

fdi  
**MOUTH**  
**HEROES**

**FOR**  
**SCHOOLS**

**TEACHER GUIDE**

A multimedia resource with lessons on  
good oral health for children aged 5–9



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# Introduction



Welcome to **Mouth Heroes for Schools**, a new teaching resource developed by FDI World Dental Federation. It gives teachers all the tools they need to deliver engaging lessons about the importance of good oral health because a healthy mouth and a healthy body go hand in hand.

**Designed for children aged 5–9 years**, the resource provides a variety of activities to suit your students as well as different ways on how to deliver them.



Toothie, the child-friendly spokesperson for Mouth Heroes, takes children on an exciting journey to develop health-related life skills. By the end of their Mouth Heroes work, children will understand how to take care of their mouth, beware of certain foods that can harm their teeth and body, take greater responsibility for their own oral health and feel empowered to practice healthy behaviours – now and in the future.

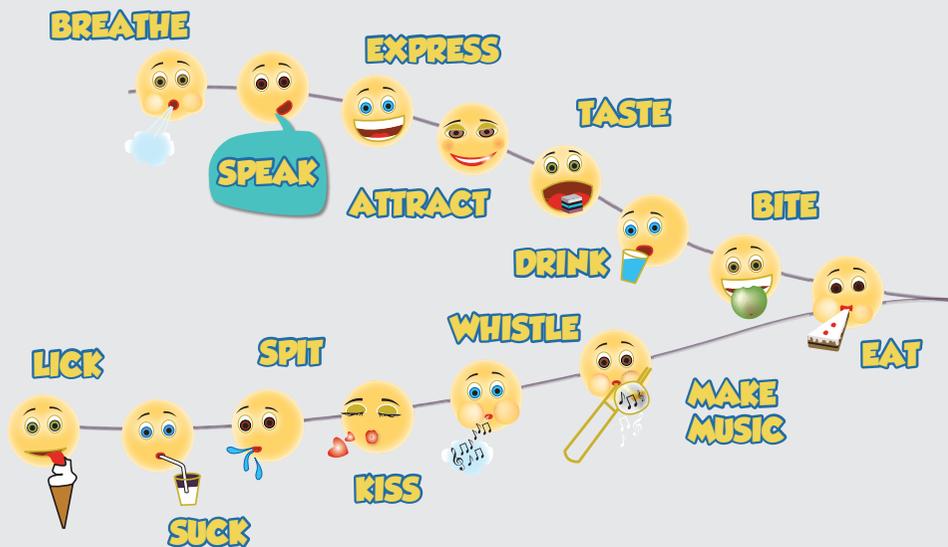
There are a whole host of lesson ideas and materials; you can use them as they are, or adapt them based on your local setting. Importantly, the resource also recognizes the key role parents and caregivers play in helping children practice good oral care at home and provides ideas on how to involve them.

In this way, and with your support, Mouth Heroes aims to build valuable lifelong habits amongst children around the world.

# Why teach about oral health?

**ORAL HEALTH HAS A HUGE IMPACT ON OUR OVERALL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.** A healthy mouth not only allows us to speak, smile, taste, touch, chew and swallow, it builds self-esteem too. However, oral health can be neglected with far-reaching consequences.

## Some of the things we can do with our mouth



Here are some **facts that illustrate why education is needed to establish good oral health habits in children** as early as possible:

- ✓ Globally, it is estimated 486 million children suffer from tooth decay (caries) in their primary teeth.
- ✓ Severe gum disease and untreated tooth decay in the primary teeth (milk or baby teeth) are among the top 10 most prevalent of all health conditions.
- ✓ Tooth decay can cause pain, anxiety and lead to premature tooth loss. More than 50 million school hours are lost each year because of poor oral health.
- ✓ Poor oral health can affect a child's ability to perform at school. Children who have poor oral health are 12 times more likely to experience a lower level of activity due to associated illness.
- ✓ Children with poor oral health indicate being apprehensive about meeting others because of their teeth, or because others made jokes about their teeth.
- ✓ Consumption of sugary foods and drinks on a regular basis is the number one cause of tooth decay and other oral diseases.

By assisting teachers to integrate oral health into lessons, we can help drive positive change and have healthier, happier children.

# What's included in the teaching resource?

THE RESOURCE PROVIDES A VARIETY OF LESSON ACTIVITIES, SUPPORTED BY A SUITE OF MATERIALS TO HELP DELIVER THEM.

## Teacher guide

All the ideas for your lessons are detailed in this guide. It includes:

 **Learning objectives** – to explain what children will learn from the activities.

 **Background notes** – to set the context.

 **Activity notes** – to help plan and run the activities. They also signpost the resources provided to deliver each activity, including videos, worksheets and presentation slides (see below).

## Videos

A series of short, fun, cartoon-style videos follow **Toothie** in a quest to promote good oral health. There are 12 videos available in total, of which seven are most relevant for children aged 5–9 years. Each video conveys an important message:

- ✓ Brush your teeth twice a day
- ✓ The size of a pea fits to a T
- ✓ The proper brushing technique
- ✓ Change your toothbrush often
- ✓ No snacking after night brushing
- ✓ Visit the dentist every year
- ✓ Avoid sugary snacks



## Presentation slides

The presentation slides are packed with engaging content including imagery, quizzes and digital activities.

## Worksheets and certificate

The worksheets allow children to develop their thinking and capture results, and the certificate can be awarded at the end in recognition of their Mouth Heroes work.

## Checklist for parents/caregivers

The checklist '*Good oral care for children*' includes helpful tips for parents/caregivers. It gives them all the information they need to support and encourage children to practice good oral care at home.

## Glossary

A glossary has been included on page 9 that explains key oral health terms in a child-friendly way.

# Mouth Heroes learning journey

THE LESSON ACTIVITIES ARE SPLIT INTO FOUR SECTIONS. There is also a fifth section, which provides ideas on how to involve the wider school community.

## 1 Toothie talks teeth

PAGE 10 This section introduces the topic of teeth and why you need them.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Understand why teeth are important.
- ✓ Identify the different teeth in our mouth.
- ✓ Understand why we have teeth of different shapes and sizes.
- ✓ Know the different parts of the tooth.

## 2 Toothie's tips

PAGE 13 This section is about how to take care of our teeth and explains why this is important.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Understand how to keep our teeth clean and healthy.
- ✓ Recognize what will happen if we don't take care of our teeth.
- ✓ Explain to others how to take care of their teeth.
- ✓ Understand that a healthy mouth is important for a healthy body.

