

FEBRUARY

Committed to your health and our community National Children's Dental Health Month

February is National Children's Dental Health Month, and the American Dental Association is asking people to "Defeat Monster Mouth." This month-long national health observance brings together thousands of dedicated dental professionals, health care providers and educators to promote the benefits of good oral health to children, their caregivers, teachers and many others. The ADA and dentists across the country also celebrate Give Kids A Smile Day on Feb. 6 by providing free oral health care to children. This year's campaign slogan, "Defeat Monster Mouth," is displayed on posters that feature the McGrinn Twins, Flossy and Buck, Den and Gen Smiley and K-9 the dog. They are fighting to defeat Plaqster the Monster for good oral health. The posters demonstrate effective ways to defeat monster mouth and maintain good oral health by

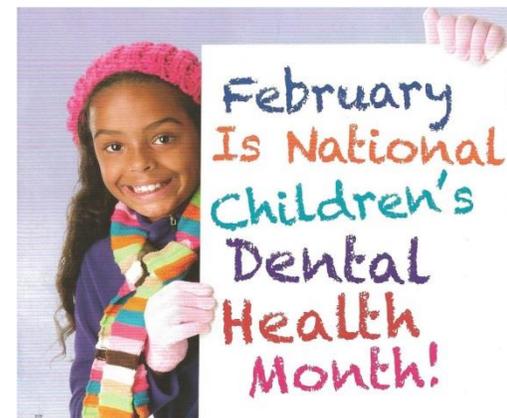
brushing, flossing, rinsing, and eating healthy snacks.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children to get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums. To access free online resources that can help you with teaching children about good oral health, visit ADA.org, click on Public Programs and then National Children's Dental Health Month. For tips on how to achieve optimal oral health, visit MouthHealthy.com. Because developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums, the American Dental Association sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month each February.

Now in its 63rd year, this month-long national health observance brings together thousands of dedicated dental professionals,

Yelm Family Medicine Patient Newsletter

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health care providers and others to promote the benefits of good oral health to children and adults, caregivers, teachers and many others. Parents and teachers can help kids celebrate and learn more about the importance of a healthy smile. The ADA offers free downloadable information, kid-friendly oral health worksheets and games on MouthHealthy.org, the ADA's consumer website. Click on the For Kids tab on the left side of the page for a variety of age-appropriate activities, games and videos and presentations. There are also teaching guides that adults can use at home, in the classroom or in other community-based settings. MouthHealthy.org also offers a variety of tools to help consumers learn more about oral health or address their concerns, including the new ADA Dental Symptom Checker. This new tool is designed to understand what your dental symptoms may mean so that you can make informed decisions about your dental health. Families who don't have a regular dentist can use the ADA Find-A-

Dentist online feature that uses a zip code search feature to help locate a dentist in their community. Find a Dentist listings include information like office hours, insurance accepted, languages spoken and photos of the dentists. Dental disease can lead to difficulty eating, sleeping, paying attention in school and smiling. The ADA urges parents to make sure their children brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste, floss daily, eat a balanced diet and see their dentist regularly to address tooth decay in its earliest stages.

CHILDREN'S ORAL CARE

Overview

Take good care of your child's baby teeth. They do eventually fall out but until they do, baby teeth play an important role in helping your child bite and chew food, and speak clearly. Many of the same treatment and evaluation options that adults have are also available to kids. These include X-rays, dental sealants, orthodontic treatment and more.

What to Expect During Childhood

- **Wiggly teeth**

When a child is about 6 years old, his/her teeth will begin to come loose. Let your child wiggle the tooth until it falls out on its own. This will minimize the pain and bleeding associated with a lost tooth.

- **Cavities**

Cavities can develop when sugar-containing foods are allowed to stay in the mouth for a long time. Bacteria that live on the teeth feast on these bits of food and can eat away at tooth enamel. Saliva washes away the acid between meals, but if your child is always eating, there may not be time for this acid to get washed away.

Topics Related to Children's Oral Care

- Brushing & Flossing
- Dental Visit
- Tooth Fairy
- Sealants