



Chapter Four: School Age

Big Kid!

The start of school brings about more skill sets and independence. Make oral care a part of your child's healthy lifestyle.

Children's Dentistry

Pediatric Dentistry is the specialty of dental medicine dedicated to the oral healthcare of children from infancy and throughout the teenage years. Additionally, pediatric dentists are qualified in the treatment of children and adults with special needs. Dental offices can be very intimidating for many children and parents are encouraged to consider the options available for their child. Pediatric dentists offer a variety of behavior management techniques to accommodate children and as needed provide care in a hospital setting. Positive dental experiences during the childhood years are fundamental to a lifetime of good oral health. Be sure to consult with your child's pediatrician and dentist to secure the best provider for your child's oral care.

Healthy Habits: KIDS Oral Care 101

- Brush after breakfast
- Snack on fresh fruits and vegetables
- Hydrate on fluoridated water
- Low sugar beverages
- Brush after lunch and again after school
- Sugar free gum
- Brush before bedtime



Braces

Between the ages of nine and twelve, your child will experience a great transition from primary teeth to the adult dentition and you may begin to notice spaces and or crowding in the arch. Although a certain degree of spacing is normal, your child may need to correct certain changes to obtain a more proper alignment of the teeth. Orthodontics is the field of dentistry that focuses on the irregularities of the teeth and their correction. Treatment can range from removable appliances to braces or even jaw surgery. While some children are treated in their teenage years, others may need treatment to begin earlier. Be sure to inquire with your child's dentist about any dental irregularities that your child may exhibit. Good oral hygiene is of great importance when wearing orthodontic appliances and professional cleanings may be recommended with greater frequency. Consult with your dental provider as needed.

Athletic Mouthguards

Sports related injuries are all too common and in millions of cases each year result in tooth loss. The upper front tooth is the most commonly injured and twice as often in males as females. Studies have shown that among concussion in populations of high school students, more than half were reported to not have been wearing a mouthguard. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends an athletic mouthguard for all children and youth participating in any organized sports activities. Mouthguards come in a variety of thickness types and designs ranging from over the counter stock options available at your local pharmacy to customized guards fabricated by dental laboratories. Be sure to discuss your child's athletic activities with your dental provider to minimize the risk of sports related facial trauma.

Home Care

With the start of school, children are engaging in a detailed schedule of classes and other activities. Good oral hygiene habits should be implemented into this daily routine. As they become more independent, school age children should be informed about their choices in regards to diet and nutrition. Dental decay results from a dynamic process involving sugar found in the food we consume and the bacteria that live in our mouths. Cavity prevention involves brushing, flossing, and rinsing after meals to maintain a healthy environment inside the mouth. Additionally, routine dental visits every six months are recommended. Be sure to consult with your dental office about your child's particular cavity risk and preventive measures that may need to be implemented. For more information on oral care for your family, visit brightwhitesbydrwhite.com.