## 3 Toothie's treats

PAGE 18 This section is about the benefits of choosing healthy foods and drinks over ones high in sugar.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Identify healthy choices.
- ✓ Investigate, record and understand what happens if we don't make healthy choices.
- ✓ Understand how too much sugar can cause tooth decay.
- ✓ Know that we can make sensible choices to prevent tooth decay.

## 4 Toothie goes on a trip

PAGE 21 This section focuses on a visit to the dentist – what it's like and why we need to go.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Know what happens when we visit the dentist.
- ✓ Understand how the dentist helps us.
- ✓ Understand why it is important to visit the dentist regularly.

## 5 Toothie on tour

PAGE 25

This section provides ideas on how to 'spread the word' by sharing key oral health messages with the whole school as well as parents and caregivers.

### Objective

- ✓ Get everyone in your school community to practice good oral care.

## How do I use the teaching resource?

**This resource is designed to be flexible.** You can select ideas to structure a programme that best suits you and your students. You may choose, for example, to plan activities in the build-up to World Oral Health Day which is celebrated on the 20 March every year. Or, you can plan a whole topic around teeth and healthy eating. **The most important thing to remember is that however you choose to run your programme, in order to empower your students to take charge of their oral health, they need to learn the following:**

- ✓ **Brush your teeth twice a day (especially before going to bed):**
  - using a fluoride toothpaste
  - in a circular motion
  - for two minutes
- ✓ **Choose healthy foods and drinks over those high in sugar**
- ✓ **Visit the dentist regularly**
- ✓ **A healthy mouth is important for a healthy body**

## Tell us what you think

We would love to hear from you. How did you use the resource and do you have any suggestions for the future? If you get in touch, there may be other ways we can help.

Send a message to: [communications@fdiworldddental.org](mailto:communications@fdiworldddental.org)

We look forward to hearing from you.

# Glossary

**CHILDREN MAY NEED HELP WITH SOME OF THE NEW VOCABULARY THEY COME ACROSS.** This glossary provides simple definitions for key oral health words and terms.

## SETS OF TEETH

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PRIMARY TEETH	Our first set of teeth. We have 20 primary teeth. Primary teeth are also called baby, milk or deciduous teeth.
PERMANENT TEETH	Primary teeth are replaced by 32 permanent (or adult) teeth. Permanent teeth begin to appear from around the age of six.

## TYPES OF TEETH

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INCISORS	These are our front teeth – four in the top-centre of our mouth and four in the bottom-centre. We bite into food with our incisors and use them to talk.
CANINES	These are sharp, pointy teeth on either side of our incisors. They tear into food and rip it apart. We have four in total.
MOLARS	Molars are the largest of the teeth. They have a flat biting service. The function of molars is to crush and chew food until it is small enough to swallow. We have eight molars in our primary set of teeth. In our permanent set, we may get a further four molars called wisdom teeth. They are the last teeth to appear, usually around the age of 21 years.
PREMOLARS	There are no premolars in our primary teeth. However, there are eight of them in our permanent set. They are smaller than molar teeth and are also good for crushing and chewing food. They sit next to the canines.

## STRUCTURE OF TEETH

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CROWN	The crown is the part of the tooth we can see in our mouth.
ROOT	The root of the tooth is planted into the jawbone. It keeps the tooth in place.
GUMS	Gums surround the teeth and bone, and protect the bone and roots of the teeth.
ENAMEL	Enamel is the hardest substance in our whole body, and it covers and protects our teeth.
DENTINE	Dentine sits beneath the enamel and forms the bulk of the tooth.
PULP	It is the soft middle of the tooth. It contains nerves and blood vessels. The pulp stretches from the crown to the tip of the root.

## WHAT HARMS OUR TEETH?

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PLAQUE	Plaque is a clear and sticky substance that forms on our teeth and gums. It is important to remove plaque by brushing our teeth twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste. Plaque is involved in causing tooth decay.
TOOTH DECAY OR DENTAL CARIES	When you eat and drink sugary things, the plaque feeds on the sugars to make acids. These acids can eat away at your teeth leading to holes which are called dental caries.

# Section 1 Toothie talks teeth

This section introduces the topic of teeth and why you need them.

## Learning objectives

- ✓ Understand why teeth are important.
- ✓ Identify the different teeth in our mouth.
- ✓ Understand why we have teeth of different shapes and sizes.
- ✓ Know the different parts of the tooth.

## Background notes

A healthy mouth is important at all stages of our lives. Most obviously, teeth help us to chew food so it can be swallowed. However, the role of teeth doesn't end there. We use teeth to speak and smile, and a healthy set can give us confidence when talking to others. Teeth also help to give our face its individual shape and form.

We only get two sets of teeth in a lifetime: a set of primary or 'baby' teeth followed by our permanent ones. There are only 20 primary teeth because little mouths can't fit many more. As we grow, our jaws get bigger, and our primary teeth are replaced by 32 permanent teeth – they are called 'permanent' because they need to last our whole lives.

Losing our primary teeth is normal, but we need to make sure they stay healthy and don't fall out too early because of tooth decay. It is very important to take care of our primary teeth, even though they are going to fall out to make room for our permanent teeth. Why? Healthy primary teeth mean our permanent teeth will have a healthy new home when they move in.

## My teeth talk!

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie talks teeth</b> (slide 3)
	<b>TO START</b> , show children the pictures in the presentation.
	<b>ASK</b> : What is the person doing in each picture? Are they using their teeth to do it? The pictures are of children eating, smiling, talking and singing. Alternatively, you could ask children to draw a quick picture to show why we need teeth. What did they draw?
	<b>DISCUSS</b> why we need teeth. Are children surprised by any of the ways that teeth help us?
	<b>EXPLAIN</b> that looking after our teeth is one of the most important and healthy things we can do for ourselves. Teeth help us to <b>chew</b> food, <b>speak</b> clearly and are an important part of our <b>smile</b> .
	<b>TO CONCLUDE</b> , sing your favourite song as a class without letting your lips or tongue touch your teeth. How did the children find it? They won't be able to make certain sounds like <b>F, S</b> and <b>TH</b> .

