

TOOTHBRUSHING

Sensory Strategies

- Use of deep pressure touch prior to brushing teeth. Try placing your hands on your child's head and apply gentle but constant pressure down. The adult then places flat hands on the child's shoulders and firmly presses down.
- The child could be encouraged to cuddle and squeeze a large toy, cushion or pillow during tooth brushing.
- The child could have a blanket wrapped around them during tooth brushing.
- Try an electric toothbrush, the vibration may be calming.
- Try a Nuk toothbrush www.nuk.co.uk initially then move onto bristles.
- Try a Colliscurve toothbrush www.fledglings.co.uk which brushes all three sides of the teeth at once.
- Start by cleaning teeth with a washcloth wrapped over a finger before using a brush
- Experiment with flavour of toothpaste. Non flavoured toothpaste is available www.fledglings.co.uk
- To reduce sensitivity, try applying pressure to the gums with a finger or by biting onto a washcloth before brushing.
- Apply deep touch pressure immediately after teeth brushing. You could repeat the pressure to the head and shoulders as above. A "bear hug" could also be encouraged- Luke faces away from you as you wrap your arms around them and squeeze.

General Strategies

- Sing a familiar nursery rhyme or song to indicate the duration of the activity.
- Try a tooth brushing app to provide visual structure and motivation e.g. Aqua-fresh brush time.
- Consider the use of visual supports to increase your child's understanding of the task and to help with sequencing. The visual aid can be in the form of photographs, pictures or symbols.
- Try different types of brush, often a soft brush head is better tolerated.
- Toothbrushes with favourite cartoon characters or designs may be more motivating.



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