

# tips for healthy smiles 2 to 12 years old



## 2- to 6-year-olds

- Stop using bottles and pacifiers.
- Limit candies, sweets, and carbonated drinks. Give your child less than 6 ounces of juice a day.
- Snacks, sweets, and juice between meals increase the chances of dental decay.
- Products that contain xylitol, such as bottled water and chewing gum, reduce bacterial growth in the mouth and can decrease the risk of dental decay.
- Brush your child's teeth twice a day, preferably after snacks or meals.
- Use fluoridated toothpaste when your child can spit.
- Floss when your child's teeth begin to touch each other.
- Topical dental fluoride treatments and dental sealants may decrease the risk of dental decay. Discuss this with your child's dentist.
- Visit the dentist every 6 months.



## 6- to 12-year-olds

- Limit candies, sweets, and carbonated drinks. Give your child less than 6 ounces of juice a day.
- Snacks, sweets, and juice between meals increase the chances of dental decay.
- Products that contain xylitol, such as bottled water and chewing gum, reduce bacterial growth in the mouth and can decrease the risk of dental decay.
- Brush teeth twice a day, preferably after snacks or meals. Most children can floss and brush their own teeth after 8 years old.
- Athletic mouth guards are recommended for children who play contact sports.
- Consider sealants for new permanent molars.
- Visit the dentist every 6 months.



American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



California Chapter 4

 KAISER PERMANENTE®

©2006 Kaiser Permanente. All rights reserved.  
SCPMG Regional Health Education  
MH1196 (6/06)

[www.kaiserpermanente.org](http://www.kaiserpermanente.org)