## Tooth types

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie talks teeth</b> (slides 5–6)
WORKSHEET	<b>Tooth types</b>

-  **BEFORE YOU START**, explain that it is normal to lose our primary teeth. Our primary teeth save spaces for our permanent ones. We just need to make sure we look after them properly so we don't lose them too early.
-  **TO START**, ask children to look at their teeth using a mirror. Are all the teeth the same shape and size? If you don't have mirrors, you can show a picture of a mouth instead; there is one included in the presentation.
-  **HAND OUT** the 'Tooth types' worksheet. Ask children to draw a tooth from the front of the mouth, at the back of the mouth and a particularly pointy one. Do they know what these different types of teeth are called?
-  **SHOW** the labelled tooth types in the presentation. Ask children to label their own pictures with the correct names.
-  **TALK** about why we have different teeth and their jobs.
- ✓ **Incisors** are used to bite and cut food.
  - ✓ **Canines** are used to tear food.
  - ✓ **Molars** are used to crush and chew food.
-  **TO CONCLUDE**, children record the job of each tooth on their worksheet. Higher ability or older children could write their own descriptions.

## Colourful smiles

ACTIVITY NOTES

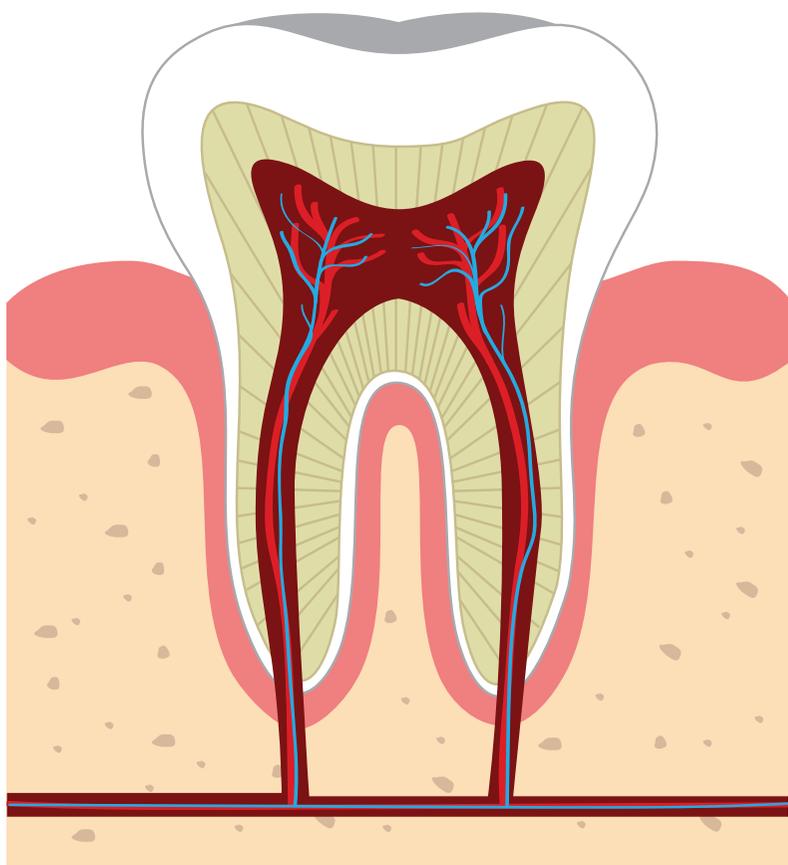
RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie talks teeth</b> (slide 8)
WORKSHEET	<b>Colourful smiles</b>

-  **TO START**, explain that we only get two sets of teeth in a lifetime – a set of primary or 'baby' teeth followed by our permanent ones.
-  **ASK**: How many permanent teeth do they expect to have? How does that compare with their primary teeth? Why will they have more permanent teeth?
-  **SHOW** the picture in the presentation of an adult mouth with all 32 teeth. It is labelled with the different types of teeth and introduces premolars and wisdom teeth.
-  **HAND OUT** the 'Colourful smiles' worksheet. Ask children to colour each type of tooth a specific colour, e.g. canine red, molar blue.
-  **TO CONCLUDE**, assign each child a type of tooth. They then arrange themselves in the order teeth are arranged in our mouth, i.e. incisors at the front, canines next to them. To make it more manageable, you can divide the class in half – one half represents the top jaw, the other the bottom. A class of 32 would be the perfect size for this activity, but it isn't necessary!

RESOURCE	TITLE
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PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie talks teeth</b> (slides 10–13)
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**TO START**, ask children: What is the hardest substance in our whole body? They may assume it is bone. Reveal that it is actually enamel, which covers and protects our teeth. Do they know any other parts of the tooth?



**SHOW** the picture in the presentation of a cross-section of a tooth. Talk through the different parts:

- ✓ Teeth are formed of two main parts: the crown – the part that you can see – and the root, which is planted into the jawbone to keep our teeth steady.
- ✓ Teeth are made-up of enamel, dentine and pulp. The pulp contains nerves and blood vessels.
- ✓ Gums surround the teeth and bone, and protect the bone and roots of the teeth.

**EXPLAIN** that they will be creating their own model of a tooth. This activity can be run in a variety of ways depending on age, student ability or your preferred method.

- ✓ Use modelling clay like Plasticine or Play-Doh.
- ✓ Use different coloured craft paper.
- ✓ Use the interactive activity supplied in the presentation. Children layer the different parts of the tooth to build and label their own.

**TO CONCLUDE**, ask children: Can our bones break? Do they think our enamel can break? Explain that even though it is the hardest substance in our body, if we don't take care of it, it starts to break down. However, unlike broken bones, it will not heal and can't grow back on its own.

## Section 2 Toothie's tips

This section is about how to take care of our teeth and explains why this is important.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Understand how to keep our teeth clean and healthy.
- ✓ Recognize what will happen if we don't take care of our teeth.
- ✓ Explain to others how to take care of their teeth.
- ✓ Understand that a healthy mouth is important for a healthy body.

### Background notes

Globally, an estimated 486 million children suffer from tooth decay (caries) in their primary teeth. Tooth decay has an enormous impact on daily life (see further statistics on page 4). It is critical that children understand how to take care of their teeth for their own health and well-being.

Tooth decay is a disease that occurs when germs (bacteria) build up in the mouth. This leads to the production of plaque. Plaque is a clear and sticky substance that forms on teeth and gums, which needs to be removed through proper brushing, i.e. twice a day, using a fluoride toothpaste, for two minutes, using circular motions, without rinsing with water to allow the fluoride to keep working. If we don't take care of our teeth, plaque will feed on the sugars from the food and drink we consume to make acids. These acids eat away at teeth, leading to tooth decay and caries (holes). Consuming too much sugar is also a major cause of tooth decay (covered in more detail in Section 3).

