Keeping the mouth clean is an important aspect of overall health care. Day nurseries can contribute to a child’s well-being by conducting daily brushing programs. It is equally important to clean brushes and maintain storage containers in a sanitary manner to prevent transmission of disease-causing germs, which can lead to illnesses.

**Toothbrush:**
- small enough to fit in the child’s mouth and be age appropriate
- soft bristles
- replace every three months, if bristles become worn or bent, during and after an outbreak, or if toothbrush falls on the floor and becomes contaminated or soiled
- each individual should have their own labelled toothbrush (e.g. use permanent marker to record child’s name on brush handle then seal with clear nail polish) - unlabelled toothbrushes that are mixed up must be discarded

**Storage Unit:**
- toothbrushes must not touch each other; spacing of two inches or more is preferable
- made of durable material that is non-porous and washable
- store away from the sink area to avoid toothbrushes from being splashed and out of children’s reach
- designed so that users can access the toothbrush handles easily

**Recommended Procedures:**
1. Supervise children
2. Children wash their hands before toothbrushing
3. Use toothpaste only if child is old enough to spit it out, otherwise, use water only.
   - fluoridated tooth paste is recommended; store out of reach of children; child should not eat or swallow the toothpaste
   - if toothpaste is used, dispense only a smear of paste onto clean, single-use paper; apply the dispensed paste onto toothbrush; discard used paper
   - after brushing, have child rinse his/her mouth with water and spit out rinse; use single-use disposable
4. Rinse toothbrush thoroughly before putting it back into storage unit; let toothbrush air dry
5. Children wash their hands after toothbrushing
6. After toothbrushing clean and disinfect sink(s) and surrounding counter area(s)
7. Clean and disinfect toothbrush storage unit/device weekly, or more often as necessary

* Circumstances may vary. Please consult with your Public Health Inspector.

Environmental Help Line
905-723-3818 or 1-888-777-9613
durham.ca