



**O**ral Health  
**P**rogram to  
**E**ngage  
**N**on-Dental Health  
& Human Service

**W**orkers in  
**I**ntegrated  
**D**ental  
**E**ducation

# ORAL HEALTH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD



TRAINING CURRICULUM AND GUIDELINES FOR  
EARLY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

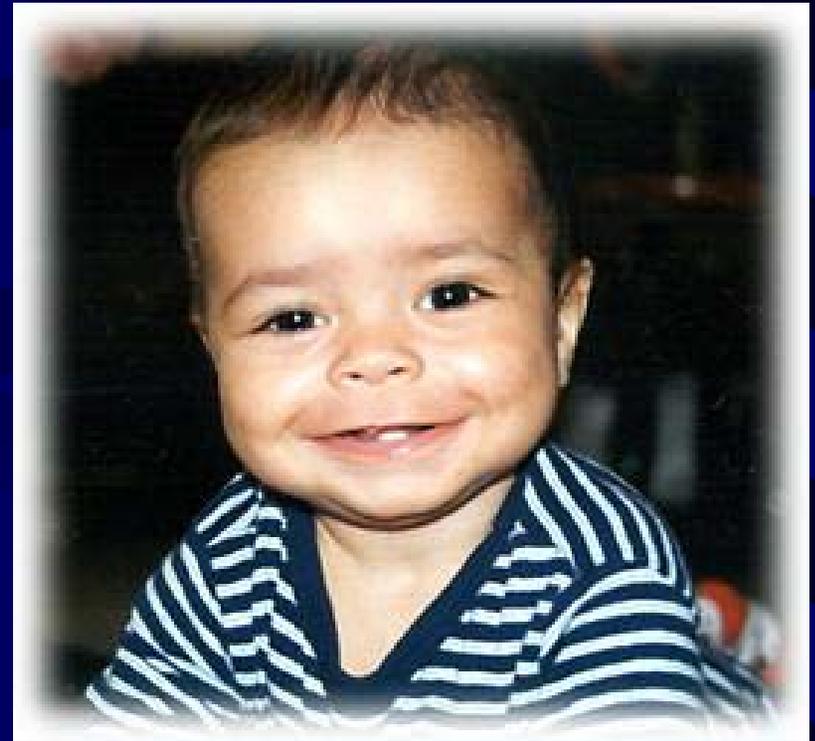
# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

BY THE END OF THIS PRESENTATION  
YOU WILL BE ABLE TO:

- ✓ Describe how tooth decay affects general health
- ✓ Explain: Bacteria + Sugar + Tooth = Decay
- ✓ List ways to help prevent tooth decay, including brushing twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- ✓ Explain why snacks should be sugar-free and on a regular schedule
- ✓ List at least 2 reasons why a child should visit the dentist by their 1st birthday

# HEALTHY BABY TEETH ARE IMPORTANT!

- Chewing and nutrition
- Self-esteem
- Growth of the adult teeth
- Growth of the face and jaws



# DECAY IN BABY TEETH IS SERIOUS

- Dental caries is the most common childhood disease
- Pain
- Difficulty chewing, poor nutrition, weight problems
- Complicated, costly treatment



# DECAY IN BABY TEETH IS SERIOUS

- Infection
- Poor self-esteem, behavior and social problems
- Lost school days and learning problems
- High risk of decay in adult teeth