## What are Toothie's tips?

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie's tips</b> (slides 3–18)
VIDEOS	<b>Brush your teeth twice a day</b> <b>The size of a pea fits to a T</b> <b>The proper brushing technique</b> <b>Change your toothbrush often</b> <b>No snacking after night brushing</b> <b>Visit the dentist every year</b> <b>Avoid sugary snacks</b>
	<b>TO START</b> , ask children: Do they know how to keep their teeth healthy? You could collect their ideas in different ways. They: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ share their ideas with the rest of the class.</li><li>✓ write on sticky notes and attach them to the board or wall.</li><li>✓ create a mind map using the format provided in the presentation.</li></ul>
	<b>EXPLAIN</b> that they are going to watch some short, fun, cartoon-style videos. Toothie, the star of the videos, is going to share important tips for taking care of teeth. After each video, ask children: What was <b>Toothie's tip</b> ?
	<b>REINFORCE</b> each of <b>Toothie's tips</b> using the supporting presentation slides. These will help to extend the children's learning even further and help them understand the consequences of not caring for their teeth.
	<b>TO CONCLUDE</b> , revisit the children's ideas from the start of the activity. Which of Toothie's tips did they know? What new ones did they learn? Highlight that we only get two sets of teeth in a lifetime. It is so important to take care of both sets even though one is going to fall out. Healthy primary teeth mean our permanent teeth will have a healthy new home when they move in.

## What's in the picture?

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie's tips</b> (slides 20–30)
WORKSHEET	<b>What's in the picture?</b>
WORKSHEET	<b>Toothie's tips</b>

-  **TO START**, show the two photos in the presentation. In one, a child is eating carrot sticks. The photo has a big tick next to it. In the other, a child is eating an ice cream. It has a cross next to it. What are the pictures trying to tell us?
-  **HAND OUT** the **What's in the picture?** worksheets. These explain Toothie's tips in pictures.
-  **SET THE TASK:** Children look at the pictures, which are stills from the videos, to work out and write a set of instructions on how to care for teeth.
-  **YOUNGER CHILDREN** can use the pre-written instruction cards provided on the corresponding worksheet – **Toothie's tips**. They match each instruction card with the correct picture or set of pictures. Cut out the instruction cards before the lesson.
-  **FLEXIBLE DELIVERY:** You can run this activity as an independent learning exercise, or in pairs and groups.
-  **ELECTRONIC DELIVERY:** We have provided the pictures in the presentation too. Children can use them to create their own Toothie's tips presentations.
-  **FURTHER ACTIVITIES:**
  - ✓ Children turn their instructions into a poster for their home.
  - ✓ Children select a set of pictures to write a story about a Toothie adventure that promotes good oral care. Encourage them to read the stories with their parents or other caregivers.

## Mouth Heroes diary

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
WORKSHEET	<b>Mouth Heroes diary</b>
CHECKLIST	<b>Good oral care for children</b>
VIDEOS	<b>Brush your teeth twice a day</b> <b>The size of a pea fits to a T</b> <b>The proper brushing technique</b>

-  **TO START**, play Toothie's brushing videos. They provide advice on how and when to brush.
-  **ASK** children to talk about their brushing routine. Do they follow all the steps in the videos? Who helps them to brush?
-  **HAND OUT** the 'Mouth Heroes diary' worksheet. Explain that they need to complete this brushing diary at home for one week. It records when they brushed their teeth and how well they followed Toothie's tips.
-  **PARENTS/CAREGIVERS** need to be brushing Monitors and Helpers. Every morning and night, parents/caregivers draw a smiley face if children brushed their teeth properly. To support them further, there is a checklist with tips written especially for parents/caregivers. This checklist can be sent home with the children too.
-  **TO CONCLUDE**, collect the diaries at the end of the week. How did the class do?

## Toothie's brushing challenge

ACTIVITY NOTES

### RESOURCE

### TITLE

VIDEO

### The proper brushing technique

 **BEFORE YOU START**, ask children to bring in their toothbrushes. If this is difficult to organize, the activity can work without them too.

 **TO START**, play 'The proper brushing technique' video. What were **Toothie's tips** for brushing? Reinforce the following points, if the class don't suggest them all independently:

- ✓ Brush gently in a circle
- ✓ All over the teeth – front and back
- ✓ For two minutes

 **EXPLAIN** that the whole class will be taking part in **Toothie's brushing challenge!**

 **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

- ✓ Split the class into groups of four or five, or however you find it easiest to manage. In turn, ask each group to come to the front.
- ✓ Their challenge is to demonstrate brushing using the proper technique. If you choose to run the activity without a toothbrush, they can pretend to be using one instead. For the purposes of this activity, don't use toothpaste. But highlight the importance of using a fluoride toothpaste to clean and protect teeth.

- ✓ Start the stopwatch. Children start brushing. Observe their technique while they brush. Children stop brushing when they think they've brushed for two minutes. But the tricky part is, they won't know when they've reached two minutes and a common mistake is not brushing for long enough! Record their individual performance in this way.

 **TO CONCLUDE**, share the results and choose either an overall winner, or a winner by category, i.e. best circular motion, most thorough clean, brushed for two minutes. Reinforce the importance of brushing properly to remove plaque which, if left on teeth, can cause caries (holes).

