



## Why It's Important to Take Care of Baby Teeth

by Patricia Braun, MD, MPH, FAAP, [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)

### When should I take my child to the dentist?

When your baby's first tooth appears, it's time to schedule their first dental visit. This is the ideal time to learn more about dental care for kids and what you'll need to do as they grow.

Over time, your dentist can help you set up a healthy family routine, explaining everything from how to teach little hands to brush and floss to fitting young athletes with the right mouthguard.

### The role your pediatrician plays

Since babies see the doctor several times before their first birthday, pediatricians have the opportunity to check inside little mouths. It can be difficult to spot warning signs in baby teeth, so your pediatrician's expert eye is especially helpful.

As your child grows, your pediatrician will offer tips and suggestions that support the expert care your family dentist will provide. They can also apply fluoride varnish to your child's teeth in partnership with your child's dentist. In addition, in addition, pediatricians can help parents learn more about special risks that make some children more cavity-prone. For example, preemies often have weaker tooth enamel than babies born at full term. Certain health conditions and medicines can reduce saliva flow, making brushing and flossing even more important.

### Making cavity prevention a family priority

Kids learn from the adults around them. That's why parents and caregivers should take excellent care of their own teeth. As one dentist puts it: "Bad teeth don't necessarily run in the family, but bad dental habits do."

Set a positive example by letting little ones watch while you brush and floss. Explain that this is something we do twice a day, morning and night, even when we're away from home. Mark dental appointments on the family calendar, which shows kids that regular checkups are a top priority. Some children benefit from going to the dentist more than every 6 months to help them avoid getting cavities or keep cavities that have already started from getting worse.

Encourage good habits by adding fun to your child's routine. Toddlers and preschoolers may enjoy brushing to music or marking their progress on a tooth care calendar. The American Dental Association offers free coloring and craft sheets you can download and share, too.

## Spring Book Recommendations

If your kiddo needs extra encouragement for confidence with going to the dentist, spring up some conversation about it with books!

### 1-5 YEARS



PEPPA PIG  
DENTIST TRIP



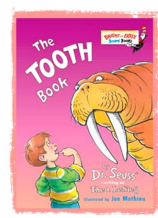
READY, SET,  
BRUSH!



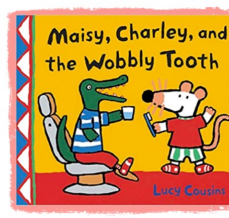
FIRST TIME  
DENTIST



BRUSH, BRUSH, BRUSH!

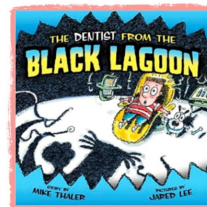


THE TOOTH  
BOOK

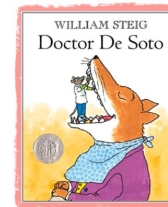


MAISY, CHARLEY, AND  
THE WOBBLY TOOTH

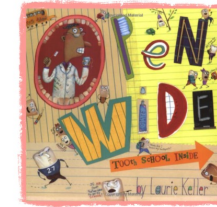
### 5-9 YEARS



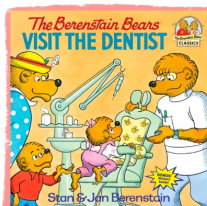
THE DENTIST FROM  
THE BLACK LAGOON



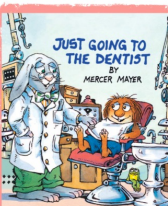
DOCTOR DE SOTO



OPEN WIDE,  
TOOTH SCHOOL INSIDE



THE BERENSTAIN BEARS  
VISIT THE DENTIST



JUST GOING TO  
THE DENTIST



CURIOUS GEORGE  
VISITS THE DENTIST

credit: <https://www.sllstories.com/tooth-picks>

## A newsletter from your Pediatrician and CHILDREN'S HEALTH foundation

Spring 2023



# TAKE CARE

## HEALTHY TIPS FOR SPRING

Spring has sprung among us! For most families, that means looking ahead as the school year is on the downhill slide. For some families, that means preparing for their teens graduating high school. What an exciting time! Whether your teen is college bound or career bound, one thing is in common for all of them- they are becoming adults! Find ways to support your teen here, and as always, Take Care.



