

# How to get children to regularly brush their teeth

Let's face facts: Kids hate to brush their teeth. And parents grow extremely weary of the daily battle to get them to do it.

Brushing your teeth is crucial for everyone, especially kids who want to avoid bad habits at a young age that can lead to poor dental hygiene the rest of their life.

Battling with a child who won't regularly brush their teeth can become an unwanted bedtime nightmare.

Dr. John Luther, Chief Dental Officer for Western Dental, provides 5 tips for getting kids to brush regularly.

- **Pick a fun Toothbrush, Toothpaste:** Buy a cool new toothbrush – dinosaurs, race cars, Disney characters, Barbie – that your child is excited to use and do the same with a child's toothpaste. Make a fun time of taking your kid to the store to pick out toothbrush and toothpaste.
- **Play their favorite song:** Brush DJ – an award-winning free app – plays two-minute songs. Kids can pick the songs. The app also sets reminders to brush twice a day, floss, use a mouthwash, and visit the dentist.
- **Reward good brushing behavior:** Suggestions include extra half hour of TV; 30 straight days leads to a gift of their choice; award stickers each time they brush, and provide a reward (new toy, trip to the zoo) when the child reaches a certain number of stickers.
- **Brushing with your kids:** Many young kids enjoy emulating their parents. Set aside a time each evening where you can brush your teeth together. Make it fun – perhaps create a dance while brushing. But also make it informative. Show them the proper technique for brushing.
- **Story time:** Create a story, like “sugar bugs” are attacking your child's mouth. The only way to defeat the sugar bugs is to defend your mouth with a toothbrush and toothpaste. Your child becomes a superhero, fighting the evil sugar bugs. Or maybe it's monsters invading Smile Kingdom. The idea is to make brushing FUN!