxic, permanent marker
- has soft, rounded nylon bristles and be sized appropriately for the child
- is replaced twice each year when used less than twice a day, 5 days a week, or sooner if the bristles become splayed or the toothbrush is contaminated

Optional statements (choose those that apply):

- Teachers/child care staff will brush their own teeth to model the desired behavior.
- State your own method for ensuring children receive guidance for brushing adequately.
- Staff training will be provided yearly on the etiology of tooth decay, oral health promotion, and toothbrushing protocol.

Choose ONE of the two options below (note: the table method is preferred).

Children will brush teeth using the table method. Children brush teeth while sitting at the table. The toothbrushing procedure at the table is:

- A pitcher of water is obtained from a food preparation sink for rinsing toothbrushes.
- Table area is cleared of all dishes when toothbrushing immediately follows a meal or snack.
- The table is washed, rinsed, and sanitized, except when toothbrushing immediately follows a meal or a snack and the 3-step process was completed prior to the meal/snack.
- Each child is given a paper towel/napkin and a small paper cup with no more than an age-appropriate amount of toothpaste on the edge.
- Children are directed to apply the toothpaste to the brush.
- Staff will guide the children to brush in a pattern and move from area to area (left-to-right, inside and outside, top-to-bottom) around the mouth. Finish with the top of the teeth.
- Brushing should continue for at least two minutes.
- Child spits the excess toothpaste into the empty paper cup and wipes mouth with paper towel/napkin.
- Choose one of the following next steps:
 - *Children hand their toothbrush to the teacher who places it on a tray. Once all children are finished, the teacher takes the tray to a food prep sink and rinses each toothbrush with water from the pitcher.*
 - *Children hand their toothbrush to the teacher, who rinses it in a clean, sanitized sink using a pitcher of water from a food prep sink.*
 - *Clean water is poured from a pitcher into a new cup. Each child rinses their toothbrush in the cup and then hands the toothbrush to the teacher.*
- Staff place toothbrushes back in the toothbrush holder.
- Cups are discarded.
- After all the children have brushed, the table is washed, rinsed, and sanitized.

Children will brush teeth using the sink method. Children brush at the sink, located (*where*). The toothbrushing procedure at the sink is:

- A pitcher of water is obtained from a food preparation sink.
- The sink will be cleaned with the 3-step process (wash, rinse, sanitize).
- Teacher will hand each child their toothbrush and a small paper cup with an age-appropriate amount of toothpaste on the edge.
- No more than (*two, three, other-write your own*) children will be at the sink at one time.
- Children apply the toothpaste to the brush.
- Teach the children to brush in a pattern and move from area to area (left-to-right, inside and outside, top-to-bottom) around the mouth. Finish with the top of the teeth.
- Brushing should continue for at least two minutes.
- Child spits excess toothpaste into _____.
 - *the paper cup. The child then discards the paper cup.*
 - *the sink. The teacher rinses the sink after each group of children.*
- Child returns the toothbrush to the teacher who rinses it in the sink using water from the pitcher and replaces it in the toothbrush rack.
- After all the children have brushed, the sink is cleaned and sanitized with the 3-step process.



Contact the Child Care Health Outreach Program
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