

# Oral health milestones and messages

## for Maternal and Child Health Nurses



dental health  
services victoria  
oral health for better health

### birth

TEETH BEGIN FORMING IN UTERO AND CONTINUE TO DEVELOP UNTIL ERUPTION

- Put baby to bed without a bottle
- Even before teeth appear, you can wipe gums using a damp, clean face washer



FROM THE FIRST TOOTH UNTIL 7-8 YEARS

- Help children to brush morning and night
- Use a toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles

**6**  
MONTHS

TOOTH ERUPTION MAY BEGIN

- Clean teeth as soon as they appear
- Brush or wipe teeth with water only until 18 months old
- Introduce a cup
- May see signs of teething

**8**  
MONTHS

CENTRAL INCISORS PRESENT

- Children should only drink water in addition to breastmilk or infant formula
- Children don't need sweet drinks, including fruit juice

► **Mouth check**

**12**  
MONTHS

1ST UPPER MOLARS BEGIN TO ERUPT AFTER 12 MONTHS

- Have a dental check-up by 12 months
- Phase out bottles by 12 months
- Enjoy a wide variety of healthy family foods
- Offer plenty of tap water

**18**  
MONTHS

1ST LOWER MOLARS MAY BEGIN TO ERUPT

- Start using a small pea-sized amount of children's low fluoride toothpaste
- After brushing, spit out toothpaste but don't rinse

► **Mouth check**

► **Toothbrushing demonstration**

**2**  
YEARS

23-33 MONTHS 2ND MOLARS MAY BEGIN TO ERUPT

- Children don't need sweet drinks, including fruit juice

► **Mouth check**

**3.5**  
YEARS

CHILD SHOULD HAVE 20 BABY TEETH

- Enjoy healthy meals and tooth-friendly snacks
- Offer plenty of tap water

► **Mouth check**

**6**  
YEARS

1ST PERMANENT MOLARS MAY ERUPT. BABY TEETH START TO SHED

- Children can begin using standard fluoride toothpaste

**8**  
YEARS

UPPER LATERAL AND CENTRAL PERMANENT INCISORS ERUPT

- Most children can brush teeth unaided by 7-8 years