

**MISSISSIPPI COUNTY, ARKANSAS, E.O.C.
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

ORAL HEALTH PRACTICES

HSPS 1302.43 Oral Health Practices CFOC3 Standards 3.1.5.1 and 4.2.0.6

GOAL STATEMENT- MCAEOC will strive for excellence by enhancing educational services to support school readiness of children that will maximize their potential to enter kindergarten with a solid foundation for reading success.

POLICY:

MCAEOC will promote effective oral health hygiene practices by ensuring to the extent possible, all children with teeth are assisted by appropriate staff, or volunteers, if available, in brushing their teeth with toothpaste containing fluoride once daily and have drinking water readily available

PURPOSE:

To promote and ensure the development of healthy and lifelong oral health practices

PROCEDURE:

Children age birth to 5 years will receive oral hygiene provided by qualified staff and as age-appropriate children will be taught proper procedure for brushing their own teeth.

Note: During the COVID pandemic classroom toothbrushing was suspended at school. When tooth brushing is not done after eating, children should be offered water to drink to rinse food from their teeth. Children should be taught to drink water from a cup rather than a sippy cup or bottle (CFOC3 Standards 3.1.5.1 and 4.2.0.6)

Healthy oral hygiene is encouraged through health experience activities at schools and parents were encouraged to practice healthy oral hygiene with children at home.

Infant Oral Hygiene (Ages 0 to about 6 months)

- Program staff (PS) who brush infants' and children's teeth or help children brush teeth should be fully vaccinated against COVID-19
- PS must wear a properly fitted face mask
- PS may also consider eye protection such as a face shield
- PS wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after working with each infant or child
- PS shall wear gloves and change gloves for each child
- PS shall wipe the mouth, gums and tongue of an infant **without teeth** using a moist cotton gauze and discarded

Infant Oral Hygiene (Ages 6 to 12 months)

- Each infant has their own infant-sized, soft-bristled toothbrush
- Label toothbrush with infant's name; replace toothbrush every 3-4 months
- Use hand hygiene and gloves as above as described in infant procedure
- Brush teeth with a smear of fluoride toothpaste (**size of a grain of rice**)

- PS will put toothpaste on the rim of a disposable cup
- Each child shall have toothpaste placed on a paper napkin or disposable cup
- PS will rinse each toothbrush after use and store in holders that allow toothbrush to air dry in an upright position.
- **Do Not** use toothbrush covers

Toddlers (Ages 1-2)

- Each child has their own child-sized, soft-bristled toothbrush
- Label toothbrush with child's name; replace toothbrush every 3-4 months
- Use hand hygiene and gloves as described in infant procedure
- Brush teeth with a smear of fluoride toothpaste (**size of a grain of rice**)
- PS will put toothpaste on the rim of a disposable cup or piece of wax paper or napkin
- Each child shall have their own labeled tube of toothpaste (optional)
- PS help child brush their teeth
- After brushing have children dribble or gently spit the remainder of toothpaste into the disposable cup, have children wipe their mouth with a napkin and place napkin in disposable cup. Children **Do Not Rinse** after brushing. Children throw cup and napkin in trash
- **Do Not** allow children to play with toothbrush
- PS will rinse each toothbrush after use and store in holders that allow toothbrush to air dry in an upright position without touching each other
- **Do Not** use toothbrush covers

Young Children (Ages 3 – 5)

- Each child has their own child-sized, soft-bristled toothbrush
- Label toothbrush with child's name; replace toothbrush every 3-4 months
- Use hand hygiene and gloves as described in infant procedure
- Brush teeth with a smear of fluoride toothpaste (**size of a pea**)
- PS will put toothpaste on the rim of a disposable cup or piece of wax paper when dispensing toothpaste from tube
- Each child shall have their own labeled tube of toothpaste (optional)
- PS help child brush their teeth
- After brushing have children dribble or gently spit the remainder of toothpaste into the disposable cup, have children wipe their mouth with a napkin and place napkin in disposable cup. Children **Do Not Rinse** after brushing. Children throw cup and napkin in trash
- **Do Not** allow children to play with toothbrush
- PS will rinse each toothbrush after use and store in holders that allow toothbrush to air dry in an upright position without touching each other
- **Do Not** use toothbrush covers

For Toothbrushing at the Classroom Table

- Seat children as far apart as possible, with staff supervising the brushing
- After brushing, clean and sanitize the table.

- If toothbrushing at the classroom table is not possible, a small group of children can brush at the sink, one child at a time, with staff supervising
- After each group of children brushes their teeth, clean and sanitize the sink.
- The toothbrushing area should be disinfected at the end of the day
- Encourage children to avoid placing toothbrushes directly on the classroom table or other surfaces.
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after brushing or helping infants and children brush their teeth.
- If soap and water are not available, staff can use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- After children brush, ensure that they wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or, for children **over age 2**, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.