

Why Should We Prevent Tooth Decay in Children?



TOOTH DECAY HAS WIDESPREAD AND LASTING IMPACTS ON:

1

A Child's Body

- Tooth decay may cause pain and affect a child's ability to chew, taste, speak, sleep, and play
- If a child cannot eat due to pain from tooth decay, he or she cannot get nutrients to grow
- Tooth decay may lead to a disfigured smile
- Children with tooth decay may get frequent infections, such as ear and sinus infections

2

A Child's Education

- Pain and discomfort from tooth decay affect a child's ability to concentrate and learn
- Pain, discomfort, and going to the dentist for treatment cause children to miss school
- American children ages 5 to 7 lose more than 7 million school hours per year because of tooth decay
- Missing school affects a child's ability to succeed academically

3

A Child's Confidence and Emotional Well-Being

- Tooth decay affects appearance
- Children with tooth decay may be unhappy about their teeth and ashamed to smile
- Children with tooth decay may lack confidence to socialize and make friends

4

A Family's Budget

- Treating tooth decay is expensive — fillings and crowns, anesthesia, ER visits, surgery
- Parents may miss work and lose wages to take their child to the dentist
- If primary tooth decay causes permanent teeth to be crooked, a child may need braces

