

The Dental Visit/Lesson Plan

Goal: WIC participants will understand the importance of having regular dental visits for themselves and their children.

Objectives: WIC participants will be able to:

- A. State the importance of visiting a dentist.
- B. Identify the members of the dental health team.
- C. State the frequency of dental visits.
- D. Explain what to expect when going to the dentist.

Introduce yourself. Ask how many people have visited a dentist.

I. Ask: Why do we need to visit a dentist?

Key points:

- A. The dentist and dental hygienist are the main members of the dental professional team in the dental office who will be providing care to you and/or your child.
- B. A dentist is a doctor who examines and takes care of the teeth, gums and the surrounding soft tissues.
 - Dentists provide dental examinations, preventive and treatment services.
 1. The examination is done in order to make a determination of the health of your teeth, gums and surrounding tissues.
 2. Treatment services can include fillings, dental sealants, crowns (caps), bridges, dentures, extractions, and various surgical procedures.
- C. A dental hygienist is a trained professional who cleans your teeth, takes x-rays, applies fluoride treatments, provides dental sealants and gives oral health information.
 - Dental hygienists also can assess your teeth and gums to determine when you need to see a dentist.
- D. Tooth decay is the number chronic disease affecting children in the United States.
 - It is important to keep all scheduled dental appointments to keep a healthy mouth.
- E. You should have your teeth and your children's teeth cleaned once every 6 months, especially if at high risk for tooth and gum disease. A dental professional can clean your teeth better than you can do at home and detect any problems you or your children may not know you have.

II. Ask: Why should my family and I go to the dentist?

Key Points:

- A. To have your teeth cleaned and examined every 6 months.
- B. If you or your child are experiencing any pain and/or swelling in the facial area, you should contact a dentist immediately.
- C. A child should see a dentist by the time their first tooth erupts and no later than their first birthday.
- D. After this first visit, your child should see the dentist for a teeth cleaning once every 6 months.

III. Ask: What should I expect when I go to the dentist?

Key Points:

- A. When you first walk into the office, a smiling receptionist will greet you.
- B. Someone will call you to be seen.

- C. When you enter the exam room, you will notice all of the dental equipment.
For example: the chair, the light over the chair, x-ray machines and instruments.
- D. The dental professional will be wearing barriers to prevent passing germs.
For example:
 - Eye wear- to protect the eyes from splatter.
 - Mask- to protect the mouth and nose.
 - Long gowns- to protect bodies.
 - Gloves- to protect hands.

NOTE: If you have any of the dental equipment, demonstrate. Other barriers are put over the chair, light and hand piece. Sterilizers are used to kill germs on the instruments.

IV. What should I do to get ready for my child to see a dentist?

Key Points:

- A. Children should understand that the dentist and dental hygienist are friendly people who will help them keep and take care of their teeth.
- B. Be positive and make dental appointments a pleasant experience.
- C. Children learn from example, so it is important for you to brush with fluoridated toothpaste and floss your teeth as well as see the dentist on a regular basis.
- D. Good health habits are formed at an early age so it is up to you to help your child have a healthy smile for life.

Suggestions:

If any children are around, read “Timmy visits the dentist” to them.

To go over tooth structures make a bulletin board comparing animal teeth to human teeth or show pictures of the animals while describing the differences.

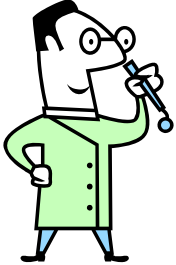
Give out all the roles of a dental team including dentist, receptionist, hygienist, assistant, patient and play “Who Am I” by giving clues and having them guess who you are talking about.

Evaluation Plan: Evaluation will be based on verbal responses from the WIC participants. If the group consists of 8 participants ask at least 2 people to answer one of the questions below. Note: If the group is larger or smaller than 8 participants, roughly as 25% of the group.

- What is a dentist? What is a dental hygienist?
- How often should you and your child visit the dentist’s office?
- When should your child first see the dentist?

Your Child's First Visit to the Dental Office

It is important for your child to see the dentist when the first tooth erupts or no later than their first birthday. Here are some things to expect during your child's first visit.



The Dentist and Dental Hygienist:

- Are friendly dental professionals who will help your child take care of their teeth.
- Will teach you how to clean your child's teeth.
- Will talk to you about fluoride and good dental habits.
- Will check for tooth decay and other problems.

What Might Be Done for Your Child on the First Visit?

- Carefully examine the development of their mouth.
- Count their teeth and give them rides in the chair and explain everything that is going to be done.
- Show how to brush their teeth.
- A fun and safe visit with a visit to the toy box

What Can You Do to Make Your Child Less Fearful of Going to the Dental Office?

- Ask the dentist about the procedures during the first visit so there are no surprises.
- Talk to your child about what to expect and build excitement about going to the fun office.
- Have your child go with you and watch you while you have your appointment.
- Be patient with your child and calm them if they are frightened and reassure them
- If your child is young, you can sit in the dental chair and hold your child in your lap.
- Play dentist with your child by taking turns looking into each other's mouths with flashlights

What Other Tips Should You Know?

- You should be prepared with an action plan for both a positive or negative reaction from your child.
- Do not have overly high expectations for your child – young children will be fussy, not sit still or cry.
- Bring with you to the appointment your child's complete medical history.

A Positive Attitude is Contagious:

- Be positive and make dental appointments a happy experience.
- Children learn from example, so be sure to brush and floss your teeth and see the dentist.
- Good habits are formed at an early age, so it is up to you to help your child have a healthy smile for life!



If you would like to find out if you are eligible for dental services, please call the HealthChoice Enrollment hotline at 1-800-977-7388.

KID'n Around Page

Here are some things that can be found in a dental office. Have your child name these items.