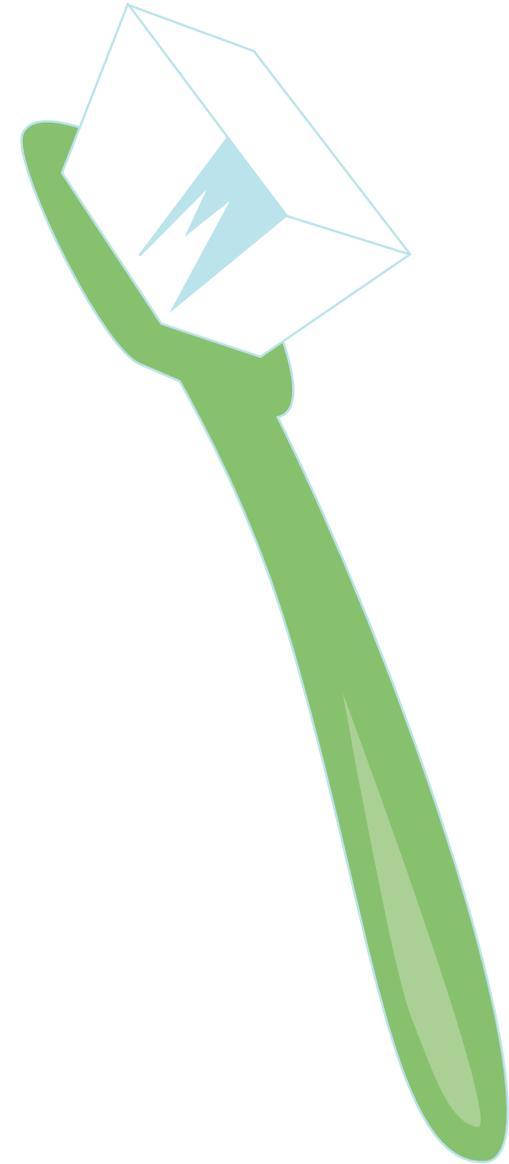
## I'm a toothbrush!

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie's tips</b> (slide 32)
WORKSHEET	<b>I'm a toothbrush!</b>
VIDEO	<b>Change your toothbrush often</b>

-  **TO START**, show children a new toothbrush.
-  **IN PAIRS**, ask them to imagine an alien has come to visit who has never seen a toothbrush before. How would they describe the toothbrush to the alien? Provide prompts (if necessary), especially to younger children. What is it used for? How does the handle help? What are the bristles for? What happens if you don't use it? Do you keep the same toothbrush for life?
-  **HAND OUT** the **I'm a toothbrush!** worksheet to capture their descriptions.
-  **ASK** children to share their descriptions with the class. Reinforce the correct ones.
  - ✓ A toothbrush is used to clean our teeth to help keep them healthy.
  - ✓ The handle allows us to reach all parts of our mouth.
  - ✓ The bristles are very important. We squeeze toothpaste on to the bristles and brush the germs off our teeth.
  - ✓ If we don't brush the germs away, we can get tooth decay and holes in our teeth.
-  **EXPLORE** children's thoughts on how long they think the same toothbrush can be used. Do any think they can keep one for a very long time?

-  **PLAY** the **Change your toothbrush often** video. What is Toothie's tip in the video? The answer is to change your toothbrush every three months. Ask them to record it on their worksheet.
-  **TO CONCLUDE**, and to reinforce the advice, show the picture in the presentation of an old, used toothbrush and a new one. How are the bristles different? Which toothbrush will clean teeth better? The answer is the new one.



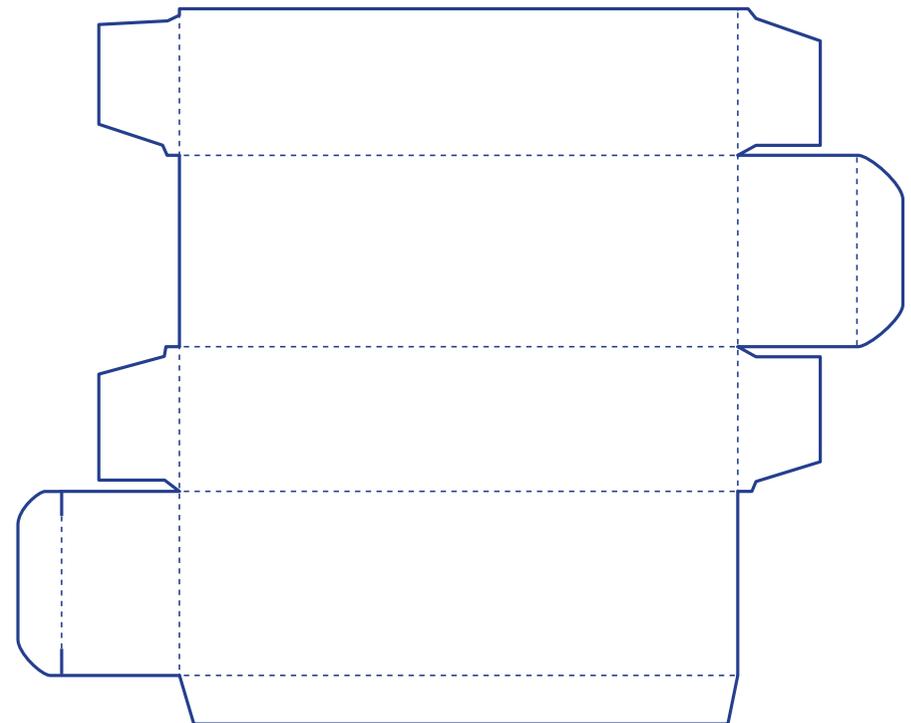
## Toothie's toothpaste

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
WORKSHEET	<b>Toothie's toothpaste</b>
VIDEO	<b>The size of a pea fits to a T</b>

- TO START**, play **The size of a pea fits to a T** video. Ask children to explain Toothie's tip from the video, i.e. use a pea-sized dab of toothpaste to clean your teeth.
- EXPLAIN** that they are going to investigate why toothpaste is important and then design their own!
- SHOW** children a range of toothpaste packaging. Please ensure they are all fluoride-based toothpastes.
- ASK**: What does the packaging say? What key messages appear on them? Why is toothpaste important? Encourage them to record the information, e.g. strong teeth, caries protection.
- CHALLENGE**: Can they find the important ingredient in toothpaste that helps protect and strengthen teeth?
- EXPLAIN** that a *fluoride* toothpaste is very important. Fluoride helps to protect the teeth from acid which forms in our mouth and causes tooth decay.
- HAND OUT** the 'Toothie's toothpaste' worksheet. It includes a template of a toothpaste box for children to design their own toothpaste; an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned.

- ELECTRONIC DELIVERY**: If you have computer aided design (CAD) software, children can use it to create their toothpaste box.
- TO CONCLUDE**, ask children to come to the front of the class and promote their new toothpaste!



## Section 3 Toothie's treats

This section is about the benefits of choosing healthy foods and drinks over ones high in sugar.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Identify healthy choices.
- ✓ Investigate, record and understand what happens if we don't make healthy choices.
- ✓ Understand how too much sugar can cause tooth decay.
- ✓ Know that we can make sensible choices to prevent tooth decay.

