

SWiCh Inc Child Care Centre
Monash Student Association Clayton

Policy: **Dental Health**

Review Date: **June 2008**

Policy Statement: To support the development of healthy teeth;

- By promoting and enforcing our nutrition and dental policies.
- By keeping parents informed on the best practices to ensure good oral health.

The centre encourages a well balanced healthy diet. Sugars can be harmful to teeth if they are consumed frequently throughout the day. Sugars that are less likely to cause dental decay include those found in unflavoured milk and milk products, whole fruit and vegetables. Sugars that are more likely to cause decay are those found in honey, lollies, donuts, jams, biscuits, ice-cream etc. At SWiCh we recommend that the children do not bring the foods that typically cause the dental decay.

Sweet and acidic drinks such as fruit juice and cordials can be harmful to teeth therefore at SWiCh we encourage children to drink water after all meals and as required throughout the day. Inappropriate use of infant bottles can be a problem. Infant feeding caries is caused by prolonged and frequent exposure of teeth to liquids containing sugars.

If infant feeding bottles are used:

- Feeding should be done under adult supervision – when the infant has had enough take the bottle away. If the child's routine at home is to have a bottle when going to bed staff can discuss a plan with the parent to eventually wean the child from this routine. If the child is in need of this routine the staff must stay with the child and remove the bottle once it is finished.
- Preferable to milk at sleep time would be to offer cooled boiled water in a bottle to comfort a baby or if extra fluid is needed.
- Bottles should only be used for expressed breastmilk, formula or water.
- From six months introduce the baby to a feeding cup. In most cases a bottle can be discarded from 12 months.
- Children should be encouraged to drink water when they are thirsty.

Although baby teeth eventually fall out they are just as important as permanent teeth as they:

- Help the child bite and chew food.
- Help the child speak correctly.
- Save space for the child's permanent teeth.
- Guide the permanent teeth into place.

Reference: Oral Health promotion. A practical guide for Children's Services
City of Monash Dental Nurse