## Next Stop Adulthood: Tips For Parents

Source: *Connected Kids: Safe, Strong, Secure* (Copyright © 2006 American Academy of Pediatrics) <https://www.healthychildren.org>

Becoming a young adult is exciting, difficult, and scary for both parents and teens. It is a time of increasing independence and change, no matter what the situation.

For example:

- Going to college
- Moving out
- Starting a job
- Staying at home

### Teach Independence

Learning to be independent does not happen overnight. Just like getting a driver's license, it occurs over time and in steps.

- **Learner's permit**—learning new skills with supervision License with limitations—taking on some responsibilities, but with parental support
- **Full license**—being fully responsible for one's own actions Parents need to give up much of the control over many of their young adult's decisions. But parents still worry about their child's safety, health, and success. This is where you need to trust the job you have done as a parent.

### Let Go, But Stay Connected

Parents give guidance and feedback to their children at every age, but giving advice to a young adult is different from telling a child what to do or teaching a child how to do something.

**Giving and Getting Advice:** Young adults need to know that everybody needs advice

and help from others for the rest of their lives. Parents now need to be open to getting advice and feedback from their adult children.

**Effective Communication Is An Important Part of This New Relationship:** Open and honest communication is key. Even though some topics may be difficult or even embarrassing for you, this is the basis of a healthy adult relationship with your child.

### Understanding Each Other May Be Difficult:

There may be times when you do not agree with each other, and conflicts may occur. Try not to let getting mad or angry turn into a fight. Fights don't solve problems; they make new ones.

**Be A Role Model:** Solve problems and conflicts with respect for your teen. Acknowledge and apologize when you are wrong. This is an excellent way to teach your child how to peacefully solve conflicts with others.

### Help Teens Learn Responsibility

As teens gain the privileges that come with being adults, they need to understand the responsibilities toward others and the community that come with these privileges. Decisions that adults make have adult consequences, both good and bad, that they will need to live with.

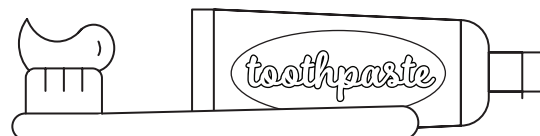
**Do Less:** Parents need to stop doing things for their teens, like making lunch or running an "emergency" load of wash, that teens can do for themselves.

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## Color the BIG FOUR!

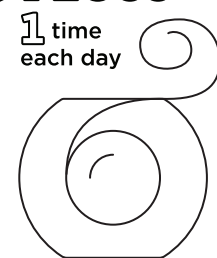
### ① BRUSH

2 times each day for 2 minutes



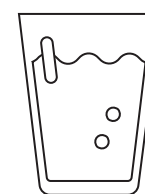
### ② FLOSS

1 time  
each day



### ③ RINSE

with:



water



mouthwash  
(children 6+)

### ④ REPEAT

every day!



Download more fun activities at:  
[www.AmericasToothFairy.org](http://www.AmericasToothFairy.org)

credit: @sllstories

### CHILDREN'S HEALTH foundation

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**[www.ch-foundation.org](http://www.ch-foundation.org)**

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Parents who complain most bitterly about their teens’irresponsibility are often the ones who don’t make their kids do anything for themselves.

**Let Consequences Happen:** There is no need to come up with special punishments to discourage irresponsibility.

Simply let nature take its course.

- Forgotten homework assignments result in lower grades or having to do make-up work.
- Not putting clothes into the hamper means that there might be nothing but dirty clothes to wear.

Of course, it is hard to stand by and see your child suffer embarrassment or defeat. A parent naturally wants to jump in and help. Remind yourself that the most helpful thing you can do is allow your child to learn to take responsibility, the sooner the better.

**Give A Regular Allowance, But No Extras:** When you are seen as a source of ready cash, your child has no incentive to handle money responsibly. Decide on a fair amount, and discuss how to budget by spending a little and saving for larger purchases. Then refuse to pay for any items that are not needed. If teens don’t have money for something they want, they soon will learn to budget.

**Teach Ways To Be More organized:** Teens who have trouble staying organized can appear irresponsible. By teaching specific skills, like always putting keys in a particular spot, you are helping your child become a responsible adult.

