DENTAL HEALTH GUIDELINES

Rationale:

A coordinated effort from all involved in the care of the infant and preschool child is needed to ensure that optimal health is achieved for them. Healthy primary teeth are essential in the maintenance of space for the developing permanent teeth.

Children Need:
- Healthy teeth so they can chew food comfortably learn to speak clearly and smile with confidence.
- Early positive experiences with dentists and appropriate allied dental personnel to encourage a lifetime of good dental habits and a positive attitude toward maintaining oral health.
- Opportunities to learn healthy dental habits, instruction on correct techniques for brushing their teeth and independence developing their self help skills.

Parents Need:
- Access to appropriate information and care in relation to oral and dental health.

Staff Need:
- To maintain hygienic and protective standards at all times.
- To support parents and the child in developing and maintaining their dental care routine.
- Resources to educate children about dental care.
- To be informed on all issues related to the development and maintenance of appropriate dietary and oral health guidelines for their facilities.

Staff encourage dental hygiene by:
- Encouraging children to rinse their mouths with water after eating, called "Swish and Swallow". They are encouraged to become independent with this as a self help skill.
- Children will be encouraged to drink water at each meal time to reduce decay through sugary drinks and foods. Eating healthy foods is encouraged.
- The centre systematically incorporates the healthy eating guidelines and dental care into the curriculum and education/information for families.
- Hygiene and dental information is provided to families in their home language.
- A dental therapist will visit the centre when possible.

This policy links to the following NQS:
National Quality Standards 2.1.1, 2.1.3

See Appendix 1-National Law (section) and National Regulations (regulation)