



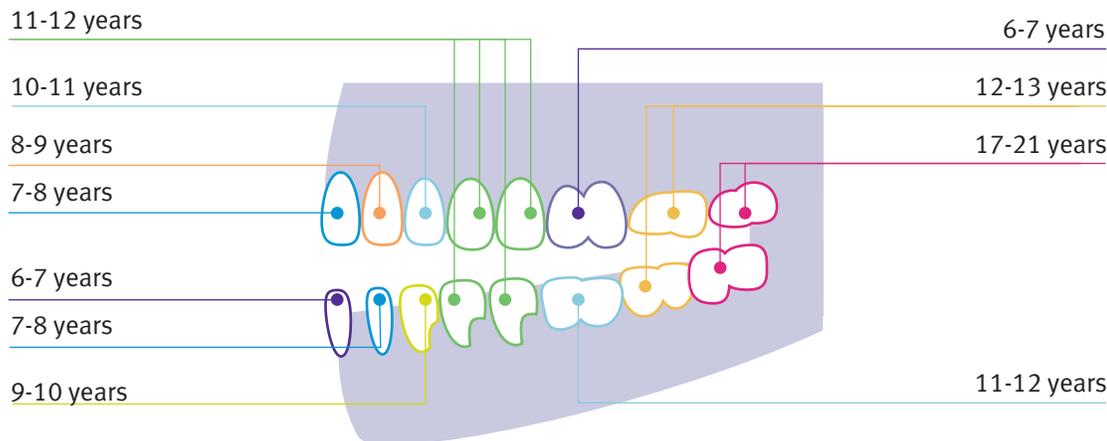
4 STAGES IN A LIFETIME OF SMILES

Caring for your child's smile helps it sparkle for a lifetime. Learn how to nurture and protect it for a strong, healthy start.

- 1 PRENATAL CARE:** Your baby's teeth begin developing during the fifth week of pregnancy, so nourish them by making the right choices.
 - › Choose a nutritionally rich, balanced diet.
 - › Get enough calcium, phosphorous and other vitamins and minerals.
- 2 INFANT ORAL CARE:** Dental hygiene should start even before teeth come. In fact, teeth are susceptible to decay as soon as they are visible. Here's how to start on the right track:
 - › **Wipe your baby's gums.** Use a soft, damp washcloth or gauze pad.
 - › **Use only water in bedtime bottles.** Avoiding sugary liquids helps to prevent baby bottle tooth decay.
 - › **Visit the dentist.** Your child's first dental visit should happen before his or her first birthday and visits should occur every six months thereafter.¹
- 3 LITTLE TEETH:** Around age 2
 - › Help children brush their own teeth twice a day.
 - › Start flossing your child's teeth as soon as there are two adjacent teeth.
 - › Use a small, soft-bristled toothbrush with a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.
 - › Visit the dentist regularly.
- 4 BIG CHOMPERS:** Around age 8
 - › Children should be able to brush and floss alone.
 - › Adults should occasionally check for a job well done.
 - › Continue to visit the dentist regularly.

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DENTAL VISIT SHOULD HAPPEN BEFORE HIS OR HER FIRST BIRTHDAY

WHEN DO GROWN-UP TEETH GROW IN?



SEE THE DENTIST: Here are ways to make it a happy experience:

- › **Mix in some fun.** Combine dental visits with trips to the park, movies or a favorite lunch spot.
- › **Think positive.** Avoid using negative words like “hurt” or “shot.”
- › **Lead by example.** Bring your child along for your dental checkups so that it’s a familiar place.

FLUORIDE IS KEY: This mineral is an essential component for maintaining your child’s oral health.

- › Fluoride may reduce dental decay by 20-40%.²
- › Make sure to use a toothpaste with fluoride.
- › Talk to your dentist about supplements if your community does not have fluoridated water.
- › Many Delta Dental plans cover children’s topical fluoride treatments.

CONSIDER SEALANTS: Dental sealants applied to the chewing surfaces of molars can act as a barrier between the tooth and harmful bacteria. This simple, effective and pain-free procedure could prevent up to 70% of children’s cavities.³ Children who are at high risk for cavies (those who have had at least one cavity in the past) are especially advised to consider sealants.



MAKE HEALTHY SMILES FUN

Grin! for Kids is a new, free kid-friendly resource from Delta Dental. With wacky tooth trivia, jokes and craft projects you can do together – this special issue of our oral health e-magazine offers a lively approach to learning about oral health.

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Delta Dental of California, Delta Dental of New York, Delta Dental of Pennsylvania, Delta Dental Insurance Company and our affiliated companies form one of the nation’s largest dental benefits delivery systems, covering 30 million enrollees. All of our companies are members, or affiliates of members, of the Delta Dental Plans Association, a network of 39 Delta Dental companies that together provide dental coverage to almost 63 million people in the U.S.

¹ According to the American Dental Association, “Healthy Dental Habits,” 2014.

² According to the American Dental Association, “Fluoride Supplements,” 2014.

³ Information courtesy of Delta Dental Plans Association, “Preventive Dental Care Study,” 2013.