



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

# HEALTH MATTERS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE

# RING IN THE NEW YEAR with a Tooth Brushing Program

Making a New Year's resolution is a very old tradition. The logic behind the tradition is to chase away the bad habits and sins of the previous year, leaving a clean slate that provides for good health and fortune in the coming year. The New Year is a great time to resolve to follow through on healthy changes to establish or re-establish good dental health habits. Celebrate the New Year by establishing a tooth brushing program in your child care setting.

Good oral health benefits children's general health. Good oral health is important for young children to help them eat, talk, smile and develop self esteem. Deciduous, or baby teeth, are important as they guide the eruption and development of permanent teeth. Any child can experience dental decay, but some groups of children in the community are more vulnerable. The prevalence of dental decay in children from lower socio-economic backgrounds and culturally and linguistically diverse communities is higher than in the general population.

While a tooth brushing program is optional, it does provide a valuable tool for reinforcing good oral hygiene. Good habits start at an early age. A tooth brushing program can introduce children to simple rules of oral hygiene that will assist him or her in taking important first steps towards a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

**Daily tooth brushing at a child care centre can be beneficial for several reasons:**

- To reinforce the hygiene messages given at home by families.
- To help children develop the habit of tooth brushing as early as possible. Daily brushing with a fluoride toothpaste helps prevent gum disease and reduce tooth decay.
- To help children learn basic hygiene and develop tooth brushing skills by brushing their own teeth.
- Some children may not be brushing at home. Sometimes the only time children regularly brush their teeth may be at your child care centre.

- By encouraging young children to brush regularly, you will be helping them keep their teeth for life.

**Before starting the program:**

- Caregivers should be provided training on how to run the program.
- Toothbrushes must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- A regular time should be set for daily brushing (ideally after a food break).
- A storage area with good ventilation will need to be set up.
- Advice should be provided to parents on a regular basis regarding the need for home brushing.

It will be important for your child care centre to consider all policies and practices that either promote or negate good oral health. If you are planning to introduce a tooth brushing program at your centre, call a member of the dental program at the Haldimand Norfolk Health Unit to provide you with information and training. Anyone who works with children has an opportunity to positively influence a child's life now, and in the years to come.

*Submitted by*

*Kim Casier, RDH (Registered Dental Hygienist)*



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# Holidays and Children's safety

Holidays are a hectic time of year for everyone, which is why it's important to make a point of thinking about children's safety. While children's safety is a year-round concern, it is particularly important during the holidays because children are excited and may not be as careful as usual. The traditional trappings, decorated trees, shimmering lights, candles and goodies galore, can all pose some dangers to the littlest members of your family. These holiday treasures can pose risks such as choking, suffocation and strangulation.

## Helpful Hints

- Keep Christmas trees watered at all times, since dry trees are a fire hazard. Make sure the tree is firmly anchored so it cannot fall over. Check all lights, bulbs, sockets and extension cords to make sure nothing is frayed, cracked or broken. Faulty cords and lights are one of the leading causes of house fires. Avoid small decorations and trimming that resembles food.
- Discard ribbons and bows quickly. When children inevitably end up playing with gift boxes, make sure they are free of staples and plastic.
- When visiting a friend's home, make sure your child is not exposed to any choking hazards. Likewise, if you have visitors, remember to remove all objects potentially dangerous to a young child.
- Always supervise your child during meals. Ensure that your child eats and drinks while sitting upright. Never let children eat while playing, running, or

if they are sleepy. Do not force feed a child. Encourage children to take small bits, eat slowly and chew their food.

## Toys

Toy makers must make sure they produce safe toys that meet the safety standards set by Health Canada. Sometimes unsafe toys make their way onto store shelves and into homes. You may also have older toys that are no longer safe, or the way the toys are being used may expose children to hazards. To check on recalled toys or hazardous products, view Health Canada's website, [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca).

### Tips to keep children safe when they play with toys:

- Read and follow the label, warnings, safety messages and instructions for toys.
- Always supervise children and teach them how to use toys safely.
- Store toys and games for older children separate from those for younger children.
- Only adults should install batteries into toys.
- Never allow children to suck or chew on metal jewellery; it may contain lead.
- Choose a ride-on toy that suits the child's age, size and abilities.

### We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

*Submitted by*

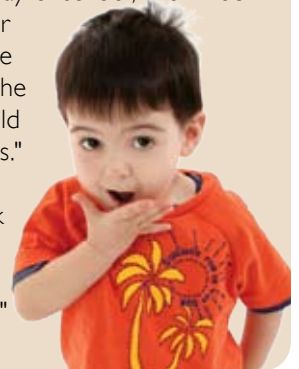
*Karin Marks, Health Promoter, Child Injury Prevention*

## Out of the Mouths of Babes...

A three-year-old went with his dad to see a litter of kittens. On returning home, he breathlessly informed his mother there were two boy kittens and two girl kittens. "How did you know?" his mother asked. "Daddy picked them up and looked underneath," he replied. "I think it's printed on the bottom."