**Help Your Teen Think Through Options:** Adolescents make large, life-changing decisions, like whether to drink, smoke, have sex, or go to college. They also make smaller but still important decisions, like whether to try out for soccer or use the time for studying or an after-school job.

One way to help with decisions is to sit down together and actually write down the answers to the following questions:

- What is the difficulty?
- What are possible solutions?
- What are consequences of each solution?
- Which of those consequences is most desirable from a practical, personal, moral, or legal point of view?

### Relating As Adults

As children become adults, the way children and parents relate needs to change. The goal is to respect each other as adults.

**Continue Sharing, Listening, and Asking Questions:** Parents want to hear about how their “kids” are doing. It is also important for children to know “what’s going on” with their parents.

Having lunch or dinner together is a good way to keep up-to-date with each other and have fun at the same time. Don’t stop being interested in each other’s lives.

### Living At Home

**Everyone Needs To Help With The Work of The Family:** Whether the chores are divided up using a formal schedule or everyone just pitches in when they can, everyone needs to help out at home. You might want to have a family meeting to decide who does what. It’s all about fairness.

**A Pleasant Place To Live:** Teens and young adults need to know that they can’t play their music so loudly that it disturbs others. Everyone needs to pick up clothing and other items in spaces they share, especially hallways and bathrooms.

**A Space To Call Their Own:** Even in small homes, providing teenagers with a space to call their own is important. This allows them the freedom to express themselves and to develop their own sense of self-discipline. For example, they can decorate their room as they wish and keep it as messy or neat as they choose, within reason. It is within your rights to insist that a room be picked up if it starts to smell bad or affects the home.

**Being Safe:** Parents always will be concerned about their children. But as children get older, they need to begin to assume some responsibility for their own safety.

For example, when parents communicate curfews as a matter of safety, it is more likely to be accepted. Teens and young adults need to know that if they are not able to make the curfew, they need to get in touch with the person who is waiting up for them.

Last Updated: 11/17/2009

Source: Connected Kids: Safe, Strong, Secure (Copyright © 2006 American Academy of Pediatrics) The information contained on this Web site should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

## 20 Minute Fish Tacos

By: Emma Christensen from [simplyrecipes.com](http://simplyrecipes.com)



Prep Time: 15 Min   Cook Time: 6 Min   Servings: 4

### Ingredients

#### For the fish:

- 1 pound cod, tilapia, halibut, or other white fish filets
- 2 to 3 teaspoons chili powder, enough to coat the fish
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

#### For the fish taco sauce:

- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 3 to 4 tablespoons lime juice (from 2 limes)
- 1 teaspoon hot sauce, optional

#### To assemble:

- 1/2 small head red cabbage, shredded (about 4 cups)
- 12 taco-sized corn or flour tortillas
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 4 radishes, thinly sliced
- 4 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup roughly chopped cilantro

### Method

#### 1. Make the fish taco sauce:

In a small bowl, combine the sour cream, mayonnaise, lime juice, and hot sauce (if using) for the taco sauce. Stir until combined.

#### 2. Make the red cabbage slaw:

In a medium bowl, combine the shredded cabbage with 3 tablespoons of the taco sauce. Stir to coat and add more taco sauce if you like. (The cabbage shouldn’t be dripping with sauce; aim for a very thin coating.)

#### 3. Warm the tortillas:

In a dry skillet over medium-high heat, warm the tortillas one at a time for about 30 seconds on both sides. Alternatively, wrap 1 to 3 tortillas in a damp paper towel and microwave for 30 seconds, until warm.

Keep warmed tortillas wrapped in a clean dish towel while you make the fish.

#### 4. Season the fish:

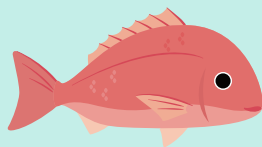
Sprinkle the fish on both sides with chili powder and salt. Gently rub in the seasonings with your fingers to make sure the fish is entirely coated.

#### 5. Cook the fish:

Warm a large cast iron or nonstick skillet on the stovetop over medium-high heat. When hot, add one tablespoon of olive oil and tilt the pan to entirely coat the bottom.

Add the fish to the pan and cook for 2 minutes. Flip the fish and cook another 2 minutes. Flip and cook 1-2 minutes longer if needed; the fish is done when it is opaque all the way through and breaks apart easily. If any smaller, thinner pieces of the fish start to break off as you flip, just scoop them out and transfer them to a serving platter.

