

# Brush Bunny Guidelines for Preschool Staff

## Resources supplied

Two Brush Buses with covers, 20 small children's toothbrushes, three tubes of toothpaste with 1450ppm fluoride, Brush Bunny story book and soft copy of the toothbrushing chart which can be printed and used at the preschool and/or home.

These will be delivered to the preschool a week or so before the first toothbrushing session so that staff can become familiar with the resources and label the toothbrushes and Brush Buses.

The dental hygienist will bring Parent Information Leaflets on the day of the first toothbrushing session which should be sent home with the children to keep the parents informed.

## General Guidelines

A designated lead person should be appointed who will be responsible for the toothbrushing programme; **Name of lead person** \_\_\_\_\_

We have catered for 20 children in your preschool and have provided the resources for them. However, if you wish to have more children involved, we can advise you in relation to sourcing the Brush Buses (storage units) and which toothpaste and toothbrushes are suitable.

Every child taking part in the toothbrushing programme should be aged between 2 and 5 years of age and should have a signed consent form completed by their parents/guardians.

A questionnaire should have been completed by the parents/ guardians for each child taking part in the programme in relation to the existing toothbrushing habits of the child before commencing the programme.

Children should brush their teeth every day during the toothbrushing programme, staff can identify when during the day this will fit in with other activities, however we recommend doing it as early in the morning as possible.

Dental support and guidance will be available from the volunteering dental hygienist on the first day of the programme and by agreed follow up phone calls or visits as required.

All toothbrushing supervisors should receive training in effective toothbrushing and infection control procedures

Staff training should be recorded and monitored by preschool management

Supervising staff should wash their hands and cover any cuts, abrasions or breaks in their skin with a waterproof dressing before starting the toothbrushing session

The parent's information leaflet should be sent home with the children on the first day of the programme (and not before this time).

## The toothpaste

The toothpaste provided by the programme, which contains between 1000 and 1450 ppm (parts per million) fluoride, should be used. If you require more toothpaste, any similar toothpaste can be used as long as it contains at least 1000 ppm levels of fluoride.

A pea-sized amount of toothpaste for children aged 2 years and over is recommended. Children under 2 years of age should not use a fluoride toothpaste.

As the toothpaste tube is being shared, a supervisor should dispense the toothpaste onto a clean surface such as a plate in pea size amounts which can be scooped up on to each toothbrush

There should be sufficient spacing between the quantities of dispensed toothpaste to allow collection without cross-contamination.

Toothpaste must only be dispensed at the time the child is ready to brush

## The toothbrush

The toothbrushes provided for the programme are appropriate for the age and ability of the child. Toothbrushes should be replaced every 3 months, or sooner if required (for example, when the bristles become splayed).

Toothbrushes should be individually identifiable for each child; we suggest developing a numbered list with the colour of each child's toothbrush and the slot in the Brush Bus allocated to them and the number should be written with indelible pen on each toothbrush to aid identification.

## **The toothbrushing**

Toothbrushing takes place in groups or individually with children seated or standing.

Children are discouraged from swallowing toothpaste during or after brushing their teeth.

After toothbrushing, brushes are rinsed thoroughly and individually under cold running water and replaced in the storage system to allow them to air dry. The covers of the Brush Bus should only be used during prolonged disuse for example weekends/holidays.

The toothbrushing programme uses one of two models depending on your facilities – wet brushing if sinks are available, or dry brushing if no sinks are available.

### **Model A – Wet Brushing (toothbrushing at a sink)**

Each child (under supervision) is responsible for collecting their toothbrush from the Brush Bus.

Toothpaste is dispensed on to a plate by the supervisor and scooped on to each child's toothbrush by the supervisor, unless the children are felt able to undertake this task.

The amount of toothpaste used should always be stressed, only a pea size piece!

The toothbrushing takes place at the identified sink area.

Ideally, no more than two children should be at each available sink. They must be supervised and encouraged to spit excess toothpaste into the sink.

Tissues/paper towels must be available and disposed of immediately after use.

### **Model B – Dry Brushing (toothbrushing without access to a sink)**

Each child (under supervision) is responsible for collecting their toothbrush from the Brush Bus.

Toothpaste is dispensed on to a plate by the supervisor and scooped on to each child's toothbrush by the supervisor, unless the children are felt able to undertake this task.

Children may be seated or standing while toothbrushing takes place.

After toothbrushing is completed, children should spit excess toothpaste into either a disposable tissue, disposable paper towel or disposable cup.

Tissues/paper towels or cups must be disposed of immediately after use in a bin.

After toothbrushing the toothbrushes can either be:

- i. rinsed at the sink area (if available) by each child under cold running water and returned to their slot in the Brush Bus (under supervision).  
OR
- ii. returned by the child to their slot in the Brush Bus and then the Supervisor rinses each toothbrush individually under cold running water and returns it to the Brush Bus.

After rinsing the toothbrushes, the child or the supervisor should shake off any excess water into the sink. Toothbrushes should not touch the sink.

Discretion should be used if a child has additional support needs.

Paper towels should be used to mop up all visible drips on the storage system.

Sinks should be rinsed following this activity.

## **Prevention and control of infection**

Toothbrushes are a potential source of infection.

Toothbrushes must be stored in the storage systems supplied (Brush Bus) or in individual ventilated holders.

The Brush Bus enables the brushes to stand in an upright position.

The Brush Bus allows sufficient distance between toothbrushes to avoid cross-contamination.

The Brush Bus has symbols for each slot to allow individual identification.

Storage systems which do not have covers must be stored within a designated trolley or in a clean, dry cupboard when not in continuous use.

The Brush Buses must be cleaned, rinsed and dried at least once a week by the staff using warm water and household detergent.

To avoid contamination via spray, the Brush Bus should not be placed directly beside the children while toothbrushing is taking place.

Care should be taken to ensure that toothbrushes do not cross-contaminate when being removed from or replaced in storage systems.

Any storage systems must be replaced if cracks, scratches or rough surfaces develop.