A mother and her young son returned from the grocery store and began putting away the groceries. The boy opened the box of animal crackers and spread them all over the table. "What are you doing?" his mother asked. "The box says you can't eat them if the seal is broken," the boy explained. "I'm looking for the seal."

On the first day of school, the kindergarten teacher said, "If anyone has to go to the bathroom, hold up two fingers." A little voice from the back of the room asked, "How will that help?"





# Fifth DISEASE (Parvovirus B19)

symptoms usually occur four to 20 days after the person has been exposed. Once a person who has had fifth disease gets better, he or she will be protected against this disease in the future.

A person infected with parvovirus B19 is contagious before the rash appears. By the time the “slapped cheek” rash occurs, the child is probably no longer contagious and may return to school and day care.

Fifth disease is spread from person to person by direct contact with respiratory secretions from the nose, mouth and throat of infected people before the onset of rash, when they appear to “just have a cold.” The virus is spread by being coughed and/or sneezed on or by sharing drinking cups and utensils of an infected person. It can be passed on from an infected mother to her unborn baby.

The risk is very low, but there is some risk to the developing baby. The pregnant woman can have a blood test done to see if she is immune to the disease. Many adults are immune. People who have blood disorders or an unhealthy immune system are at higher risk for complications

from the disease. They should seek medical attention if they have been in contact with someone who has fifth disease.

There is no vaccine or medicine that prevents fifth disease. However, frequent hand washing, careful disposal of used facial tissues and not sharing drinking cups or utensils are effective methods to decrease the chance of becoming infected.

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**Heymann, D.L. (2004). Control of Communicable Diseases Manual.** (18thed.). American Public Health Association. United Press Book, Inc. Baltimore, Md.

*Submitted by: Lynda Linn RN, BScN, MN, PHN*

Fifth disease, also known as “Slapped Face” disease, is a mild rash illness that occurs most frequently in children. It is caused by Parvovirus B19 and tends to occur in the winter and spring.

Fifth disease usually begins with a mild illness that may result in a fever, tiredness, body aches, headache and cold-like symptoms. A few days later, a very red rash appears on the face that looks like “slapped cheeks” and a lacy red rash on the trunk and limbs. The rash may be itchy. The child is usually not very ill, and the rash resolves in seven to 10 days. The

## Health Matters for Little People: Day Nurseries and Private Home Day Care

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act prohibits smoking on any premise a day nursery or private home day care operates at all times, whether children are present or not.

### Operators must:

- Make sure that everyone is aware that smoking is prohibited.
- Remove all ashtrays.
- Ensure that no one smokes on the property.

- Post No Smoking signs at all entrances, exits, washrooms and in other appropriate locations.

Signage is available, free of charge, from the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit. For more information or to request signage, please contact 519-426-6170 Ext. 3202 or leave a message on the Smoke-Free Ontario Hotline at 519-426-6170 Ext. 3278.

*Submitted by  
Amy Jones, TCO (Tobacco Control Officer)*



## Recipe

# CARROT Snacking Cake

This cake is simple, delicious and wholesome.

### Ingredients:

3/4 cup (175 ml) canned crushed pineapple	1-1/4 cups (300 ml) whole wheat flour
2 eggs	1 1/2 tsp (7 ml) cinnamon
3/4 cup (175 ml) granulated sugar	1 tsp (5 ml) baking powder
1/3 cup (75 ml) vegetable oil	1/2 tsp (2 ml) baking soda
1/4 cup (50 ml) unsweetened applesauce	1-1/2 cups (375 ml) grated carrots
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla	1/2 cup (125 ml) golden raisins (optional)

### Preparation:

- In fine sieve over bowl, drain pineapple, pressing to extract juice. Set aside.
- In large bowl, beat eggs with sugar until pale. Beat in oil, applesauce and vanilla. In separate bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and stir into egg mixture just until moistened. Stir in pineapple, carrots, and raisins (if using). Scrape into parchment paper lined nine-inch (2.5 l) square metal cake pan.

- Bake in 350°F (180°C) oven until cake tester inserted in centre comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Let cool in pan on rack for 15 minutes. Remove from pan; let cool completely. (Make-ahead: Wrap and store for up to two days or overwrap in foil and freeze in airtight container for up to two weeks.)

Submitted by  
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