HEALTHY DENTAL HABITS

Developing good dental health habits with your child early on and practicing them daily will help your child's smile and overall health. Baby teeth are not just placeholders. They are important and need to be protected. Take a look at the tips below to help your child have healthy teeth.
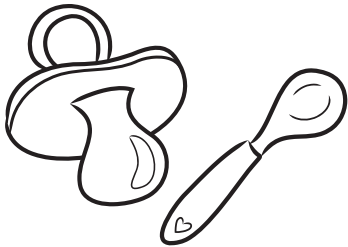
CHOOSE HEALTHY DRINKS
Breastfeed your baby until at least six months of age, if possible. Then fill your baby's bottle with formula, milk, or water. Don't put sugary drinks or juice in your child's bottle.
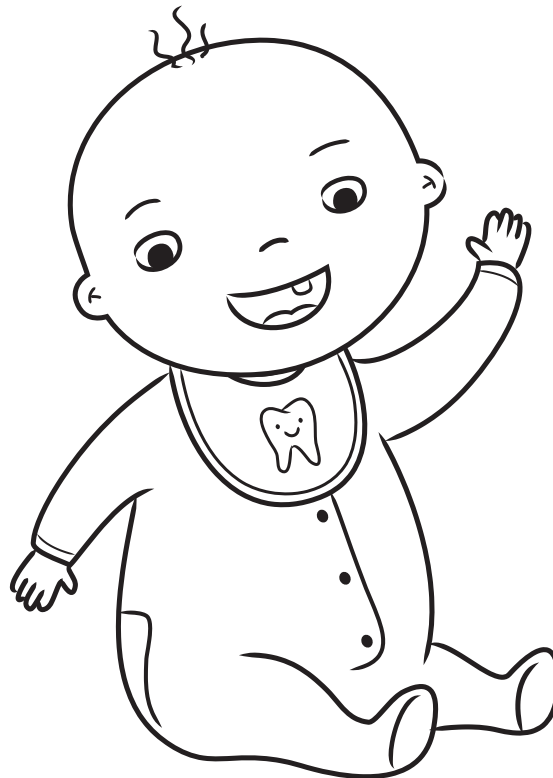
DO NOT PASS ALONG GERMS
Do not put pacifiers or feeding spoons in your mouth—you can pass cavity-causing germs to your child. Rinse pacifiers with water to clean them.

FINISH BOTTLES BEFORE BED
Finish bottle feedings before putting your baby down to sleep. Wipe baby's gums after each feeding.

SEE THE DENTIST
Take your child to the dentist for a first checkup after the first tooth appears or by the time your child turns 1.

CLEANING GUMS AND TEETH STARTS AT BIRTH

▶ **BIRTH TO 1ST TOOTH** Gently wipe baby's gums with a clean, damp, soft washcloth or gauze after each feeding.

▶ **1ST TOOTH TO 3 YEARS OLD** Brush your child's teeth two times a day (morning and night). Use a baby toothbrush and a smear of fluoride toothpaste the size of a grain of rice.

▶ **3 TO 5 YEARS OLD** Brush your child's teeth for two minutes, two times a day. Use a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste on a child's toothbrush. Make it a fun activity—sing a silly song or make a game out of it using a timer.

▶ Supervise brushing until your child can spit out the toothpaste instead of swallowing it, around age 6.

Contact your child's dentist or pediatrician if you have questions about your child's dental health or teething, and ask about fluoride varnish for your child's teeth.

Give Kids A Smile!
American Dental Association®