Dental Health Messages & Handouts

Use of sippy cups/training cups

Autonomy Support

Encouraging message
○ Skip the sippy cup filled with juices and other sweetened fluids! Help your child keep their teeth clean by only offering water in their cup! Instead of comforting an upset child with their sippy cup, give them a stuffed animal or toy to play with!

Reinforcing message
○ Wow, those are some clean teeth! Keep encouraging your child to only drink water from their cup and remember to remove and wash their cup when they’re done drinking!

Directive Communication

Encouraging message
○ Skip the sippy cup filled with juices and other sweetened fluids! Offer water in a child’s cup to help prevent cavity causing bacteria from growing. Try not to soothe an upset child by giving them their cup and offer their favorite stuffed animal or toy instead!

Reinforcing message
○ Continue to keep your child cavity free! Always wash sippy cups after use and only use them for water to avoid cavity-causing bacteria from growing.
Drinking a bottle at night

Autonomy Support:

Encouraging Message
○ Fight cavity-causing bacteria by encouraging your child to stop nighttime bottle use or choose water only! Bedtime bottles filled with milk and juice can leave behind sugars on teeth that put your child at risk for cavities.

Reinforcing Message
○ Wow! Those are some clean teeth! Keep encouraging your child to put the bedtime bottle away and choose water to help fight cavities.

Directive Communication:

Encouraging Message
○ Bedtime bottles filled with milk, juice, or soft drinks can leave behind sugars on teeth that cavity causing bacteria love to eat! Avoid giving your child a bottle at night or offer only water.

Reinforcing Message
○ Wow! Those are some clean teeth! Keep up the great work and continue to put the bedtime bottle away and choose water to help fight cavities.
Thumb sucking and pacifier use

Autonomy Support

*Encouraging Message:* ○ Pass on the pacifier (or thumb)! Thumb sucking and pacifier use can lead to problems with your child’s teeth alignment. Encourage your child to move away from this habit by rewarding them with stickers or a bedtime story and giving them gentle reminders.

*Reinforcing Message* ○ Healthy Smiles = Happy Kids! Continue to limit your child's use of pacifiers and thumb sucking to help their teeth grow in as healthy as possible!

Directive Communication

*Encouraging Message:* ○ Pass on the pacifier (or thumb)! Thumb sucking and pacifier use can lead to problems with your child’s teeth alignment. Try to reward your child with stickers or a bedtime story and use gentle reminders to help break this habit!

*Reinforcing Message* ○ Smiles = Happy Kids! Continue to limit your child’s use of pacifiers and thumb sucking to help their teeth come in healthy! Reward your child with a sticker or a bedtime story for not sucking their thumb or using a pacifier!

Healthy
Pediasure drinking throughout the day

Autonomy Support

**Encouraging Message:**
- *Pediasure is high in sugar which can put your child at risk for cavities. Offer your child low sugar beverages like water to help keep their teeth clean!*

**Reinforcing Message:**
- *Brush and clean in between! Continue to help your child remember to brush their teeth after sugary drinks and choose water instead to help fight cavities. Great job keeping those teeth clean!*

Directive Communication

**Encouraging Message:**
- *Pediasure is high in sugar which can put your child at risk for cavities. Try to limit your child’s consumption of sugary beverages and choose water instead to help keep their teeth clean!*

**Reinforcing Message:**
- *Brush and clean in between! Continue to remind your child to brush their teeth after sugary drinks and choose water instead to help fight cavities. Great job keeping those teeth clean!*
Teeth Brushing Habits

Autonomy support:

Encouraging
○ Take time to get that grime! To prevent cavities, try helping your child brush their teeth in the morning and at night. With healthy habits from a young age, they’ll be at a lower risk for cavities!

Reinforcing
○ Your child’s teeth are sparkling clean! Try to keep reminding your child to brush their teeth in the morning and at night to stay cavity-free!

Directive Communication:

Encouraging
○ Take time to get that grime! Remind your child to brush their teeth in the morning and at night. With healthy habits from a young age, they’ll be at a lower risk for cavities!

Reinforcing
○ Your child’s teeth are sparkling clean! Keep reminding your child to brush their teeth in the morning and at night to stay cavity-free!