### Background notes

Consumption of sugary foods and drinks on a regular basis is the number one cause of tooth decay. *Free sugars* are the main problem. This refers to sugars that are added to foods and drinks and those naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juice and fruit juice concentrates. It does not refer to sugar that is naturally present in whole fruits, vegetables and milk.

Confectionery, cakes, biscuits, sweetened cereals, sweet desserts, and jams/preserves are common sources of free sugars as are sugary drinks (e.g. soda, fruit juices, energy and sports drinks).

Tooth decay is preventable, yet it is the most common childhood disease. Tooth loss or pain due to tooth decay can stop children from enjoying a healthy diet and can impact their daily required intake of nutrients. A varied, wholesome diet which includes fruit and vegetables is an important part of maintaining a healthy mouth and a healthy body. Therefore, it is important to encourage children to make healthy choices and limit their sugar intake – especially from snacking in-between meals.

### What would Toothie choose?

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie's treats</b> (slides 3–8)
VIDEO	<b>Avoid sugary snacks</b>
	<b>TO START</b> , ask children to share some of the foods and drinks they like, and those they don't like, with the rest of the class. You could capture their choices on the board.
	<b>SHOW</b> a selection of healthy and unhealthy snacks and drinks using the pictures in the presentation. Ask children to decide which are healthy, and which ones are bad for us if eaten all the time.
	<b>PLAY</b> the ' <b>Avoid sugary snacks</b> ' video.
	<b>ASK</b> : What snacks did Toothie choose?
	<b>DISCUSS THE POSSIBLE REASONS</b> why too much sugar is bad for our teeth. Encourage children to share their ideas before using the presentation slides to explain that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ A build-up of germs (bacteria) in our mouth leads to the production of plaque.</li><li>✓ Plaque is a clear and sticky substance that forms on our teeth and gums.</li><li>✓ When we eat and drink <i>sugary things</i>, the plaque feeds on the sugars to make acids.</li><li>✓ The acid attacks our healthy teeth.</li><li>✓ This can lead to tooth decay and holes in our teeth.</li></ul>
	<b>TO CONCLUDE</b> , revisit the foods that children said they liked and didn't like at the start of the activity. Are there any foods children like that they should eat less of moving forward? Are there any foods they don't like that are bad for them anyway? Are there some healthy foods they dislike? What could be good alternatives for these?

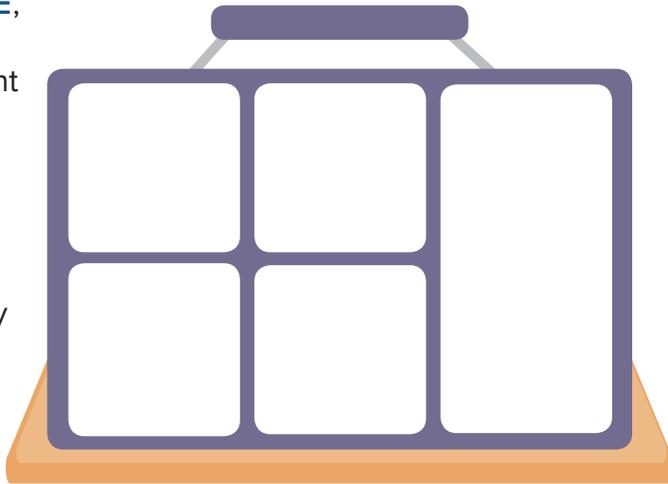
## Toothie's tasty lunchbox

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie's treats</b> (slide 10)
WORKSHEET	<b>Toothie's tasty lunchbox</b>
VIDEO	<b>Avoid sugary snacks</b>

- TO START**, play the '**Avoid sugary snacks**' video.
- ASK** children what Toothie is explaining in the video. Write Toothie's message on the board, i.e. to avoid sugary snacks, and to choose healthy foods and drinks instead.
- HAND OUT** the '**Toothie's tasty lunchbox**' worksheet. Ask children to prepare a healthy lunch – one that Toothie would approve of and enjoy too! There are spaces on the worksheet for children to draw and describe their choices.
- ELECTRONIC DELIVERY**: Alternatively, children could use computers for this activity. They search for foods and drinks online and insert them into the lunchbox provided in the presentation slides.

- TO CONCLUDE**, ask children to come to the front of the class to show everyone what's inside their lunchbox, and to explain the choices they made.



## Don't hide "Sugar"!

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
VIDEO	<b>Avoid sugary snacks</b>

- TO START**, play the '**Avoid sugary snacks**' video.
- EXPLAIN** to the class that eating too much sugar is not good for our mouth or body.
- ASK** children if they know the limit, in teaspoons, of how much sugar they should have each day. The recommendation is a maximum of 3 teaspoons daily (12g).
- SET THE TASK**: Explain that sugar is sneaky and likes to hide. Often it is hiding so well, we don't even realise how much of it we are eating. Their job is to find where the sugar is hiding and to expose sugar!
- FLEXIBLE DELIVERY**: You can bring in various food and drinks' packaging for children to explore, e.g. sugary cereals, cakes, biscuits, jams, fruit juice, soda. Alternatively, children can research products online. What do the labels say? What do the labels mean?
- CONVERT** the grams of sugar into teaspoons together, or children can do the calculations independently as a mathematics exercise.
- DEMONSTRATE** how much sugar there really is in some products by weighing it out for children to see.
- TO CONCLUDE**, children interpret what they have uncovered in a fun way by producing a short story or comic. The title of the story is, 'Sugar versus Toothie: The final battle!' For further support, you can provide the opening words too, e.g. 'For years, Sugar was in hiding. It plotted and planned...' To simplify the task for younger children, ask them to design a cover for the book.

# Toothie's plaque attack experiment !

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie's treats</b> (slides 12–14)
WORKSHEET	<b>Toothie's plaque attack experiment</b>
WORKSHEET	<b>Happy teeth</b>

 **BEFORE YOU START**, check children have no food allergies as they will be handling eggs as part of the experiment.

## **EXPERIMENT CHECKLIST**

- ✓ Hard-boiled eggs
- ✓ Clear vinegar
- ✓ Plastic cups or screw-top jars

 **TO START**, ask children: Do they know what hard substance covers our teeth? Explain that it is called enamel and it is the hardest substance in our body.