# STAGES OF DECAY

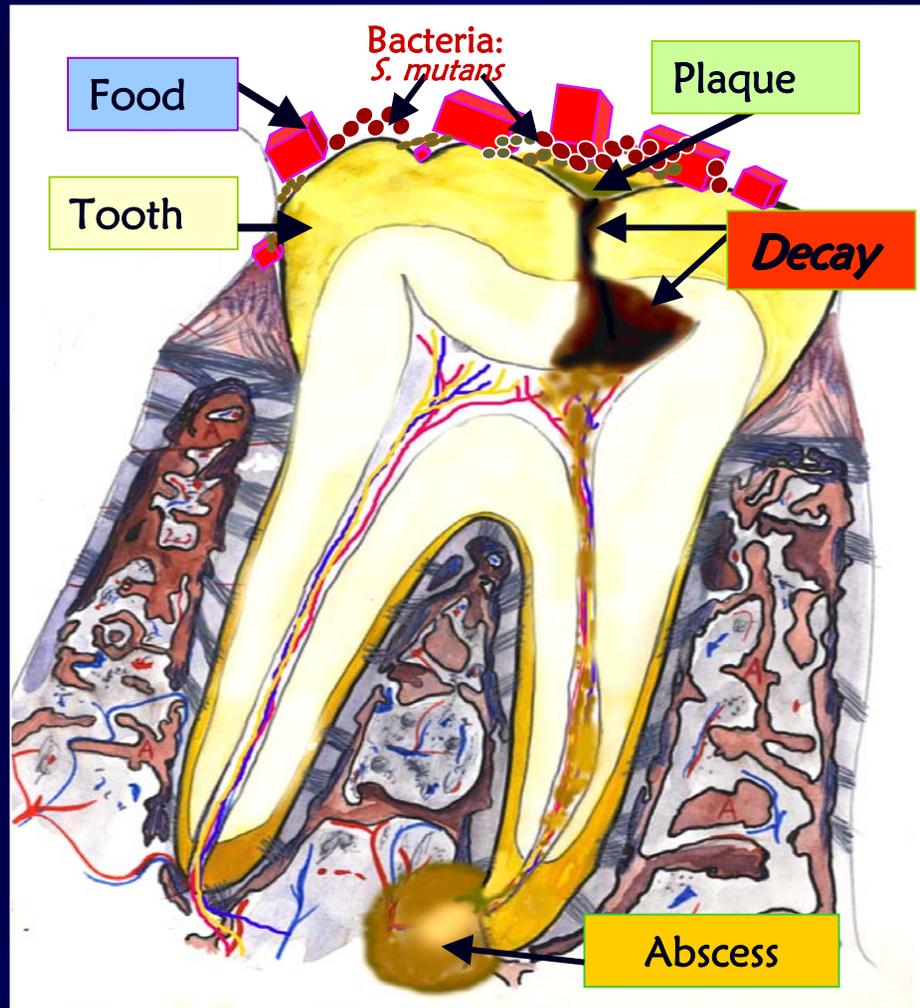


Early Decay



Moderate Decay

# BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY



BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY

# TOOTH DECAY IS AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE

- Bacteria in mother's saliva passed to child
- **Mother's** oral health must be good !



BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY

## AVOID SUGARS

READ IT BEFORE YOU EAT IT!

CHECK FOOD LABELS:

You'd be surprised how much sugar is in some foods!

- How often sugars are eaten is more important than how much
- Too many sugars through:
  - frequent snacks and grazing
  - sweetened drinks in bottles and sippy cups



BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY

## INFANT FEEDING

- Breast is best
- Only formula or breast milk in the bottle
- Hold the baby when bottle feeding -  
No propping or bottle to bed
- Introduce cup at 6 months
- Stop bottle at 12 months



# STOPPING THE BOTTLE

## Bed time bottle alternatives

- Stuffed toy
- Blanket
- Clean pacifier
- Rocking
- Back rub
- Read or sing to child
- Crying is normal



( Baby will sleep peacefully after a few nights )

BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY

# TODDLER & PRESCHOOL FEEDING

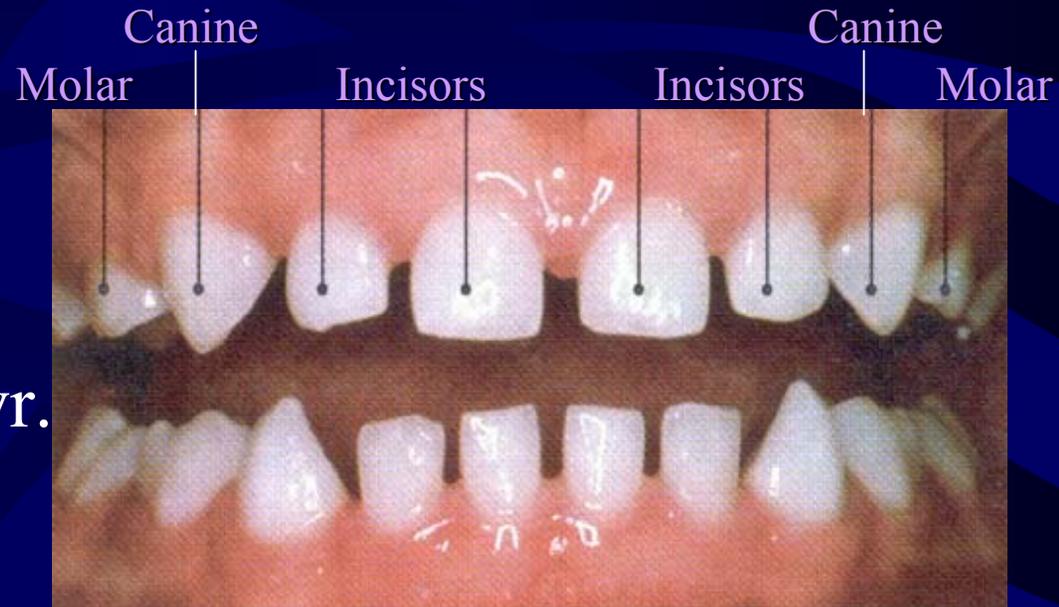
- Regular meals – no ‘grazing’
- Healthy, nutritious, sugar-free snacks
  - fruit
  - vegetables
  - cheese
  - cereal/crackers
- Milk or water between meals



BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY

## WHEN DO THE BABY TEETH COME INTO THE MOUTH ?

- Incisors 6 mos.
- 1st Molars 1st yr.
- Canines 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> yr.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Molars 2<sup>nd</sup> yr.



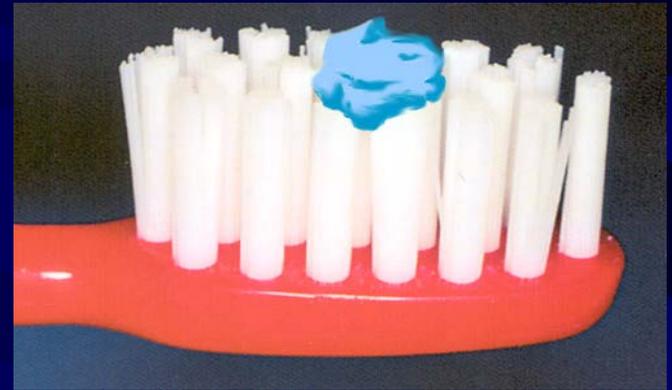
Decay can happen as soon as the incisors are in the mouth

BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY

## START BRUSHING

WHEN THE FIRST TOOTH COMES INTO THE MOUTH  
( About 6 – 8 months of age )

- Use a soft nylon brush and small drop of toothpaste with fluoride
- Spit out the toothpaste - don't rinse
- Adult does the brushing until age 6 to 7 years old
- Nothing to eat or drink after brushing at night



BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY

# PROPER BRUSHING TECHNIQUE



Children should lie in adult's lap or stand in front of adult, both facing same direction

BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY

# PROPER BRUSHING TECHNIQUE

- Lift lip to brush at gum line



- Brush behind the teeth

BACTERIA + FOOD + TOOTH = DECAY

# FIRST DENTAL VISIT BY FIRST BIRTHDAY



- Education
- Prevention
- Detection of early cavities
- Prompt treatment

# WHICH FAMILIES ARE LIKELY TO HAVE CHILDREN WITH DENTAL DECAY?

- Families with untreated dental decay
- Families who drink a lot of soda and eat a lot of snacks
- Families who do not go to the dentist
- Families who do not brush their teeth regularly
- Families who have lower incomes

# TAKE HOME MESSAGE

- Teeth, including baby teeth, are very important
- **BACTERIA + SUGAR + TOOTH = DECAY**
- Healthy mother's teeth means health baby's teeth
- Brush the teeth two times a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- First dental visit by first birthday
- Keep to a regular schedule for snacks. Water, milk, vegetables and fruit are best.

# State of Connecticut Department of Public Health



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH

Keeping Connecticut Healthy

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