Transfer the cooked filets to a platter and use a fork or a knife to gently break the fish into large chunks. Assemble the tacos with a few pieces of fish, some cabbage slaw, toppings of your choice, and a drizzle of taco sauce.



## The American Academy of Pediatrics says that most kids in the United States are not eating enough seafood!

### Healthy Fish Choices for Kids

Source: Council on Environmental Health (Copyright © 2019 American Academy of Pediatrics) <https://healthychildren.org>

Adding fish to your child’s diet is an excellent way to reel in a prize catch of important nutrients. Most seafood (fish and shellfish like crab, scallops, oysters, and mussels) that’s eaten in the United States provides a tasty, safe and healthy mealtime option. But there are a few types of fish children should skip, or eat in limited amounts, to avoid exposure to high levels of mercury.

#### One fish, two fish: How much fish should kids eat?

In addition to high-quality protein, vitamins and minerals, fish is a great source of healthy fats such as docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) that are essential for a child’s developing brain, nervous system and vision. There’s also some research suggesting that consuming fish early in life may help prevent allergic diseases such as asthma and eczema.

To avoid missing out on these nutritional perks, children should eat small servings of a variety of fish and shellfish 1 to 2 times per week.

### How much fish should kids eat?

A child’s recommended serving of seafood is smaller than an adult’s, based on their age. On average, this means:



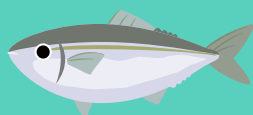
**1 oz for ages 2-3**



**1 oz for ages 4-7**



**3 oz for ages 8-10**



**4 oz for ages 11+**

#### Why are some fish better choices than others?

**Mercury.** Some lakes, rivers, oceans, and other bodies of water can be contaminated with mercury. This naturally occurring metal is released into the air by burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas), solid waste, and by some factories. When it settles into water, bacteria changes the mercury into a more dangerous form, methylmercury. Methylmercury can build up in fish—especially ones that eat other fish and live longer, such as shark and swordfish. Eating too much of these contaminated fish can have harmful effects on a child’s developing nervous system.

**Local concerns.** The good news is that other water pollutants like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxins have decreased in recent years, making them less of a threat to people’s health. However, they can still be found in the water and soil in some areas and levels may vary by location and type of fish. For information about the safety of fish and shellfish caught in your area, contact your state and local health departments.



If your family likes to go fishing and cook what you catch, check local advisories first. If the body of water in your area isn’t monitored, limit how much of the fish you eat to one serving per week. The Federal Drug Administration (FDA) also recommends removing the skin, fat and internal organs before cooking and eating what you catch. That’s where water pollution a fish was exposed to would collect.

#### The best seafood choices for kids:

Together with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the FDA recently issued advice on choosing the healthiest fish to eat. Many nutritious and safe fish choices include:

- **Tuna.** “Light” is best. The EPA and FDA rank canned light tuna (solid or chunk) to be among the “best choices” for children to eat, recommending 2-3 servings a week. “Light” tuna, which means it has a pinkish color, includes species such as skipjack. This is considered a better choice than white (albacore) and yellow fish tuna, although these are still considered “good choices,” with 1 serving a week recommended.
- **More good choices.** Salmon, trout and herring are considered low in mercury and high in brain-boosting DHA. Other types of seafood considered “best choices” include shrimp, cod, catfish, crab, scallops, pollock, tilapia, whitefish, trout, perch, flounder, sole, sardine, anchovy, crawfish, clams, oyster, and lobster.
- **Choices to avoid.** It is best to avoid fish that are more likely to be high in mercury, including: Tilefish, Shark, Swordfish, King mackerel, Orange roughy, Marlin, Bigeye & bluefin tuna
- **Future generations of fish-eaters.** Some of the world’s fishing grounds are being over-harvested. The best choices for sustainably caught or raised fish and shellfish most often come from U.S. fisheries.

#### Remember

Getting your kids hooked on fish, and knowing how to make safe seafood choices, is a nutritious and delicious way to give them what their growing bodies need.

#### Talk with your pediatrician

If you have questions about fish choices for your child, talk with your pediatrician. Your regional Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) have staff who can also talk with parents about concerns over environmental toxins.