 **THE INVESTIGATION**: Explain that the class will be taking part in an experiment to find out, **'What is the effect of sugar and acid on our enamel?'**

 **WHY EGGS?** The eggs serve as a model for teeth. Eggshells, like enamel, protect the softer parts inside.

 **WHY VINEGAR?** The vinegar represents acid in our mouth. Use the slides in the presentation to explain how acid forms in our mouth:

- ✓ A build-up of germs (bacteria) in our mouth leads to the production of plaque.
- ✓ Plaque is a clear and sticky substance that forms on our teeth and gums.
- ✓ When we eat and drink sugary things, the plaque feeds on the sugars to make acids.

 **HAND OUT** the **Toothie's plaque attack experiment** worksheet. Children use this to record what they did and the results.

## **THE EXPERIMENT:**

- ✓ Place the egg in a clear cup or screw-top jar.
- ✓ Cover the egg completely in vinegar.
- ✓ Use a 'control' egg too. Cover that with water.
- ✓ Let the eggs sit for three days.

 **THE RESULTS**: Ask the class to describe how the eggs look and feel. The eggshell in the vinegar will have dissolved. The acidic vinegar breaks down the eggshell just as the acid does to the enamel. The egg in the water will not change.

## **FURTHER EXPERIMENTS:**

- ✓ As an extension or follow-up, you can repeat the experiment using different drinks including light and dark-coloured sodas, fruit juice and water. For greater impact, leave the eggs in the liquids for longer, e.g. five days.
- ✓ The purpose of the test is to find out, 'What is the healthiest liquid we can drink?'
- ✓ The results (to expect): Water will not breakdown our teeth and is the healthiest drink. The fruit juice and light-coloured soda will cause some softening to the outer shell, and the dark soda will discolour it. Other than water, each liquid has the potential to cause tooth decay if consumed on a regular basis.

 **TO CONCLUDE**, talk about how different foods and drinks can break down the enamel on teeth and the importance of making healthy choices. Children make a pledge to do something that they are not doing already to help keep their mouth healthy. They can write their pledges on the worksheet provided – 'Happy Teeth' – and you could display them as a reminder.

## Section 4

# Toothie goes on a trip

This section focuses on a visit to the dentist – what it's like and why we need to go.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Know what happens when we visit the dentist.
- ✓ Understand how the dentist helps us.
- ✓ Understand why it is important to visit the dentist regularly.

### Background notes

Regular dental check-ups are important to keep teeth and gums healthy. The dentist will count children's teeth, check they are growing properly and make sure they are clean and healthy. If necessary, they will also remove any build-up of plaque, which if not managed, can lead to tooth decay. Severe gum disease and untreated tooth decay in the primary teeth is among the top 10 most prevalent conditions. A regular visit to the dentist can contribute to a lifetime of good overall health and well-being.

It is important not to worry children about visiting the dentist but to highlight the importance of how it keeps them healthy.

### Dentist role play

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie goes on a trip</b> (slides 3–9)
WORKSHEET	<b>Advice for a healthy mouth</b>
WORKSHEET	<b>Patient record</b>
VIDEO	<b>Visit the dentist every year</b>

 **TO START**, play the **Visit the dentist every year** video.

 **EXPLAIN** to children that they will be taking part in a dentist's role play.

 **FLEXIBLE DELIVERY**: Run this activity in a way that best suits you and your classroom set-up.

 **RESOURCES**: We have provided a variety of resources to support the role play activity.

**In the presentation you will find:**

- ✓ Printouts for your classroom wall and role play area promoting important oral care messages.

**The following worksheets are also available:**

- ✓ A set of cards that can be used by budding dentists to offer advice.
- ✓ A 'Patient record' worksheet to write notes about the check-up, e.g. how many times does the patient brush each day, is the patient brushing their teeth correctly, does the patient avoid sugary snacks.

 **TO CONCLUDE**, ask children to write about their experience of visiting (or being) the dentist.

## Let's talk about the dentist

ACTIVITY NOTES

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie goes on a trip</b> (slide 11)
VIDEO	<b>Visit the dentist every year</b>

- 📖 **TO START**, ask children to write down everything they already know about visiting the dentist. They create a mind map using the format provided in the presentation.
- 📖 **PROVIDE PROMPTS**: When was the last time they visited a dentist? What is their dentist's name? Why should you go to the dentist? When should you go? What happens at the dentist?
- 📖 **PLAY** the **Visit the dentist every year** video.
- 📖 **ASK**: What happened in Toothie's visit? Encourage children to include as much detail as possible. You can pause certain frames to help them see that Toothie:
  - ✓ sat in the dentist's chair.
  - ✓ was greeted by the smiley dentist.
  - ✓ had a wide-opened mouth for the check-up by the dentist.
  - ✓ let the dentist check the teeth with a little mirror.
  - ✓ returned a year later for another check-up.
  - ✓ is happy that a visit to the dentist helped to keep a healthy mouth and smile.
- 📖 **ASK** children to revisit their mind maps. What did they know at the start? What do they know now? They should add any new information to their mind maps.
- 📖 **DISCUSS** when you should visit the dentist. Some children may think it is only when you have a problem with your teeth. What was Toothie's advice?



- 📖 **REINFORCE** the importance of visiting the dentist regularly – at least once a year. The dentist will count their teeth, check they are growing correctly, provide advice, look for caries (holes) and treat problems to avoid further damage. Overall, dentists help to keep the teeth and mouth healthy.
- 📖 **FURTHER ACTIVITIES**:
  - ✓ Children create a poster to encourage others to visit the dentist regularly.
  - ✓ Alternatively, you can appeal to children's more playful side and ask them to write/type a newspaper article or present a TV report that starts with the headline, 'The child who never visited the dentist.'

## An interview with a dentist

ACTIVITY NOTES

### RESOURCE

### TITLE

VIDEO

**Visit the dentist every year**

-  **BEFORE YOU START**, get in touch with your National Dental Association. They may help arrange for a dentist (or oral health expert) to visit your school. You can find your local contact here: [www.fdiworlddental.org/members](http://www.fdiworlddental.org/members). If there is no local contact available in your country, consider inviting a dentist directly. There may even be a parent from your school who is a dentist!
-  **TO START**, play the **Visit the dentist every year** video.
-  **EXPLAIN** to children that a dentist is visiting your school.
-  **ASK** children to prepare questions to ask the dentist. For example: Do they like being a dentist? What equipment do they use? How important is it to visit the dentist?
-  **TO CONCLUDE**, ask children to write up their interview with the dentist.

## The voice of Toothie!

ACTIVITY NOTES

### RESOURCE

### TITLE

PRESENTATION

**Toothie goes on a trip** (slides 13–17)

WORKSHEET

**Give Toothie a voice!**

VIDEO

**Visit the dentist every year**

-  **TO START**, play the **Visit the dentist every year** video.
-  **SET THE TASK**: Children need to write a script or voice-over for the video. They must give Toothie a voice!
-  **HAND OUT** the **Give Toothie a voice!** worksheet. It contains a number of frames from the video to support the task. The frames have been included in the presentation too so you can deliver the activity in a way that suits you.
-  **RECORD THE VOICE-OVER**: A great way for children to have fun and remember the message.
-  **TO CONCLUDE**, play the video again and listen to the children's voice-overs!

## The BIG Toothie quiz

ACTIVITY NOTES

### RESOURCE

### TITLE

PRESENTATION **Toothie goes on a trip** (slides 18–29)

-  **TO START**, explain to the children that dentists know everything about teeth! That's why it is so important to visit the dentist regularly. Dentists will help keep their smile healthy.
-  **WHAT DO THEY KNOW ABOUT TEETH?** Explain that they will be taking part in The BIG Toothie quiz!
-  **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS** are included in the presentation and have been taken from all sections of the Mouth Heroes learning journey. Therefore, consider running this quiz as a conclusion to your oral-care work.
-  **FLEXIBLE DELIVERY:** Children can work in teams or individually, noting down answers until the end. Alternatively, you can ask for answers as you run through the quiz.
-  **TO CONCLUDE**, share the results of the quiz. Who are the champions of **The BIG Toothie quiz**?

## Section 5 Toothie on tour

This section provides ideas on how to ‘spread the word’ by sharing key oral health messages with the whole school as well as parents and caregivers.

### Objective

- ✓ Get everyone in your school community to practice good oral care.

### Hold an assembly

Why don't you hold an assembly for the whole school? You could hold it anytime or on or around 20 March to celebrate World Oral Health Day, which promotes good oral health for everyone ([www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)). We've provided a script for you to use and a presentation with a fun quiz.

RESOURCE	TITLE
PRESENTATION	<b>Toothie on tour assembly</b>
VIDEOS	<b>Brush your teeth twice a day</b> <b>The size of a pea fits to a T</b> <b>The proper brushing technique</b> <b>Change your toothbrush often</b> <b>No snacking after night brushing</b> <b>Visit the dentist every year</b> <b>Avoid sugary snacks</b>

### Hold an assembly

ASSEMBLY NOTES

#### INTRODUCE THE THEME OF THE ASSEMBLY

Ask children if they can guess the theme of the assembly from the following clues. **What am I?**

- ✓ I am an important part of your body.
- ✓ I am covered with something very strong. In fact, it is the strongest thing in your body.
- ✓ You get two sets of me in a lifetime.
- ✓ Sugar is really bad for me.
- ✓ You need to keep me clean and healthy because I help you eat, smile and talk.

Add some more clues of your own if children take longer to guess correctly.

#### WATCH THE MOUTH HEROES VIDEOS

Once children have guessed the theme, explain that they are going to watch some short, fun, cartoon-style videos. Toothie, the star of the videos, is going to share important tips for taking care of teeth.

**Play the videos.** After each video, ask children: What was Toothie's tip?

Reinforce each of Toothie's tips using the presentation slides. These provide additional advice and help children understand the consequences of not caring for their teeth.

#### TIME FOR REFLECTION

Explain that a healthy mouth is important for a healthy body. An unhealthy mouth makes it difficult for us to do the things that we take for granted, like eating and talking.

Give children a moment to think about Toothie's oral care messages and what they can do differently for a healthy mouth.

# Involving parents/caregivers

It is really important that parents/caregivers help children practice good oral care. After all, it is in the home that children will clean and care for their teeth, and it is their parents/caregivers who are ultimately responsible for scheduling regular dental check-ups for them.

We have offered ideas throughout this guide on how you might support and involve parents/caregivers in their child's oral-care work. To make it easy, we have pulled out the main ones again below and have added a new one at the end that showcases the children's efforts.

## Checklist with tips

We have included a helpful checklist for parents/caregivers. It gives them all the information they need to support children to practice good oral care and establish long-lasting habits. Why not circulate this at the start of, or during your Mouth Heroes work.

## Mouth Heroes diary

As part of their work in Section 2, children are encouraged to complete a toothbrushing diary (p. 14), and parents/caregivers are urged to become their brushing Monitors and Helpers.

## Encourage children to share schoolwork with parents/caregivers

Send their teeth-linked work home to talk through with their families. We have provided lesson activities that specifically help with this too.

- ✓ Children design a poster for their home that showcase's Toothie's tips on how to care for teeth (p. 14).
- ✓ Children write stories, a Toothie adventure that promotes good oral care (p. 14 and 19). Encourage them to read the stories with their parents/caregivers.
- ✓ Children make a pledge to do something they are not doing already to keep their mouth healthy (p. 20). What role can parents/caregivers play to help them achieve it?

## Certificate

Award children a certificate in recognition of their Mouth Heroes work. It's something for them to be proud of and share with their parents/caregivers. We have designed one for you to hand out.

## Toothie exhibition

Display the children's work and invite parents to come and see it. This guide is packed with ideas for both design-led work and creative writing.

[www.fdiworlddental.org/mouth-heroes](http://www.fdiworlddental.org/mouth-heroes)



## Tell us what you think

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. HOW DID YOU USE THE RESOURCE AND DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE? IF YOU GET IN TOUCH, THERE MAY BE OTHER WAYS WE CAN HELP.

SEND A MESSAGE TO [communications@fdiworlddental.org](mailto:communications@fdiworlddental.org)

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU.



### FDI WORLD DENTAL FEDERATION

AVENUE LOUIS-CASAÏ 51 • 1216 GENEVA • SWITZERLAND  
T +41 22 560 81 50 • [INFO@FDIWORLDDENTAL.ORG](mailto:INFO@FDIWORLDDENTAL.ORG)  
[WWW.FDIWORLDDENTAL.ORG](http://WWW.FDIWORLDDENTAL.ORG)

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Charanjit Jagait

**DESIGN + LAYOUT**  
Gilberto D Lontro

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